THE HOUSE RESUMES
At 6:45 P.M. the House resumed, the SPEAKER in the Chair.

POINT OF QUORUM
the question of a quorum was raised.
A quorum was later present.

HOUSE STANDS AT EASE
On motion of the Speaker the House stood at ease, subject to the call of the Chair.

THE HOUSE RESUMES
At 6:55 P.M. the House resumed, the SPEAKER in the Chair.

JOINT ASSEMBLY
At 6:56 P.M. the Senate appeared in the Hall of the House.
The President of the Senate called the Joint Assembly to order and announced that it had convened under the terms of a Concurrent Resolution adopted by both Houses.


Governor Riley was escorted into the Hall of the House of Representatives by a committee composed of Senators Chapman, Newman and McConnell and Representatives MURRAY, GRANGER and CROCKER.
The President introduced Governor Riley who then addressed the Joint Assembly as follows:

ADDRESS BY GOVERNOR RICHARD W. RILEY

"Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of this Joint Assembly,
My Fellow South Carolinians:
Civilizations are measured by what was important to their people: the age of wars and possessions; the age of self gratification, of greed; the age of reason and enlightenment. This was a time when men and women improved themselves through the arts, and through religion, through learning.
Within these civilizations, we have forces that determine which direction people will take: the force of power, the force of change, the force of crisis, the force of leadership. Government leadership, on all levels and in all branches, executive, legislative, judicial, is generally measured by how it responds to these forces. Did it respond with reason and with strength to crisis? Did it respond with foresight and intelligence to the force of change?

Many times in our history as a state we have been at the crossroads of crisis and of change. Many times we have made excuses for not moving forward. Usually our reason was that our people are too poor to be measured by high standards. Fortunately, however, our leaders did not always seek justification for mediocrity.

In 1921, for example, here in this very State House, Governor Robert Cooper said to the General Assembly, "... (W)e could never be so poor as to justify us in taking away from our people the one thing most necessary for the accumulation of wealth. The more difficult we find the economic and social conditions, the more", Governor Cooper said, "do we need education."

Today, we once again find ourselves facing a changing world, a complex information society and an economy based on knowledge. And, yes, we face a crisis in this change — a crisis of deciding how we, as a great and proud state, must respond to these dramatic changes which are taking place all around us. We, who have been placed in positions of leadership, must now decide whether our people will be the masters of this change or whether we will permit our people to become the victims of change.

Tonight, as a result of our history and the result of dramatic change, you and I face a crisis in our public schools — one which demands we respond with a commitment unmatched in our previous history. For years you and I have talked about our support for public education. Yet, we have never given that support real meaning with the resources necessary to ensure quality. That attitude, I submit to you, must change, for I assure you that the world will not stand still in order for us to debate whether we are ready.

Over the last decade we have laid a good foundation for change, a foundation for quality, and I'm proud of that. Through kindergarten and early childhood programs, the Education Finance Act, the Teacher Certification Act, and through Basic Skills testing, we have begun the task of preparing our state for the challenges and the opportunities of the future. Now, I think, we are prepared to talk about "quality" — quality education for all of the children of this state.
Now is the time, you see, we must begin to make the kinds of decisions that will have long-term benefits for the future of our state and the futures of our people. We cannot expect instant solutions, for the problems were not created overnight. Short-sighted responses have allowed those ills to continue from one generation to the next without complete resolution. We must decide that our human resources are important enough for us to be willing to risk our political comfort in order for our people to have a chance at self-improvement and even excellence. We must ask ourselves if all this political discomfort is worth it. I respectfully submit to you that it is.

For the simple truth is that we in South Carolina rank the highest in infant mortality and the lowest in life expectancy. We have a growing number of medically indigent patients, embarrassed by their helplessness, straining the resources of our health system. We have too many poor people dependent upon welfare, and, at the same time, we rank 49th in the amount of assistance payments that we pay. We have too many illiterate adults who can't find a job. We have a growing number of cases of child abuse and neglect when one single case is one too many. And yet the tragedy common to all these problems is that these unfortunate South Carolinians happen to be among the least educated in our state.

The simple truth is that in a state which spends only $2,000 per pupil, we spend $7,300 per inmate each year, and we put more of our people in jail than any other state. And again, the tragic common element is that the average inmate in our prisons reads at the sixth grade level.

And what has been our response to these continuing human problems?

The simple truth is that for years test scores in our public schools have trailed the national average. The simple truth is that we rank at or near the bottom in educational funding. We spend less per pupil than every other state, save one. We also pay teachers less than most other states and that gap widens with each passing year.

