

our state, and they were being hosted and they were having a large dinner. And the host of that dinner had some presents for the Chinese delegation. And Secretary of State Beermann asked him what the presents were, because he noticed all these big boxes around. And the host said, well, I bought all these hats for these Chinese guests, I'm going to award them these hats, or I'm going to give them these hats after the dinner is over. And Senator (sic) Beermann opened up one of the box...or Secretary of State Beermann opened up one of the boxes and the hats were green. Now green hats, to us, may not mean very much, you know, it might not be very significant at all, they're just another color. But in China I'm told that the color green is like the scarlet letter. The color green is something that you do not wear, it's a...and, if it is worn by someone, it is a mark of condemnation. And here we were, here was the host going to give out green caps to the Chinese delegation because he was not aware and had not been made aware of what the customs and the culture of China was like. That would be something that would never happen, if we had a Protocol Office. Other things, I'm told that we've received gifts from various countries. There is a large vase, Secretary of State Beermann had in his office, and he said that the Governor has a vase just like that, it was given a few years ago before this Governor was in office, beautiful vase as a gift. There has never been a thank you note sent back to the delegation that gave that gift to the Governor. No one has ever returned the favor or returned the gift or sent a thank you for it. Other things, I guess I'm told that the Irish flag, for example, if you put it up one way, it stands for the country of Ireland. If you reverse it, by accident, it's the flag of another country. If you hang it from top to bottom, that is done only at funerals. And, if you are not aware of these things, if you don't have a Protocol Officer or a Protocol Office being aware of these things, you make these kind of mistakes, embarrassments that just are inappropriate for people that are visiting our state. When we talk about \$80,000 I'm always curious about the funding. This has become symbolic, I guess, because it's the first A bill. We are passing along lots of bills. As Senator Johnson mentioned, we're forgiving a \$37 million tax that could have been collected on the access charges on the phone companies. I believe that is a good bill. I plan on voting for it. But, if you are talking about funding, how about that? We just passed a bill the other day that allowed...or advanced a bill, I should say, that allows newspapers to charge a fee for public notices, a higher fee. It's a good bill. It's going to cost our state, I think, in the