



Legislative
Service
Bureau

MINUTES

International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

October 10, 1995

First Meeting for 1995-1996

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Steven Churchill, Chairperson

Senator Dennis Black
Senator William Fink
Senator Derryl McLaren
Senator Mary Neuhauser

Senator Jack Rife
Senator Elaine Szymoniak
Representative Tom Baker
Representative Linda Nelson

MEETING IN BRIEF

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1. Procedural Business.
 2. Review of Committee History.
 3. Update on Interest Group Activities.
 4. Discussion of Gifts, Travel, and Legislator Participation in International Affairs.
 5. Discussion of Committee Status and Goals.
 6. Next Meeting Date.
 7. Written Materials Filed with the Legislative Service Bureau.
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COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Procedural Business.

Call to Order. The first meeting of the International Relations Committee was called to order by Acting Chairperson, Representative Steven Churchill, at 10:15 a.m., Tuesday, October 10, 1995, in Committee Room 118, State House, Des Moines, Iowa. Acting



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Chairperson Churchill noted that Representatives Chuck Larson and Beverly Nelson had phoned in their regrets at not being able to attend the meeting.

Recognition of Chairperson. Acting Chairperson Churchill welcomed the members and guests to the meeting and noted that the Chairperson of the Committee is appointed by the Legislative Council and that during the 1995 Session of the General Assembly, the House of Representatives member serves as Chairperson.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

2. Review of Committee History.

Senator Szymoniak noted that the Committee had not met formally since 1993 and that the members had never defined the role of the Committee. Senator McLaren added that he and Senator Rife are the only two original members of the Committee still serving on the Committee and that the Committee had originally been formed out of the necessity to establish a formal group to greet international visitors.

Ms. Julie Livers, Director, Legislative Information Office, provided information regarding the visits of international guests to the Capitol in the previous three years.

3. Update on Interest Group Activities.

Chairperson Churchill recognized members of the audience to provide updates on the current activities of their organizations:

a. Iowa Sister States Program. Ms. Sarah Lande, Executive Director, Iowa Sister States, explained that the Iowa Sister States program was developed in 1985 to facilitate exchange among leaders in education, agriculture, sports, business, media, and culture. The nonprofit corporation currently recognizes six sister states. Ms. Lande noted that the organization is in the process of developing a long-term strategic plan, that the criteria for selection of additional sister states in the future will include both cultural and economic development elements, and that additional private funding is being sought for future expenses. Ms. Lande encouraged the Committee to develop a budget which includes travel as a means of learning about other cultures and of understanding the economies of the developing countries that will become our competitors.

b. Iowa Council for International Understanding. Ms. Ann Schodde, Executive Director, Iowa Council for International Understanding (CIU), noted that the CIU has been operating since 1938 and that the mission of the CIU has changed over the years. Today the primary objectives of CIU are bringing international visitors to Iowa and assisting Iowans in understanding the world around them. Ms. Schodde noted that the international visitors are usually high-level officials and that last year 60 countries were represented by these visitors. In addition to providing translation services in 35 languages, the CIU is currently concentrating on assisting businesses and on youth-related activities. In the area of business, the CIU is assisting businesses in educating their employees, who work in the international arena, about various cultures and is developing a database to record agreements with international visitors to Iowa to establish linkages for visits by Iowans to other countries. In the area of youth-related activities, the CIU is continuing involvement in the World Prize Institute, the exchange



program through the Peace Institute, and is sponsoring a conference on January 19 and 20, 1996, to bring international students visiting Iowa together to share their experiences. Ms. Schodde encouraged the Committee to be open to international guests and emphasized the need for an ongoing entity to discuss and respond to international concerns.