If as a state say by our actions that education is not important, then we are saying that our children are not important today, and that their futures are not important tomorrow. We are sending them into the world, you see, to be victims of change.

We can continue to offer the kinds of shortsighted solutions of the past — solutions that will lead us to more prisons, continued poverty, shorter lives, chronic unemployment. Or, you and I can muster the courage to offer a New Approach to not just to quality education, but to government itself, an exciting approach that will lead us to long-term, permanent solutions to these kinds of problems.

What will this New Approach to Government require of us?

In the field of health care and human services, the New Approach emphasizes prevention and wellness as less costly and more sensible alternatives. We have already begun a New Approach for senior citizens with the Community Long Term Care Project, a sound method to help frail, older people remain in their homes. We have moved toward non-institutionalized care for the mentally ill and mentally the retarded. I commend the Ways and Means Committee for recommending the Medically Needy Program which will allow medical assistance for pregnant mothers and children from poor, two-parent families, that's now available only for one-parent families.

You and I must commit ourselves to policies that will improve each person's capacity to work, and to strengthen their family bonds, and to lift their expectations to a full and productive life.

Over the last couple of years we have fashioned the framework for a New Approach to public safety. In the field of criminal justice, we have passed tougher laws on drugs, arson, DUI and other crimes. Yet, we also have promoted crime prevention and rehabilitation, and developed a new approach to our overcrowded prisons in a way that ensures public safety, but not staggering financial costs, on and on into the future, I hope. We must continue to deal with this difficult issue, but other areas also need our attention.

Raising the drinking age for beer and wine, prohibiting open containers of alcoholic beverages in vehicles, illegal per se drunk driving legislation, stronger implied consent laws, victims assistance and sentencing procedures all of these are measures which must be enacted as part of the New Approach to Public Safety. We must assure our people that we can and will deal with all of its victims in a responsible and deliberate manner.

In the area of the environment, we have already begun implementing a New Approach. Through your leadership, this nation is on the road to a comprehensive nuclear waste policy. Last year we launched a major new endeavor to cleanup and control hazardous wastes. There is a new recognition of drought and erosion and other issues associated with water and its use. We have undertaken initiatives that we can be proud of, for they confirm that we
can and will be responsible stewards of our environment. If we can accomplish for the environment what we want to do for people, we can pass on a healthy ecology, one that will support future human growth and development and progress.

Our continued economic growth and development will face its greatest challenge as we enter the new century and enter the competition that we will have in the international marketplace. Twenty-five years ago, in response to a similar challenge, we initiated an industrial revenue bond program, a bold approach, a strengthened Development Board and a model Technical Education System to improve economic conditions.

Now, new challenges, different challenges, demand new responses. We must tap the unlimited potential for growth in small and minority businesses, export enterprises, and agriculture and research-based industries.

We must fully support our colleges and our universities and our technical schools so they can prepare our people for tomorrow's job market and positions of leadership. This New Approach will lead to more jobs, to better cooperation among state agencies and a far wiser use of our existing resources.

But to sustain economic growth we must go even further. A quality public education system is clearly the key to economic prosperity. Industrial development truly begins in the classroom. Being 50th in support of education sends a message: it tells potential industries that we don't expect much from ourselves or our future. It says that Georgia and North Carolina have more confidence in their children than we do. It says that Mississippi and Arkansas care more about human improvement than does South Carolina. I don't think that; yes, being 50th sends a message. And I tell you tonight that message must change and it must change in 1984.

Therefore, the key step this year must be a New Approach to Quality Education — a proposal that will provide both the programs and the funding to make the development of our human potential the top priority in South Carolina now and for the future.

This New Approach means tougher academic standards for all grade levels. This demand for performance touches all students: the low achiever, the average student and the gifted child. It includes some no-cost items, such as increasing student discipline and more effective use of classroom time. However, it also requires investment in job-oriented vocational programs and gifted and talented programs at both the elementary and secondary level in each school district. It also provides a firm learning foundation through required attendance in either a public, private or church-related kindergarten, plus also half-day developmental programs for 4-year-olds with special learning problems.

Every single business prospect I have talked to recently has emphasized to me the importance, the importance of a work force with the basic capability to read, write, compute and think. As members of the General Assembly, you have recognized this need through the passage of the Basic Skills Assessment Test. This test has shown us that one-third of the students of our public schools, over 200,000 students in number need remedial help in the basic skills. We now must provide the funds, the funds that are set out in the New Approach to correct these deficiencies, and help these children succeed. This special remedial program will provide smaller classes and specially trained teachers and teacher aides to work with students. And, make no mistake, the teacher aides are needed, but we will either pay for it now or in the future through costly prisons and health and welfare programs. We are going to pay one way or the other.

