

THE CARTER CENTER



NEWS

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Learning Lessons from the U.S. Elections

The eyes of the world were fixed on recounts and judicial twists in the 2000 U.S. presidential election for weeks last fall. When the suspense finally lifted and a winner emerged, the experience left Americans wiser and more educated about their own democracy.

“This was not a constitutional crisis as some have said, nor was it an indictment of our democratic process. But there were definitely valuable lessons learned from an unprecedented turn of events,” said Charles Costello, The Carter Center’s Democracy Program director.

The existence of outdated voting technology in some states, the effects of decentralizing electoral administration among independent states and counties, the potential shortcomings of the electoral college system, and the impact of every single vote were the focus of nonstop public discourse and media commentary.

“It shows that when a population takes its elections for granted, as we have in the United States for a long time, it may not look closely enough at voting technology and procedural deficiencies that can become magnified in a very close race,” said Dr. Jennifer McCoy, director of the Center’s Latin American and Caribbean Program, which has organized election observations in the Western Hemisphere.

A pioneer in observing and mediating elections, The Carter Center has undertaken missions to some 30 elections in 20 countries in Latin America, Asia, and Africa since 1989. To support the development of international standards for free and fair elections, Carter Center observer delegations always have included representatives from as many countries as possible. Observers’ reputation for neutrality and their presence help to build confidence in the electoral process and reassure voters they can safely and secretly cast their ballots.

Guided by international standards, delegations publicize conclusions about the fairness of an election – from voter

registration through campaigning, voting, counting, and judicial appeals. Their statements can influence voters’ acceptance of election results and whether a nation is welcomed into the worldwide community of democracies.

After the recent U.S. election, Carter Center experts saw a need to stress the importance of this evaluation process in established democracies, too, and offered

Beating Guinea Worm Odds

Seven countries once plagued with the same disease have taken giant steps toward improving health conditions and building hope.

See Page 6 for a look at which nations celebrated at least one year of freedom from Guinea worm disease with The Carter Center. 



Volunteer Koffi in Togo applies ointment to a Guinea worm patient.

their own post-election assessment of ways the U.S. electoral system could be improved.

Reassessing Technology

Dr. McCoy suggested the United States modernize its voting equipment, noting that Brazil and Venezuela use much more modern technology. Currently the United States uses relatively antiquated

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technology: 60-year-old lever machines, 40-year-old punchcard systems, and 20-year-old optically scanned paper ballots. These are then counted on a countywide and statewide basis. In contrast, Venezuela uses optical scanners that then transmit results electronically to a central headquarters to learn nationwide results almost instantly. Brazil uses even more state-of-the-art touch-screen machines, with candidates' pictures for illiterate voters.

Not only should technology be updated, but it should be more uniform, an issue brought to the fore by the now famous "butterfly" ballot used in West Palm Beach County, Florida. Nationwide, there were literally dozens of different combinations of ballot design, name placement, and methods of casting and counting ballots.

According to Dr. McCoy, the United States has a more decentralized election administration than any of the 20 countries where The Carter Center has observed elections — due to both the constitutional authority awarded to states to conduct elections and the state-based Electoral College.

"We believe there needs to be much more procedural uniformity to guarantee voters' rights. The role of the federal government in elections basically is limited to campaign finance," Costello said. "The rules of play are governed by state electoral codes, but counties throughout each state actually conduct the elections."

He noted there are positive features to a decentralized election administration, including the absence of a federal bureaucracy, little or no risk that the seated administration in Washington, D.C., can control or manipulate the election, and the opportunity for states and counties to be flexible to local conditions.

"But the U.S. system has become so

decentralized that there is too much variation in quality and technical standards," he said. "The states should come together to standardize electoral processes in the same way that states agree to standardize laws affecting commerce."

Revisiting the Electoral College

People in the U.S. also are taking a fresh look at the role of the Electoral College system, which gives each state a largely population-based number of electors who actually cast votes for the president based on the popular vote in

than on a state-by-state basis. Dr. McCoy and Costello agree that the Electoral College is anachronistic in the 21st century and should be abolished. But they also note the political challenge of changing this system, which would require a constitutional amendment approved by Congress and ratified by three-fourths of the states.

