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Finding Your Public Voice

A Media Guidebook

United States Information Agency

FINDING
YOUR
PUBLIC
VOICE

*A
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September 4, 1996

Ms. Melanne Verveer
Deputy Assistant to the President
and Deputy Chief of Staff to the First Lady
The White House

Dear Melanne:

I regret very much that I was unable to attend the White House meeting with Mrs. Clinton on follow-up to the Eastern Europe trip. I would have liked to recommend a role for her in promoting civic education.

USIA and the Department of Education have launched a significant initiative in cooperation with Eastern Europeans and educators in the former Soviet Union to develop textbooks and teaching materials, train teachers, and introduce new curricula in the field of civic education.

This is a genuine partnership -- American educators have learned as much as they have taught. It has a broad and enthusiastic American constituency. It is not expensive -- certainly not in terms of the benefits provided. It is seriously and gratefully received by the democrats of the region. The Western Europeans are involved.

The group of American teachers returning from Bosnia with whom the First Lady met last month were part of this program.

If there is some possibility that she will be returning to the region, or if she has any other interest, I would like very much to have the opportunity to suggest some practical ways she might be involved. I know it could be immensely helpful.

I attach a brief report about the program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Penn", is located below the word "Sincerely,".

Penn Kemble
Deputy Director

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CIVITAS: AN INTERNATIONAL CIVIC EDUCATION EXCHANGE PROGRAM



To Strengthen Civic Education And Civic Culture

Civitas: An International Civic Education Exchange Program is a cooperative project of a consortium of leading organizations in civic education in the United States and other participating nations. The program, administered by the Center for Civic Education, is supported by the United States Department of Education and is being conducted with the cooperation of the United States Information Agency and its affiliated offices in participating nations in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (EEN/NIS).

The program enables civic educators from the United States and the EEN/NIS to learn from and assist each other in improving education for democracy. The improvement of democratic education is essential to the development of a healthy civic culture and sustenance of vigorous democratic institutions.

The Civitas exchange program is an initial activity of *Civitas*, an informal international network of individuals and organizations being formed to strengthen civic education and constitutional democracy

throughout the world. The formation of the *Civitas* network was initiated in June 1995 at the **Civitas@Prague** conference sponsored by the United States Information Agency. At the close of that conference participants representing over 50 nations signed a declaration pledging to "create and maintain a worldwide network that will make civic education a higher priority on the international agenda."