Another of the key goals of the New Approach is to ensure that all children have good teachers to guide them in the classroom. Through the new Teacher Certification Program passed by this very General Assembly, South Carolina now has some of the toughest standards for prospective teachers. Yet, we offer one of the lowest pay scales in the country, if we are going to demand more, then we must be willing to pay more, or our brightest students will choose other careers.

Failure on our part to pay our teachers a decent salary will in no way rid the system somehow of incompetence, rather it will only demoralize all teachers and drive out the best. But along with increased compensation, we must have tough new evaluation and training requirements in order to ensure quality classroom performance. Teachers should be evaluated closely and then should be rewarded for superior performance. New recruitment standards and stringent evaluation standards for principals and administrators must be implemented to help both principals and administrators become effective instructional leaders. Everyone must be involved in the classroom in what's happening there in the classroom. Both of these recommendations are included in the New Approach.

We borrowed from the business world's expertise in managing people and in obtaining results as we developed this plan. The result was an innovative incentive program that will provide cash...
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rewards to schools that show improved student test scores, achieve better attendance and foster greater parental and community involvement.

During my past five years as governor, I have visited literally hundreds of classrooms. And it is clear to me that in addition to elevating standards and performance, we also must be willing to address the infrastructure needs of our schools. We have far too many schools that need new roofs, that are not energy efficient, that have too little laboratory equipment, or have poor access for handicapped students. The funding we propose in this plan is only a portion of the $1.6 billion need which has been identified by a joint legislative committee, and it must be done. It's going to be spent one way or the other. Without this program, the other option is simply to fund these needed improvements solely through costly bonds paid for by local property taxes.

Finally, let me put one fear to rest. I am recommending that the revenue from the one cent sales tax increase be put in a special account in the budget, separate from the general fund, and used only for quality education.

The recommendations contained in the New Approach to Quality Education took months and months of study and work and citizen participation from throughout this state to formulate. This comprehensive reform program contains both the course of action. It also contains the means to fund it. It's a carefully balanced program. To remove any element undermines the entire effort and compromises the giant leap forward that this plan could guarantee South Carolina in her future.

There are those who say that we can establish this major and expensive program for quality education without a tax increase. I respectfully but strongly disagree. Let's put our financial circumstances in perspective. Today, we have 3,000 fewer state employees than we had five years ago, when I took office. Since 1980, the growth of the state spending has been substantially less than the growth of personal income, a standard often looked at in terms of measuring growth. Because of recession during the last two and one-half years, we have suffered budget cuts of over $300 million, cuts which have left most state services at a standstill.

We cannot bring about this major investment in education without providing a separate funding source to give it life, to give it strength, to give it permanence. We cannot build quality education, now or for the future, by borrowing from every other recession-strained service in state government. And we cannot fund this major program with debt — either the kind that shows as a deficit as is done on the federal level, or the kind that damages every other state program and assures greater costs in the future.

The improvements outlined in the New Approach are all desperately needed. We must guarantee a long-range commitment to the program and a long-term funding source to support it. If we don't, our commitment to quality education, I am afraid, will ring hollow in homes and communities and the schoolrooms across this state. We must not play politics with the future of our children. Politics will not be the answer to the long-term well-being of South Carolina.

A minister recently told me the tale of a man who was running to catch a train as it left the station. Just as he reached for the railing on the caboose, the train pulled quickly out of reach. Two old codgers, sitting on a bench there, observed his futile efforts. One of them remarked, "He just didn't run fast enough." The other replied, "It wasn't that he didn't run fast enough. He just started too late."

And, unlike that old codger, I don't think it's too late at all for the young people of this great state. But you must decide for yourselves what is important for us to do in 1984, because I assure you that our civilization will surely be measured on that basis. Our reach, my friends, this year must exceed our capacity to grasp. I know it won't be easy; for progress is never easy. As one who began his political career right here in this body, I realize the many pressures everyone of you will face. I can only offer as friendly and concluding advice, the ancient warning found in Proverbs, "Where there is vision, the people of this state will perish." I close by stating this proverb, which is in negative terms, around in positive terms: where there is vision, the people of this state will have a chance to improve themselves, to make this an age of economic development and jobs and progress, a glorious age of reason and enlightenment.

Thank you."

JOINT ASSEMBLY RECEDES

The purposes of the Joint Assembly having been accomplished, the PRESIDENT announced that under the terms of the Concurrent Resolution the Joint Assembly would recede from business.

The Senate accordingly retired to its Chamber.

THE HOUSE RESUMES

At 7:32 P.M. the House resumed, the SPEAKER in the Chair.