



Legislative
Service
Bureau

MINUTES

International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

April 15, 1996

Second Meeting for 1995-1996

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Steve Churchill, Chairperson
Senator Bill Fink
Senator Mary Neuhauser
Senator Jack Rife
Senator Elaine Szymoniak
Representative Linda Nelson

MEETING IN BRIEF

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Minutes prepared by Gregg
Halstead, Legal Counsel,
Legislative Service Bureau
(515) 281-3444

Organizational staffing
provided and prepared by
Patty Funaro, Legal Counsel
515-281-3040

Additional staffing by Julie
Livers, Director, Legislative
Information Office
515-281-5129

1. Procedural Business.
2. Discussion Relating to Gift-Giving by the General Assembly.
3. Discussion of the Visit of Russian Parliamentarians.
4. Iowa-Sponsored Reception for Foreign Ambassadors.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Procedural Business.

Call to Order. The second meeting of the International Relations Committee was called to order by Chairperson, Representative Steve Churchill, at 12:10 p.m., Monday, April 15, 1995, in the Speaker's Conference Room, State House, Des Moines, Iowa.



International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

Introduction. Chairperson Churchill welcomed the Committee members and staff to the meeting and introduced Mr. Gregg Halstead, Legal Counsel, Legislative Service Bureau, as a new staff person for the Committee.

Next Meeting Date. The Committee tentatively scheduled the next meeting of the Committee for early June, prior to the June meeting of the Legislative Council.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

2. Discussion Relating to Gift-Giving to Official Visitors by the General Assembly.

a. Legislative Process of Approving a Gift-Giving Policy. The Committee discussed and agreed to formulate a policy relating to the presentation of gifts to international visitors and delegations and to seek approval of the policy by the Legislative Council. The Committee directed staff to draft a proposed policy for consideration by the Committee and to develop a proposed budget. The Committee agreed to review and approve a proposal for a two-year budget for gift-giving at the June meeting and to subsequently seek Legislative Council approval of the proposed budget.

b. Discussion of a Policy of Gift-Giving to International Visitors and Delegations. Chairperson Churchill recommended that gift-giving be commensurate with the type and length of the visit of an international guest. Senator Neuhauser suggested that if one or both houses of the General Assembly had invited the visitor or delegation, the General Assembly should pay for gifts.

◆ **Recommendations.** At Senator Fink's recommendation, the Committee directed staff to draft a gift-giving policy which incorporates the following categories and criteria based upon the differing types of international visitors and visits:

(1) Types of International Visitors.

- ◇ *Elected officials.*
- ◇ *Visitors introduced by the General Assembly.*
- ◇ *Visitors to the State House.*

(2) Types of International Visits.

- ◇ *Elected officials hosted by the General Assembly .*
- ◇ *Elected officials hosted by the executive branch.*
- ◇ *Elected officials hosted by the federal government.*
- ◇ *Elected officials sent to Iowa by their governments.*

◆ **Additional Recommendations.** At the suggestion of Senator Neuhauser, the Committee agreed that the gift-giving policy should also have a category for gift-giving to the entire visiting international delegation as a whole. The Committee also



instructed staff to include protocol relating to official introductions of international visitors to a body and to other legislative and social events.

c. **Discussion of a Policy of Gift-Giving by Members of the General Assembly who are Traveling Abroad.** Chairperson Churchill noted that there is no consensus of the Committee or of the General Assembly on this issue. Unresolved Issues of gift-giving include those relating to finance and coordination between the two houses of the General Assembly and between the majority and minority parties while traveling abroad. Senator Neuhauser suggested that if travel abroad by members of the General Assembly constitutes an official visit in which the members are invited in their capacity as legislators by a foreign government, the General Assembly should pay for gift-giving by those members of the General Assembly.

3. Discussion of the Visit of Russian Parliamentarians.

The Committee noted that the ten-day visit in April, 1996, of Russian Parliamentarians from the Duma (parliament) of the Stavropol Region in Russia to the Iowa Senate was very successful. Senator Neuhauser thanked Ms. Diane Bolender, Director, Legislative Service Bureau, and Ms. Julie Livers, Director, Legislative Information Office, for their work in organizing the visit. Members of the Committee recounted the importance that gift-giving had played in making the visit truly memorable and productive. Senator Szymoniak stressed the importance that the home visits with Senators had played in the Russian parliamentarians' visit.

4. Iowa-Sponsored Reception for Foreign Ambassadors.

Representative Nelson stated that the annual reception for foreign ambassadors hosted by some members of Iowa's congressional delegation will be held in Washington, D.C., on May 13, 1996. Representative Nelson noted that the 1995 reception had been held in Marshalltown, Iowa, and that the reception is an important opportunity to promote Iowa and Iowa-made products to an international audience.

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