c. Agriculture International Trade Section. Mr. Steven Pederson, Agricultural Marketing Bureau Chief, Administrative Division, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS), noted that the International Trade Section is not currently fully staffed and recognized Mr. Harold Hommes, to provide information regarding International Trade Section programs. Mr. Hommes noted that the International Trade Section was established in 1987 and became fully staffed in 1989. Mr. Hommes described the various programs of the Section including quality grains, value-added foods, livestock and seedstock genetics, and general assistance activities. He noted that the current focus of the Section is Mexico, but that future activities will target the Asian and Latin American markets. He noted that the Section's budget has eroded over the past five years and that the restricted budget has limited the activities of the Section. Mr. Hommes distributed a folder of information to the members of the Committee, a copy of which is on file with the Legislative Service Bureau.

d. Economic Development International Division. Mr. Mike Doyle, Director, International Division, Department of Economic Development (IDED), discussed the three areas of emphasis of the Division: trade promotion, education, and attraction of investment. Mr. Doyle noted that the emphasis for the coming year by the Division will be expansion of overseas representation and filling in the gaps left by the termination of the Iowa International Development Foundation which, among other activities, sought grants for international trade efforts. Mr. Doyle encouraged the Committee to advocate for all things international, to educate themselves and other elected officials about the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and to begin formulating a plan as a group to take an active role in the international arena. Mr. Doyle also noted that IDALS and IDED have worked together to designate areas of involvement so as not to duplicate their efforts. Chairperson Churchill noted that the respective appropriations subcommittees will review this question in the coming session of the General Assembly and that with regard to NAFTA, a conference is scheduled for January 1996 at Iowa State University to review this topic.

4. Discussion of Gifts, Travel, and Legislator Participation in International Affairs.

Gifts. Ms. Julie Livers, Director, Legislative Information Office, discussed the current status of the presentation of gifts to international visitors. She noted that there is currently no existing budget for these items and no rules for presentation of gifts to international visitors. She provided a number of suggestions for gifts, including paperweights, decorative boxes, candies, an afghan, pins, and the state flag.



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Former state senator Jim Riordan commented on the importance of building linkages with other countries and noted that the work that he and others had performed during his tenure in the General Assembly has resulted in ongoing trade and cultural exchanges.

Senator Black provided information regarding his international travels and noted the importance of international involvement and exchanges. He stressed the importance of gift giving and the need for Iowans to be much more involved globally.

5. Discussion of Committee Status and Goals.

Goals. Following discussion, the Committee agreed upon the following goals:

a. Actively involving the General Assembly in international relations, including development of a formal protocol for the recognition of international visitors to the Capitol, including presentation of visitors to the General Assembly, receptions, and presentation of gifts, and the development of rules regarding travel by legislators to and contacts with other countries.

b. Education of legislators and others regarding international agreements such as NAFTA and GATT and regarding the cultures of international guests.

c. Coordination with the executive branch and with other agencies and outside organizations in the international relations area.

d. Development of a budget to accomplish the goals of the Committee, including funds for expenses related to presentation of gifts, travel, and translation of materials.

Recommendations. The Committee recommended the following:

a. Establishment of ad hoc groups to review the various goals and to report back to the full Committee at the next meeting to be held in January 1996. Senator Neuhauser volunteered to work with Senator McLaren and with the office of the Attorney General and IDED to organize a seminar regarding NAFTA and GATT. Senator Fink stated that he would contact Representative Beverly Nelson to develop protocol and procedures for the presentation of international visitors in each of the chambers.

b. Chairperson Churchill and Senator Szymoniak agreed to review the area of gifts with Ms. Livers and to submit a request to the Legislative Council for a start-up budget for official gifts.

c. All members of the Committee were asked to review the issue of travel by legislators and to report their suggestions at the next meeting of the Committee.

d. The Committee suggested that a copy of the minutes of the meeting and the recommendations of the Committee be provided to the Legislative Council at the Council's next meeting.

6. Next Meeting Date.

The Committee agreed to schedule a meeting after the beginning of the next session of the General Assembly, although no specific date or time was scheduled.



7. Written Materials on File with the Legislative Service Bureau.

- ♦ Iowa Grown For You folder provided by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, International Trade Section.
- ♦ Marketing Iowa To The World brochure provided by the Iowa Department of Economic Development, International Division.
- ♦ Background information provided to the members of the Committee by the Legislative Service Bureau.

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