

At 1 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m., the Speaker announced that the joint session was dissolved.

Thereupon the Vice President and the Members of the Senate returned to their Chamber.

ACTION ON THE VETO MESSAGE OF
THE PRESIDENT

The SPEAKER. The objections of the President will be entered at large on the Journal, and the message and the bill printed as a House document.

The question is, Will the House of Representatives, on reconsideration, pass the bill, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding?

Parliamentarian's Note: The return of a bill in this manner was unusual as the message otherwise is delivered to the House originating the measure. The other House would be notified only following action by the first House. The House here properly waited until the dissolution of the joint session and the departure of the Senate before proceeding to the reconsideration of the bill.

§ 5. Joint Sessions to Receive Presidential Messages: Procedure

At the appointed hour for a joint session to receive the President, the Members of the Senate arrive and occupy the seats re-

served for them. The President of the Senate (the Vice President) sits to the right of the Speaker, but in the absence of the Vice President, the President pro tempore sits to the left of the Speaker. The Speaker presides.⁽¹⁾ Since the inception of television coverage in the House, the President almost always delivers his annual state of the Union message in the evening.⁽²⁾

Speaker's Declaration of Recess

§ 5.1 The Speaker declares a recess in connection with a joint session to receive a message in person from the President.

Under the authority of Rule I clause 12(a) to "suspend the business of the House for a short time when no question is pending before the House,"⁽¹⁾ the Chair declares a recess for the purpose of preparing the Chamber for a joint session to receive a message from

1. *House Rules and Manual* §169 (2007).
2. The first instance of a President delivering an annual message at an evening session occurred on Jan. 3, 1936. See 80 CONG. REC. 27-30, 74th Cong. 2d Sess.
1. *House Rules and Manual* §638 (2007).

the President, as seen in the proceedings of Jan. 29, 2002:⁽²⁾

The SPEAKER pro tempore.⁽³⁾ Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 8:40 p.m. for the purpose of receiving in joint session the President of the United States.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 8:40 p.m.

The proceedings of Jan. 7, 1959,⁽⁴⁾ exemplify the grant of authority for the Speaker to declare a recess that was necessary before the adoption of Rule I clause 12(a) at the beginning of the 103d Congress.

On that date, following the adoption of a concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of the two Houses to receive a message from the President on Jan. 9, 1959,⁽⁵⁾ the Speaker, Sam Rayburn, of Texas, was authorized by unanimous consent to declare a recess at any time on that date, as follows:

Mr. [John W.] McCORMACK [of Massachusetts]. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that on Friday, January 9, 1959, it may be in order for

2. 148 CONG. REC. 329, 330, 107th Cong. 2d Sess.
3. John E. Sweeney (NY).
4. 105 CONG. REC. 16, 86th Cong. 1st Sess.
5. 80 CONG. REC. 9, 74th Cong. 2d Sess. (S. Con. Res. 25).

the Speaker to declare a recess at any time subject to the call of the Chair.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Ceremonial Procedure at Joint Session

§ 5.2 The two Houses follow established ceremonial procedures at a joint session to receive a message from the President.

On Jan. 31, 2006,⁽¹⁾ the two Houses met in joint session to receive the President's annual state of the Union message. As part of the preparation for the joint session, the Chair announced the customary policy on floor privileges for the joint session. The Chair also announced that the practice of reserving seats by placard for the joint session would not be allowed and that Members could reserve seats only by their physical presence following a security sweep of the Chamber.

The proceedings were as follows:

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore.⁽²⁾ The Chair desires to make an announcement.

1. 152 CONG. REC. 413-417, 109th Cong. 2d Sess.
2. Ray LaHood (IL).

After consultation among the Speaker, the majority and minority leaders, and with their consent and approval, the Chair announces that tonight when the two Houses meet in joint session to hear an address by the President of the United States, only the doors immediately opposite the Speaker and those on his left and right will be open.

No one will be allowed on the floor of the House who does not have the privilege of the floor of the House.

Due to the large attendance that is anticipated, the Chair feels that the rule regarding the privilege of the floor must be strictly adhered to.

Children of Members will not be permitted on the floor, and the cooperation of all Members is requested.

The practice of reserving seats prior to the joint session by placard will not be allowed. Members may reserve their seats by physical presence only following the security sweep of the Chamber.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 8:40 p.m. for the purpose of receiving in joint session the President of the United States.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 8:40 p.m.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order at 8 o'clock and 43 minutes p.m.

JOINT SESSION OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE HELD PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 77 TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The Speaker⁽³⁾ of the House presided.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms,⁽⁴⁾ Mrs. Kerri Hanley, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate, who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right of the Speaker,⁽⁵⁾ and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort the President of the United States into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT); . . .

