



A MARKETPLACE OF IDEAS F. CLIFTON WHITE RESOURCE CENTER

In the marketplace of ideas, liberal democracy stirs a lot of interest. Some people would promote it, others would adapt it, some would analyze it, some would refute it, and some, with no agenda other than the vague sense that liberal democracy may improve their lives, would simply learn about it. All these people, whether specialists or not, approach liberal democracy with varied and numberless questions. It was to address such information needs that Richard M. Scammon and F. Clifton White personally began collecting and organizing authoritative materials on democracy in general and elections in particular.

Guiding the growth of the center was a clear mandate: "to collect and disseminate information and materials related to the administration of and effective citizen participation in democratic elections."

When IFES was established in 1987, Scammon and White generously donated important portions of their personal collections to the budding resource center. As IFES expanded, so did the collection. Guiding the growth of the center was a clear mandate: "to collect and disseminate information and materials related to the administration of and effective citizen participation in democratic elections." So, besides the usual complement of books, reports and periodicals, the collection actively sought posters, ballots, fliers, handbills and sundry other materials generated by the electoral process in the field.

During the ensuing 15 years, the library at the F. Clifton White Resource Center has assembled highly specialized collections and, along the way, earned a reputation as a world-class center for democracy research. Special collections in the F. Clifton White Resource Center include:

- Ballots from numerous countries and elections, including absentee ballots, low-literacy ballots, referendum ballots and so forth.
- International constitutions and electoral codes, both current and historical.
- Hundreds of voter education posters, handbills, booklets and audio and video clips from around the world.

Election assessments and country reports published by IFES since 1989 comprise another special collection. These IFES

publications, joined by an astonishing range of country and topic reports prepared by selected non-governmental organizations, think tanks, academic institutions and individual scholars, form the informational heart of the collection. This unique literature provides researchers with vital insights on nearly every aspect of the workings and theories of international electoral systems.

To broaden access to its collection, the Resource Center makes extensive use of information technologies. It recently became a contributing member of Columbia International Affairs Online (CIAO), a database managed by Columbia University that provides a platform for academic researchers from more than 60 institutions to post the most current working papers, research projects, conference proceedings and journal articles. The library is committed to the proposition that pluralist societies thrive on open access to knowledge and invites questions and requests for research assistance from scholars, students, practitioners in the field and anyone interested in the advancement of democracy.

Art Levine is the Librarian for the F. Clifton White Resource Center at IFES.

THE MANATT DEMOCRACY STUDIES FELLOWSHIP

Each summer, two outstanding graduate students from universities in the American Midwest come to Washington, DC for a summer of research under the Manatt Democracy Studies Fellowship Program. Founded in 1998 by Charles Manatt, former Chairman of IFES' Board of Directors, and his wife Kathleen, the program provides fellows with a stipend to spend six to eight weeks at the F. Clifton White Resource Center conducting research on election administration and civic participation in the political process. Research findings of the Manatt Fellows and additional information about the Fellowship Program, including application requirements and procedures, are available at www.ifes.org/research_comm/manatt.

May: Chile ends Augusto Pinochet's immunity, clearing way for trial on murder and torture during years as dictator.



June: Presidents of North and South Korea sign peace accord, ending half-century of antagonism.



July: Vicente Fox Quesada elected president of Mexico, ending more than seven decades of rule by the PRI.



September: Palestinians launch Al-Aqsa Intifada.

September: Yugoslav opposition claims victory. Nationwide uprising overthrows Milosevic.



2000

Star Radio, set up with IFES support, selected as best radio station in Liberia.

IFES hosts regional conference on election dispute resolution in Ukraine.

IFES trains Ghanaian citizens with disabilities as election observers during the nation's presidential and parliamentary elections of December 7, 2000.

More than four million voters are registered during an IFES voter registration project in Haiti.

IFES hosts more than 60 election officials, judges and politicians from Latin America, Russia and Africa to observe the 2000 US presidential elections.