

REFLECTIONS ON THE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNORSHIP  
BY  
LOU WANGBERG



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# viewpoints

## A job for Lt. Gov. Lou Wangberg

No task facing the 1979 legislative session is more pressing and more complex than that of revising the system of state aids to elementary and secondary education.

Many school districts have very serious problems that need immediate solution and have little local autonomy within which to act. Answers depend on legislative action and patchwork corrections will not do the job.

Among the most seriously affected districts are the suburban metropolitan districts. Fortunately, the Association of Metropolitan School Districts, which includes Edina and 20 other districts, has produced an excellent study presenting our local school district problems and making 12 recommendations relative to school enrollment decline, need for higher basic aid, problems of regional cost differentials, funding for mandated programs and several more, each important. The central cities and every area of the state have their own difficulties with the present structure.

We believe solutions are not going to come out of

the normal legislative process of considering a host of individual bills dealing with different aspects of education needs and problems. We believe a special task force should be established by the Governor to tackle the issue on an overall coordinated basis. We believe Lt. Gov. Lou Wangberg, who is an educator, is ideally suited to head that group.

Geo. Rossman, Grand Rapids publisher who chaired a milestone state aid study in the early '60s and has a wealth of knowledge and experience in the field, would be a good member. Lorraine Clugg, Hopkins board member and chairperson of the Association of Metropolitan School Districts, would be another.

If legislators wanted to serve, it would be splendid as the ultimate decision is for the legislature to make. However, a select group of people with no legislative responsibility might have a better chance to come up with a comprehensive solution and by constant communication with legislators, one that might find ready legislative approval. Certainly it would be a way to put Wangberg's specialized knowledge and skills to work.

The office of Lieutenant Governor has its roots early in our governmental tradition. The office was existent in each of the 13 original colonies. Further impetus was given to the development of the position when the Vice Presidency was created.

The most practical definition of Lt. Governor is that of an official, elected statewide, who is next in line of succession to the governorship. This definition includes some Secretaries of State. It does not include Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Tennessee, and West Virginia. Those five states bestow the succession responsibility upon the President of the Senate who is not elected statewide. Any similarity between the operations of the other 45 states is mostly accidental. Five principles appear to govern the Lieutenant Governorship:

- A. There should be a Lt. Governor to fill a vacant governorship or pick up the duties during incapacity or absence.
- B. The Lt. Governor should be sufficiently involved in the governmental process to have adequate knowledge to assist the Governor or to assume his duties if necessary.
- C. The Lt. Governor should be elected statewide.
- D. The Lt. Governor should be full time.
- E. The Lt. Governor's office should be adequately staffed.

Currently there are four models for the operation of the office of Lieutenant Governor in the various states.

1. The Traditional Plan: Under this model, used in half of the states, the Lt. Governor has limited duties and presides over the Senate

2. The Legislative Plan: This is used where the Governor is constitutionally weak (Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas.) The Lt. Governor has legislative responsibilities that go far beyond presiding over the Senate.
3. The Administrative Plan: Under this system, the official who is first in line of succession is an independently nominated and elected statewide official. Examples include Arizona, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming, where the Secretary of State fills this responsibility.
4. The Executive Plan: This approach is utilized in Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana and our own Minnesota. It seems best adapted to states which concentrate a high degree of Executive Branch authority in the Governor and where there is a strong and viable two-party system. It contemplates a close working relationship between the Governor and Lt. Governor, with the latter undertaking, for at least a significant portion of the time, those areas and assignments expressly designated by the Governor.

Formerly, the Lt. Governor presided over the Minnesota State Senate. A Constitutional Amendment ratified in November, 1972, permitted the Senate to choose its own presiding officer. Consequently, the duties of the Lt. Governor were changed and he became a full time official of the Executive Branch.

The job description, as laid out in 1971-73, during the first term of Rudy Perpich and before the Constitutional Amendment, is outlined in Appendix A. Appendix B is the job description during 1973-75 after

the Constitutional Amendment. Appendix C shows the job during 1975-77 and reflects the Bicentennial activities. Under Alec Olson during 1977-79 the job description has included:

1. State-Federal relations.
2. State-Local relations.
3. Chairman of the Capitol Area Architectural Planning Board.
4. Member of the Executive Council.
5. Member of the Rural Development Council.
6. Ex-Officio member of the State Arts Board.
7. Ex-Officio member of the Indian Affairs Intertribal Board.
8. Governor's liason to the Minnesota State Retirement System.
9. Governor's liason officer to the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources.
10. State Employees Suggestion Board.
11. Credit Union Advisory Council.
12. State Zoological Board.
13. Upper Mississippi River Basin Commission.
14. Great Lakes Commission.
15. Mississippi River Parkway Commission.
16. Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Area Commission.