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN).⁽⁶⁾

3. J. Dennis Hastert (IL).
4. Before the abolition of the office in 1995 (see *House Rules and Manual* §663a (2007)), the Doorkeeper announced all attendees. See, e.g., 105 CONG. REC. 32–36, 86th Cong. 1st Sess., Jan. 7, 1948.
5. In the absence of the Vice President (the President of the Senate), the Senate is represented on the Speaker's rostrum by its President pro tempore, who sits to the Speaker's left. See *House Rules and Manual* § 169 (2007).
6. The full House escort committee consisted of the Majority Leader, Roy Blunt (MO), the Republican Conference Chairman, Deborah Pryce

The VICE PRESIDENT.⁽⁷⁾ The President of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort the President of the United States into the House Chamber:

The Senator from Tennessee (Mr. FRIST); . . .

The Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ).

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms announced the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps. . . .

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.⁽⁸⁾

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms announced the Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court.

The Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

(OH), the Rules Committee Chairman, David Dreier (CA), the Minority Leader, Nancy Pelosi (CA), the Minority Whip, Steny Hoyer (MD), and the Democratic Caucus Chairman, Jim Clyburn (SC). At the time of this joint session, the positions of Majority Whip and Democratic Caucus Vice Chairman were vacant.

7. Richard B. Cheney (WY).
8. Under an earlier practice, the entire diplomatic corps was announced. See, *e.g.*, 94 CONG. REC. 32, 80th Cong. 2d Sess., Jan. 7, 1948; 136 CONG. REC. 905, 101st Cong. 2d Sess., Jan. 31, 1990.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 9 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m., the Sergeant at Arms, the Honorable Wilson Livingood, announced the President of the United States.

The President of the United States, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and stood at the Clerk's desk.

(Applause, the Members rising).

The SPEAKER. Members of Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor of presenting to you the President of the United States.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The PRESIDENT. Mr. Speaker, Vice President CHENEY, Members of Congress, members of the Supreme Court and Diplomatic Corps, distinguished guests and fellow citizens: . . .

May God bless America.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

At 10 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m., the President of the United States, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The Members of the President's Cabinet; Chief Justice of the United States and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court;

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

JOINT SESSION DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The Chair declares the joint session of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 10 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m., the joint meeting of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON THE STATE OF THE UNION

Mr. [Bob] GOODLATTE [of Virginia]. Mister Speaker, I move that the message of the President be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

The motion was agreed to.

State of the Union and Budget as One Message

§ 5.3 The President has submitted his annual message on the state of the Union and his budget message in one communication.

On Jan. 21, 1946,⁽¹⁾ President Harry S Truman submitted in

1. 92 CONG. REC. 136-155, 79th Cong. 2d Sess.

writing his annual message on the state of the Union. His comments on the budget were included in the same message.

Messages in Writing Accompanying State of the Union Address

§ 5.4 On one occasion, the President delivered his state of the Union address to a joint session of Congress and delivered in writing a lengthy message carrying his legislative program in more detail than in the text read to the Members. On motion, the House ordered both texts printed as a single document and referred to the Union Calendar.

For the state of the Union message delivered on Jan. 30, 1974,⁽¹⁾ President Richard M. Nixon delivered an abbreviated version in person and provided a longer version in writing. The delivered speech took about 40 minutes; the written text submitted under separate seal, was some 22,000 words in length.⁽²⁾

1. See 120 CONG. REC. 1465-85, 93d Cong. 2d Sess.

2. *Parliamentarian's Note*: At the time of this state of the Union message the House Committee on the Judiciary had commenced an impeachment inquiry.

The proceedings were as follows:

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 8 o'clock and 43 minutes p.m.

JOINT SESSION OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE HELD PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 413 TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER of the House presided. . . .

The SPEAKER.⁽³⁾ My colleagues of the Congress, I have the distinct privilege and the high personal honor of presenting to you the President of the United States.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

THE STATE OF THE UNION—ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 93-206)

The PRESIDENT. Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, my colleagues in the Congress, our distinguished guests, and my fellow Americans:

. . . Tonight, for the first time in 12 years, a President of the United States can report to the Congress on the state of a Union at peace with every nation of the world.

Because of this, in the 22,000-word message on the state of the Union that

3. Carl Albert (OK).

I have just handed to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, I have been able to deal primarily with the problems of peace, with what we can do here at home in America for the American people, rather than with the problems of war. The measures I have outlined in this message set an agenda for truly significant progress for this Nation and the world in 1974. . . .

[Applause, the Members rising.]

The state of the Union message, referred to by the President, and submitted to the Congress, is, in its official text, as follows:

To the Congress of the United States:

We enter 1974 not at the beginning of an historical cycle, but in the middle of one. Beginnings have been made in many vital areas, beginnings which we now must build upon. New needs have arisen which we are in the process of addressing. Opportunities are coalescing which give us a chance to make historic progress toward a stable peace and expanding prosperity. . . .

I have full confidence that we will meet that responsibility.

RICHARD NIXON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *January 30, 1974.*

At 9 o'clock and 48 minutes p.m., the President of the United States, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives. . . .

