

**United States  
Information  
Agency**

Washington, D.C. 20547

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**USIA**

Dr. Matthew Meselson  
7 Divinity Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Dr. Meselson,

Having finally recovered from both Mardi Gras and an overloaded "in" box, I'd like to follow up on my brief contact with you following your talk at last month's AAAS meeting.

Your well-crafted remarks on "Chemical Weapons and Chemical Defense: Implications for Arms Control" were right on target and effectively delivered. In these heady days of pro-democracy revolutionary euphoria in Europe, it is too easy to forget that elsewhere there are many regimes actively developing chemical weapons programs to achieve their clearly undemocratic goals. As an Army officer, I am well aware of the effects of these weapons and applaud the efforts of those who wish to limit their use. Perhaps one day we shall have the ability to wage the "non-lethal war" to which you alluded in your remarks (I'll have my dice ready).

I'm delighted that you appear to be interested in the American Participant (or AmPart) program run by USIA. I don't remember if you said that you were familiar with the program, so let me now provide further details:

The AmPart program supports USIA's role as the U.S. government's public relations agency by sending abroad highly-qualified speakers to address the host country's decisionmaking and opinion-molding population. The topics addressed by these speakers reflect those areas considered by our government to be important to our diplomatic efforts and are tailored to the existing bilateral relationship with the host country.

Although more narrowly focused than electronic or print media, the AmPart program can achieve extraordinary results because of the personal contact our speakers can provide. Equally important is the fact that an AmPart need not always be in total agreement with official U.S. policy, as long as the speaker explains and critiques that policy in a responsible manner. That we are willing to pay someone to do so speaks eloquently of our democratic ideals and is a powerful message in itself.

The process begins when each of our overseas posts develops a "country plan", a list of topics which forms the basis for our recruiting efforts throughout the year. In my area, topics

generally concern East-West relations, NATO, arms control, U.S. foreign policy, and SDI. Most of my programming takes place in Europe, as the topics might indicate, but our coverage is worldwide, with interest in U.S. security policy spanning the globe from Finland to Fiji.

After finding an expert on one of the above themes who has the time and ability to speak before our prospective audiences and who has given us an idea of his or her period of availability, we send a cable to the appropriate overseas posts offering the speaker's services against a specific project number in each post. The offer cable would describe your background and list relevant publications to give the posts a better idea of your approach to the topic. It would also let our posts know when you would be available for programming, so that they could see how you might fit into their schedule (sometimes a speaker who is otherwise "right" for a given topic has to be declined simply because the timing is bad for the post).

We give the posts about two weeks to respond to the offer, and then begin negotiating the programming dates with those posts able to accept your services. Posts vary in their ability to absorb an AmPart, and a stop could be for as many as 6-8 days in countries where there are many constituent sub-posts, such as West Germany, Canada, Yugoslavia, or India, or could be as brief as one day spent in the capital city. If the total number of days requested, plus travel time, exceeds the amount of time you have available, your own preferences come into play as we pare down the itinerary to fit your constraints.

If you are given a Full Grant, or one in which the agency is paying all expenses, we would normally expect you to give us at least ten program days to be spent in at least two countries. However, if you are already planning to travel and are funded by Harvard or another source, you can receive a Partial Grant and add any number of program days and countries; your additional expenses will be covered by USIA. A Full Grant can be used only every three years, whereas a Partial Grant can be used more frequently. In addition to paying for all required transportation, the agency also pays per diem at the prevailing government rate and an additional sum for miscellaneous expenses such as cabfare or similar administrative requirements. We also pay a \$100 honorarium for each program day, i.e., a day on which an "official" activity occurs.

While we cannot compete with the compensation available from private sources, we like to think that it is for a good cause. There is, however, nonmonetary compensation, because embassy sponsorship means access to the highest levels of the host government and to the most prestigious institutes and universities. A typical program day, for example, might include a breakfast with journalists, a one-on-one or roundtable discussion at the Ministry of Defense or Foreign Affairs, a talk at a prestigious think tank, and a dinner at the home of the Public Affairs Officer or at the Ambassador's residence.

If you would like to continue this process, I would appreciate your sending me the following materials at your convenience:

1. An updated resume or c.v.. As I said earlier, this would form the basis of an offer cable and should, therefore, include as much information as possible which would convey your attractiveness as a speaker.
2. A list of proposed topics. This not only allows me to match you most effectively with our overseas posts when making the original offer, but it also allows the post, as the consumer of your services, to assess more accurately how your topic might fit into their plan and tends to help them arrive at a "yes" response to our offer cable. This process is further aided by the inclusion of talking points where appropriate. A cautionary note should be added: An extremely wide range of topics tends to arouse suspicion regarding the speaker's depth in any one area, unless supported by a c.v. which reflects the experience or research which would be reasonably expected.
3. Possible travel dates. Generally speaking, the greater the lead time the better, but we and our constituent posts can be quite flexible if necessary. This is more important for a Full Grant than for a Partial. For the latter, we can notify our posts of known travel plans several weeks in advance, if necessary, but that should be avoided as it takes time for posts to coordinate with possible cosponsors.

While the above is a reasonably thorough explanation of how our AmPart Program works--augmented by the enclosed brochure--I cannot presume to have anticipated all your questions. If you wish, I would be delighted to discuss this further at your convenience.

Sincerely,



Henry Collins  
Major, U.S. Army  
Program Development Officer

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