



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

*Inaugural Address
The Honorable C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho*

January 5, 2007

Mr. Chief Justice, Lieutenant Governor, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Pro Tem, fellow Constitutional Officers, Members of our Congressional Delegation, honored legislators, judges, county and city officials, citizens ... fellow Idahoans.

There is no better or more straightforward way to express my feelings today than to simply say ... Thank you.

Thank you for the privilege of standing before you as someone for whom there is no higher aspiration and no greater honor than being an Idahoan.

Thank you for participating in this celebration of our freedom.

Thank you for your confidence and for entrusting this high office to my safekeeping.

Most of all, thank you for making Idaho the kind of place where people from all over the country and the world want to live, work and raise their families.

I pledge to help you keep building on that greatness. I ask today for your patience, your understanding, and most of all for your help in that endeavor.

For years now I have been talking about personal responsibility and accountability, both in our private lives and in the halls of government. Those are important principles here in Idaho, and they will form the basis of this administration.

Moving the ideas of efficiency, customer service and cost savings into the everyday language of our public lives won't be easy.

Building a state government consistent with the principles of frugality and common sense will require a fundamental paradigm shift.

It will require putting aside personal and political agendas to achieve results for the greater good.

And it will require the acceptance, trust and good will of individual Idahoans.

To restore balance between our private and public lives, we must take full advantage of our growing opportunities to become a true laboratory of this republic. We must more directly and substantially engage the private sector, individuals and organizations throughout Idaho to achieve common goals.

And most of all, we must foster a climate of renewed possibilities.

The changes involved will extend to every corner of this administration, and they will begin at the top.

Thomas Jefferson wisely observed more than 200 years ago that “The boisterous sea of liberty is never without a wave.”

That’s just as true today. But I have every confidence that the good graces of the people of Idaho can weather that sea without bitterness or rancor, and together we can secure the many blessings of liberty for generations yet unborn.

As your governor, it’s my hope that everyone in our great state will join me in embracing the responsibilities as well as the opportunities afforded by citizenship.

For me, that means committing every day to ensuring that your government becomes what it was meant to be – the people’s servant.

Meeting that goal is essential to making the best use of our most valuable resources – the talent, creativity, energy and enthusiasm of 1.6 million individual Idahoans.

We all have seen how fast Idaho is growing, and we all know the challenges that growth is laying at our door.

Some see them as daunting, but I hope you will join me in focusing instead on the great opportunities that growth will afford us as we commit to making Idaho what America was meant to be.

Lieutenant Governor Risch understands that vision. I want to thank him today for the great job he’s done over the past seven months of framing some of the issues that arise from Idaho’s growth and laying the groundwork for addressing them – for applying the paradigm of limited government and unlimited opportunity to Idaho’s challenges.

Jim and Vicki, thank you both for all you’ve done in the office of governor, lieutenant governor and in the Idaho Senate. And thank you for all you will continue doing for the people of Idaho.

Before I go any further, please join me in officially welcoming – for the first time in her new role – Idaho’s First Lady, my wonderful wife Lori.

In the coming days and week we will be discussing many seemingly diverse issues. But they all have a common thread.

Our ability as a state and as Idahoans to embrace our future, to meet the challenges of today and opportunities of tomorrow depends on how we educate and prepare our children for productive and thoughtful lives.

Jefferson once again said it best: “Enlighten the people ... and tyranny and oppressions of body and mind will vanish like spirits at the dawn of day.”

So today we begin together a new dawn in Idaho history. With your help, and with God’s, we can build – for ourselves and for generations to come – a new unity of purpose. We can build a new willingness to think big thoughts and dream big dreams, and a determination to act and achieve greatness.

We truly can become the architects of our own destiny.

Thank you once again. God bless Idaho, and God bless America.