There seems to have been an attempt to "manufacture" assignments for the office in order to justify the expansion to full time. It would appear that neither Rudy Perpich nor Alec Olson were an integral part of the Governor's office or function. In fact, our inquiries to a number of these boards indicates many of them never heard of Alec Olson. The activities included are, of course, important but lack the substance that helps the Governor make stronger decisions, nor do they offer deep

or broad training to prepare the Lt. Governor for a future role of substance. In order to earn a posture of importance in State Government one must have direct authority to deal in a major way with budget, hiring, legislation or policy. Neither Perpich or Olson had a major role in any of those areas.

There are several current activities assigned to the Lt. Governor that either cannot or should not be considered for reassignment.

They include:

1. Chairman of the Capitol Area Architectural Planning Board  
(Assigned by Statute).

2. Member of the Executive Council (Assigned by Statute).

Currently, I have no way of evaluating the appropriateness of including the following activities within the realm of Lt. Governor.

1. Member of the Rural Development Council.
2. Ex-Officio member of the State Arts Council.
3. Ex-Officio member of the Indian Affairs Intertribal Board.
4. Governor's liason to the Minnesota State Retirement System.
5. Governor's liason to the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources.
6. State Employee Suggestion Board.
7. Credit Union Advisory Council.
8. State Zoological Board.
9. Upper Mississippi River Basin Committee.
10. Great Lakes Commission (Note: This is different from the Upper Great Lakes Regional Commission).
11. Mississippi River Parkway Commission.
12. Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Area Commission.

I believe these responsibilities should be slated for immediate assignment to the Lt. Governor and then reviewed after a short period (2-4 months) of evaluation. This would allow attendance at their meetings and involvement with their functions.

In the existing job description, there are two areas that deserve particular attention. The first is that of Federal-State relations. My own background is so lacking in understanding of Washington, D.C., and your own so extensive, that it does not make sense to continue this function in the Lt. Governor's office. This is particularly true since the Washington function is designed primarily to represent the interests of the Governor. The second area is that of State-Local relations. I believe very little has been done in this important relationship. In this case, my own experience with local government being broader, there is an opportunity for the Lt. Governor to develop a major thrust for the administration which is consistent with your own priorities.

In terms of new initiatives which should be examined and spelled out, I would personally express an interest in evaluating the appropriateness of my being your personal liason to:

1. Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board.
2. Upper Great Lakes Regional Commission.

Both of these operate in sensitive areas where we want to make a significant positive impact.

The Lt. Governor should be considered a member of your staff and be included in your top level staff meetings.

The Lt. Governor should be included in all Cabinet meetings with department and agency heads.

You have a proposal to create a separate Department of Tourism.

This will diminish the Economic Development Department somewhat. In the state of Indiana, the Lt. Governor is responsible for economic development and agriculture. Their model may not fit Minnesota, however, in light of the proposed change. We should seriously examine its problems and possibilities.

With my background in education, I would be interested in and would welcome special involvement in the problems incumbent in this area. However, I do not want to be narrowed to one area only. Furthermore, the strong interest you have in the problems of this area will allow me freedom to expand my interests in other directions.

The ceremonial responsibilities of government are important even if they do not always seem to be. I enjoy these types of activities and believe I can represent yourself and the state well. My only concern is that they be coupled with something more substantive.

If our personal relationship develops as I believe it can and will, the most significant role I can play during the next years will be simply as personal counsel. This is a nebulous area at best and difficult to incorporate in to a job description because it is so personal.

Currently, the Lt. Governor is housed in eight rooms on the ground floor and first floor in the extreme Southeast corner of the Capitol. These rooms are on loan from the House of Representatives. They are on the opposite end of the building from the office of the Governor. This imposes a limitation because of the physical isolation from the Governor, but more importantly, it represents a symbolic separation that will cause some problems. The location is not entirely unworkable, since the distance between the two offices is only a 90 second walk away, but we should attempt to see if an office



space of equal size, but more convenient, can be found. In this case we need to occupy the space and evaluate it before we can move further. Informal discussion has indicated Perpich may have been looking at the Hill Mansion as an Executive Office Building.

The four primary areas of influence in state government are the areas of a) budget, b) legislation, c) hiring and d) policy. Failure to have a perceived role of significance in one or more of the four areas means that one's role in state government is minor rather than major.

It has been indirectly fortunate that I chaired the budget hearings because I not only learned a great deal about state government, but apparently the state grapevine has indentified this role as having greater significance than its reality. A specific task assignment of this kind from time to time may be a useful role for me to play. It is hard for me to envision if there is a continuing role in this area, but we should explore it.

