

Letter to ASCL Membership

December 20, 2010

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you to all of you for this opportunity to serve as the President of our Society. It is a great honor and pleasure. As is the custom, this letter will provide a brief update on events relating to the Society and a call for certain specific help.

The XVIIIth International Congress of Comparative Law: The International Congress held this summer in Washington, D.C., was a great success and our Society is riding high on the reputation and good will it brought us. We cannot thank enough the host law schools at American University, Georgetown University, and George Washington University respectively, or the planning committee David V. Snyder of American (chair); Susan L. Karamanian of George Washington (vice-chair); James V. Feinerman and Franz Werro of Georgetown; Fernanda G. Nicola and Jennifer Dabson of American; Karen B. Brown of George Washington; and Mathias Reimann of the University of Michigan for the work they did in planning this very successful and innovative congress. George Bermann, as President of the International Academy of Comparative Law (IACL), has posted a detailed and laudatory review of the main achievements of the Congress as part of his President's Message on the IACL website, <http://www.iuscomparatum.org/AIDC>. I commend his account to you.

The International Academy of Comparative Law: The IACL had its business meeting on the closing day of the Congress and relected George Bermann of Columbia University as President, and Jürgen Basidow of Germany as Secretary-General for terms lasting until the next Congress in four years. See George Bermann's President's Message listed above for further details about the IACL meeting.

The Society's 2010 Annual Meeting: Our Society's annual meeting was also held in conjunction with the International Congress. At that meeting the following people were elected to the offices indicated for a two-year term, 2010 to 2012:

Honorary President: Symeon C. Symeonides of Willamette
President: John C. Reitz of University of Iowa
Vice President: H. Patrick Glenn of McGill University
Secretary: Alison W. Conner from Hawaii
Executive Committee: Francesca Bignami from George Washington and Hannah Buxbaum from Indiana

Patrick Glenn was also elected as the Parliamentarian, but in view of his election as Vice-President, he relinquished that office and I have appointed David Gerber of Chicago-Kent in his place as Parliamentarian in order to keep up the membership of the Executive Committee. The complete minutes of the Society's meeting are posted on the Society's website, <http://www.comparativelaw.org/>, under Organization/Organizational Documents/Minutes.

Sad News: I am sorry to have to announce that our long-time colleague Courtland Peterson from the University of Colorado passed away in November after a long struggle against cancer. The Executive Board adopted the following resolution and I sent a copy of the resolution to his wife, Sue Peterson:

The Executive Board of the American Society of Comparative Law notes with sorrow the passing of our good colleague and friend Courtland Peterson, Professor Emeritus of the University of Colorado and long-time stalwart of the Society. Professor Peterson's teaching and scholarship concentrated on conflicts of law. He gave tirelessly of himself for the good of the Society. He long provided a steady voice on the Executive Board where his fairness and gentleness were especially valued. His long tenure as Treasurer of the Society, from 1980 to 1989, reflected the widespread recognition among the Society membership of Professor Peterson's evident probity, as did his subsequent

offices as Honorary President from 1996 to 1998 and as Parliamentarian from 1998 to 2006. At the annual meetings, his was always a particularly welcoming face for newer, younger participants. He will be greatly missed. On behalf of the whole Society, the Executive Board extends our deepest sympathies to his wife Sue and family.

I will ask the Prize Committee to consider naming the next scholarly prize in Court's honor.

Now we come to the requests for help.

Committees: The first call for help has to do with the Society's many committees. A full list of our current committees is available on the Society's website under People/Committees. If you are interested in serving on any of the committees, please let me know. Some of the currently listed members may wish to be relieved of their committee assignments and I think it is important to involve other members who have not yet served in such capacities, so I would very much like your (self)-nominations.

In addition, in accordance with the decision at the 2010 annual meeting to authorize the expenditure of funds to redesign the Society's website, I am going to create a new ad hoc committee on website design. The committee will work with the Executive Board to develop a list of specifications for the redesign and hire a website designer. This matter needs attention as soon as possible. If you have any interest in working on this project, and especially if you have any experience in working on website design (not necessarily actually doing it, but working with those who carry out the design), please let me know by the start of next semester. We also need a new Webmaster for the Society, so please let me know if you would be interested in serving in that capacity.

Future Annual Meetings: The next annual meeting will be held at McGeorge School of Law, in Sacramento, California, from Thursday evening, October 20, through Saturday, October 22, 2011. Please note those dates on your calendars for 2011. The title for the main academic sessions of the meeting will be "Teaching Comparative Law." The Program Committee will be working actively with Frank Gervutz and his colleagues at McGeorge in the spring semester to prepare for this meeting.

The 2010 annual meeting of the Society also accepted my invitation to come to Iowa for the 2012 annual meeting. The primary academic topic for the meeting will be "Judicial Review of Public Action: Between Promise and Chagrin." At the 2011 meeting, we will entertain proposals for the 2013 meeting and beyond, so I encourage you to start thinking about your proposals if you are interested.

The winter holiday season is upon us. I wish you all a joyous celebration, some well-deserved rest, and a great beginning to the new year, during which it will be time once again to press forward on the Society's business on many fronts.

Sincerely yours,

John C. Reitz

President