

Federalist leaning to monarchical forms and practices. He sent his address, therefore, in writing, accompanied with letters to the presiding officers of the two chambers, in which he justified this departure from custom on the ground of convenience and economy of time. "I have had principal regard," he wrote, "to the convenience of the Legislature, to the economy of their time, to the relief from the embarrassment of immediate answers on subjects not yet fully before them, and to the benefits thence resulting to the public affairs." This explanation deceived no one, unless it was the writer himself. It was thoroughly characteristic of Thomas Jefferson that he often explained his conduct by reasons which were obvious afterthoughts — an unfortunate habit which has led his contemporaries and his unfriendly biographers to charge him with hypocrisy. And it must be admitted that his preference for indirect methods of achieving a purpose exposed him justly to the reproaches of those who liked frankness and plain dealing. It is not unfair, then, to wonder whether the President was not thinking rather of his own convenience when he elected to address Congress by written message, for he was not a ready nor an impressive speaker. At all events, he established a precedent