I am uncertain yet about how you will be handling legislation. I want to play a helpful role in formulating the legislation you may wish to pursue. I also think I can be helpful in working with legislators. In the past the Governor has apparently testified rarely before the Legislature. We should discuss the appropriateness and effectiveness of my speaking on behalf of the administration from time to time.

As an administrator, I developed special skills in the area of hiring that go beyond the normal. Because of the great pressure of time and division of responsibilities, I have played only a periferal role in this area during the transition. However, this is an area of strength that I would like to explore in depth as we define the Lt. Governor role. Time and basic structure already in place may make this a difficult area to work in, but again, it needs to be analyzed.

The final area of policy is the most nebulous of all, but in the long run the most important. Your confidence in me is the only basis for my involvement in policy development. That confidence cannot be forced, it must develop naturally and be built upon mutual trust. I believe my judgement and perspectives are such that I both recognize my potential and my limitations. I can be involved in this activity only through your daily invitation to share in the problem areas as they arise. This is an activity that I can most easily be shut out of by staff and the departments unless a special effort is made to include me.

The fundamental issues connected with the office of Lt. Governor are:

1. The federal liason should be transferred to the office of the Governor.
2. Is there merit in expanding the role of Lt. Governor in liason with local governmental units?
3. Is economic development an appropriate function for the Lt. Governor?
4. Which Boards and Commissioner currently assigned to the Lt. Governor are "trash" assignments and which are meaningful?
5. Can specific responsibilities which deal with a) policy, b) budget, c) hiring, or d) legislation, be identified as substantive and continuing?
6. Is there a better arrangement for housing the office of the Lt. Governor?

In summary, it is hard to be precise about the job description for the Lt. Governor until two things happen. First, there needs to be an analysis of ongoing responsibilities. This will take several weeks. Secondly, we need some extended dialogue about the whole philosophy of government with the intent of engaging in some meaningful goal setting.

During the interim, however, a tentative job outline should be laid out. I would suggest the following for consideration:

1. The Lt. Governor is first in line of succession when a vacancy occurs in the office of Governor. He may assume the duties of Governor any time the Governor is absent from the state.
2. To discharge ministerial and ceremonial duties as the Governor may designate from time to time, and to represent the Governor at public events and presentations upon the request of the Governor.
3. Member of the Executive Council.
4. Chairman of the Capital Area Architectural Planning Board.
5. State-Local relations.
6. Member of the Rural Development Council.
7. Ex-officio member of the State Arts Board.
8. Ex-officio member of the Indian Affairs Intertribal Board.
9. Governor's liason to the State Retirement System.
10. Governor's liason officer to the Legislation Commission on Minnesota Resources.
11. State Employee Suggestion Board.
12. Credit Union Advisory Council.
13. State Zoological Board.
14. Great Lakes Commission.
15. Mississippi River Parkway Commission.
16. Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Area Commission.
17. Upper Mississippi River Basin Commission.
18. Upper Great Lakes Regional Commission.
19. Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board.
20. When called upon, to advise and counsel the Governor on matters of policy, legislation, budget, personnel or other matters.
21. To serve as a member of the Cabinet.

Many of the things you do as Governor will be more important symbolically than substantively. This is particularly true of the Lt. Governorship. If you can move in some significant way to establish the importance of the office as a compliment to your own responsibilities, then others will accept it for the entire term. Your challenge is to make the symbolism and substance come together.

## APPENDIX A

During the 1971-73 term of Rudy Perpich, prior to the changes in the office, the duties of the Lieutenant Governor were described as:

The Lt. Governor is first in line of succession when a vacancy occurs in the office of Governor. He may assume the duties of Governor any time the Governor is absent from the state.

When a vacancy occurs in the office of Lt. Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate becomes the Lt. Governor.

The Lt. Governor is ex-officio president of the State Senate during the legislative sessions.

A bill enacted into law in 1971 enables the Governor to delegate to the Lt. Governor such powers, duties, responsibilities and functions as are prescribed by law to be performed by the Governor, subject to his control, by filing a written order specifying such delegation with the Secretary of State; provided however, that no power, duty, responsibility or function imposed upon the Governor by the Constitution shall be delegated by such written order or otherwise.

## APPENDIX B

During the 1973-75 term of Rudy Perpich and after the Constitutional changes in the office, the duties were described as including:

The Lt. Governor is first in line of succession when a vacancy occurs in the office of Governor. He may assume the duties of Governor any time the Governor is absent from the state.