JOINT SESSION DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The Chair declares the joint session of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 9 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m., the joint session of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

REFERENCE OF PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE

Mr. [Charles] ROSE [of North Carolina]. Mr. Speaker, I move that the message of the President together with the accompanying documents be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered printed.

The motion was agreed to.

§ 5.5 In the second session of the 96th Congress, the President transmitted his state of the Union speech in writing on the day before he delivered the address to a joint session of Congress.

When the second session of the 96th Congress convened to conduct its organizational business, the Majority Leader, appointed by the Speaker to the select committee to notify the President that a quorum was assembled and that the House was ready to proceed to business, reported back to the House that the President wished to address a joint session of Congress on the state of the Union on the following day. His written speech was transmitted on Jan. 22, 1980,⁽¹⁾ and was read (in

1. 126 CONG. REC. 190-215, 96th Cong. 2d Sess.

brief), referred to the Union Calendar, and ordered printed. Both versions were thus printed as House documents.⁽²⁾

The written message was laid before the House and subsequent proceedings were as follows:

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS—
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
(H. DOC. NO. 96-250)

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

My State of the Union Address will be devoted to a discussion of the most important challenges facing our country as we enter the 1980's. . . .

We must move together into this decade with the strength which comes from realization of the dangers before us and from the confidence that together we can overcome them.

JIMMY CARTER.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *January 21, 1980.*

REPORT OF COMMITTEE TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CONGRESS

Mr. [James C.] WRIGHT [Jr., of Texas]. Mr. Speaker, your committee

2. The address to the joint session was printed as H. Doc. No. 96-257. See 126 CONG. REC. 380-382, 96th Cong. 1st Sess., Jan. 22, 1980.

on the part of the House to join a like committee on the part of the Senate to notify the President of the United States that a quorum of each House has been assembled and is ready to receive any communication that he may be pleased to make has performed that duty.

The President asked us to report that he will be pleased to deliver his message at 9 p.m., Wednesday, January 23, 1980, to a joint session of the two Houses. . . .

JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS—
STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. WRIGHT. Mr. Speaker I offer a concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 241) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 241

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring) That the two Houses of Congress assemble in the Hall of the House of Representatives on Wednesday, January 23, 1980, at 9 o'clock postmeridieum for the purpose of receiving such communication as the President of the United States shall be pleased to make to them.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

Consecutive Joint Sessions to Count Electoral Votes and Receive Presidential Message

§ 5.6 At the inception of the 79th Congress, immediately

after a joint session was held for the purpose of counting electoral votes, a second joint session was held to hear the President's annual message read by the Clerk.

On Jan. 6, 1945,⁽¹⁾ a recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker. The Senate entered the Hall, preceded by the Vice President and the Secretary of the Senate. The Vice President addressed the assembly as to the purpose of the joint session:

The VICE PRESIDENT.⁽²⁾ Mr. Speaker and gentlemen of the Congress, the Senate and the House of Representatives, pursuant to the requirements of the Constitution and laws of the United States, have met in joint session for the purpose of opening the certificates and ascertaining and counting the votes of the electors of the several States for President and Vice President. . . .⁽³⁾

The tellers proceeded to read, count, and announce the electoral votes of the several States in alphabetical order. The Vice President then announced that the certificates of all the States had been opened and read, and that the tellers would make final ascertainment of the result and deliver it to the Vice President.

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1. 191 CONG. REC. 90-97, 79th Cong. 1st Sess.
 2. Henry A. Wallace (IA).
 3. Electoral College, see Ch. 10, *supra*.

This done, the Vice President dissolved the joint session, called pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 1, and indicated that the Senate would remain in the House Chamber pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 2, to receive a message in writing from the President of the United States. This message was communicated to the joint session by one of the President's secretaries. The Speaker laid the message before the joint session and it was read:

To the Congress of the United States:

In considering the state of the Union, the war, and the peace that is to follow, are naturally uppermost in the minds of all of us. . . .

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *January 6, 1945.*

Following the reading, the joint session was dissolved by the Speaker. The Senate retired from the Hall of the House, and the House was called to order by the Speaker.

§ 6. Letters From the President

Letter in Support of Bill

§ 6.1 During debate in the Committee of the Whole, the Clerk, by unanimous consent, read a letter from the

President to the Speaker in which the President expressed his support for the bill then under consideration.

On Nov. 20, 1969,⁽¹⁾ while the House was sitting as the Committee of the Whole, the Speaker, John W. McCormack, of Massachusetts, rose to announce that he had just received a letter from the President relating to the legislation then under discussion.

The following proceedings ensued:

Mr. McCORMACK. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I have just received a letter from President Nixon. I understand the minority leader also received a letter. I received it a few minutes ago. It relates to the bill pending before the House. I would like to have the contents of the letter read to the House so that the Members will have in mind the views expressed by the President in his letter to me.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk be authorized to read the letter of the President of the United States.

The CHAIRMAN.⁽²⁾ Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the letter as follows:

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington.

1. 115 CONG. REC. 35192, 35193, 91st Cong. 1st Sess.
2. Charles M. Price (IL).