When a vacancy occurs in the office of Lt. Governor, the last elected presiding officer of the Senate becomes the Lt. Governor.

A bill enacted in 1971 enables the Governor to delegate to the Lt. Governor such powers, duties, responsibilities and functions as are prescribed by law to be performed by the Governor, subject to his control, by filing a written order specifying such delegation with the Secretary of State; provided, however, that no power, duty, responsibility or function imposed upon the Governor by the Constitution shall be delegated by such written order or otherwise.

The Governor issued Executive Order No. 53, filed with the Secretary of State, January 12, 1973, which delegated the following duties and responsibilities to the Office of Lieutenant Governor:

1. To coordinate and direct selected reorganizations and administration modifications of the operations of State government recommended by the Loaned Executive Action Program (Executive Order #18, March 28, 1972).
2. To aid in the implementation of the provisions of the Federal Rural Development Act of 1972 and to serve as the Governor's representative on the Rural Development Council.
3. To serve as the Chairman of the Human Services Council (Executive Order #45, Oct. 26, 1972).
4. To discharge ministerial and ceremonial duties as the Governor may designate from time to time, and to represent the Governor at public events and presentations upon the request of the Governor.
5. To develop, coordinate, and, wherever possible, implement a systematic state program to preserve and enhance the aesthetic environment in Minnesota.
6. To serve as ex-officio member on the State Arts Council and the Indian Affairs Commission.
7. To serve as a member of the State Employees Insurance Benefit Board and the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission.
8. To serve as the Governor's liason officer to certain boards, agencies and commissions as listed below:
  - a. Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Commission.
  - b. State Zoological Board.
  - c. Minnesota Resources Commission.
  - d. Experimental City Authority.

e. Public Employee Groups

State Employees Merit Award Board  
Highway Patrolmen's Retirement Association  
Public Employees Retirement Association  
Minnesota State Retirement System  
Teachers Retirement Association  
State Police Officers Retirement Board  
Credit Union Advisory Council

f. Interstate Development and Cooperation Activities

Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Tidewater Commission  
Great Lakes Commission  
Mississippi River Parkway Commission  
Upper Mississippi and St. Croix River Improvement  
Commission  
Minnesota Commission on Interstate Cooperation  
Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Area Commission  
Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Area Technical  
Advisory Committee  
Minnesota-South Dakota Boundary Waters Commission

9. To make such periodic reports to the Governor as he may request regarding the discharge of the duties and responsibilities above.

## APPENDIX C

There was a slight alteration during the 1975-77 term which reflected the Bicentennial activities.

The duties and responsibilities of the Lt. Governor are as follows:

1. Chairman of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Comm.
2. Member of the Executive Council.
3. Ex-officio member of the State Arts Council.
4. Honorary Chairman of the Minnesota American Revolution Bicentennial Commission. As Honorary Chairman, the Lt. Governor promotes and encourages Minnesota's observances and activities commemorating the historic events associated with the American Revolution Bicentennial celebration.

He contributes to the program for commemorating the Bicentennial on a statewide basis through his involvement in Bicentennial flag and certificate presentations designating individual Minnesota communities as Bicentennial communities.

Furthermore, as part of the overall program of the Minnesota American Revolution Bicentennial Commission to enhance and preserve the esthetic environment of Minnesota, the Lt. Governor develops, coordinates, and whenever possible, implements a systematic state program for that purpose. He provides stimulation and assistance to local subdivisions of government so that they may take advantage of presently available authority and resources for the following:

- a. razing of dilapidated buildings which are unsightly and a fire and health hazard.
  - b. removal of abandoned motor vehicles.
  - c. screening or removal of junkyards which do not conform to state law as defined by M.S. 161.42.
  - d. removal of other manifestations of visual pollution in the state
5. Chairman of the Iron Range Interpretative Center Program.
6. Governor's liason officer to the Minnesota State Retirement System.
7. Governor's liason officer to the Rural Development Council.
8. To make such periodic reports to the Governor as he may request regarding the discharge of the duties and responsibilities above.

The Lt. Governor is first in line when a vacancy occurs in the office of Governor. In case the Governor is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the same devolves on the Lt. Governor.

When a vacancy occurs in the office of Lt. Governor, the last elected presiding officer of the Senate becomes the Lt. Governor.



In order to make the office of Lt. Governor more meaningful and productive, a bill was enacted in 1971 enabling the Governor to delegate to the Lt. Governor such powers, duties, responsibilities, and functions as are prescribed by law to be performed by the Governor, subject to his control, by filing a written order specifying such delegation with the Secretary of State, provided, however, that no power, duty, responsibility, or function imposed upon the Governor by the Constitution shall be delegated by such written order or otherwise.