Setting an Example

Despite difficulties in the presidential election, the U.S. continued to set some positive examples for the rest of the world. One of those was the peaceful transition of power, which separates the U.S. from countries where violence routinely surrounds elections.

"The Carter Center's message in the United States was similar to what we often say abroad when the result of an election is immediately unclear, or when a close race creates danger of civil unrest or a struggle for power. Jimmy Carter urges people to be patient and have confidence in the system and the laws that govern the process," Costello said. "We

generally advise parties to keep political passions from becoming inflamed by being careful about their public discourse. And we advise governments to let the legal process run its course and allow the judicial system to work."

Another lesson was that an independent judiciary is absolutely crucial to resolving disputes peacefully. "You must have well-established rules and institutions that have earned the trust and confidence of the people," Dr. McCoy said. "Although close scrutiny raised some questions about partisanship in the judiciary and among election officials, the strength of U.S. democracy was demonstrated when both candidates and their supporters adhered to the rules and accepted the outcomes."



Pia Pannula

Election officials in China's Zhujiqiao village raise a ballot box to show voters it is empty before voting begins.

each state. With the exception of two states, the system is "winner take all," with the candidate who gets the most votes in the state winning all of that state's electoral votes.

"Many people around the world became aware for the first time that the U.S. president isn't elected by the popular vote, but indirectly, by an electoral college. Being able to come to power with a minority of the votes, as happened in 2000, sounds fishy to people abroad who have been victimized by rigged elections," said Costello.

The Electoral College system was one of many political compromises agreed upon when the U.S. Constitution was written in the 18th century. Many say that today's international standards of democracy argue for direct popular national election of the president, rather

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U.S. Observers Abroad

As recounts commenced and the appeals process snowballed, governments worldwide offered to send election monitors to Florida. Some of these offers were serious; others, such as the one from Cuba, were intended to mock our system. But Costello and Dr. McCoy agreed that despite jokes about

the United States needing observers, the 2000 race did not tarnish the reputation or future work of U.S. election observers abroad.

“Many reporters asked us if this would damage The Carter Center’s credibility as an organization that monitors elections. My answer was ‘no,’” said Costello. “We worked hard over the past decade to help develop international standards for free and fair elections. We’re not saying, do everything as we do in the United States. There are shortcomings in

our own system, including our campaign finance structure. In other countries, there may be government control of the media, which limits access to television or radio by opposition candidates. We’re saying let’s all do our best to live up to international standards and learn from each other’s experiences.”

Added Dr. McCoy, “Our recent presidential election demonstrated every democracy can be improved, and that we need to look closely at electoral technology, rules, and institutions in the U.S., just as we do in other countries.”

Strategies for Improving U.S. Elections

American-based election observation organizations were not called upon to observe the U.S. elections. Nonetheless, developments in Florida compelled professional election observers to begin looking at ways to address clear deficiencies. “The debacle in Florida set in motion a sincere and intense process of self-reflection here in the United States,” said Costello. “One of the basic tenets of democracy is that the government must be responsive to its people; and right now the people are calling for improvements that can ensure, beyond doubt, that their votes will count.”

Costello and Dr. McCoy suggested the following for improving the U.S. electoral system in three main areas — voting procedures, dispute resolution, and campaign finance.

Voting Procedures

- Create uniform voting procedures and technology within states and perhaps nationwide.
- Replace antiquated voting machinery with more reliable technology and make it available in all communities, rich or poor.
- Conduct simulations of the voting systems to test their reliability and accuracy before elections.
- Provide voting systems that let voters know whether they have followed proper procedure and immediately correct mistakes.
- Create an information-sharing system among counties within a state and among states to cross-check voter registration to eliminate duplications, deceased registrants, and other errors.

Dispute Resolution

- Have state laws and regulations in place before an election to dictate the conditions under which recounts and revotes would occur and how to conduct them, setting specific standards for valid votes.
- Establish bi-partisan commissions in each state responsible for adjudicating disputes about the vote count.
- Bar partisan campaign activities by public officials with possible election supervisory responsibilities.

Campaign and Campaign Finance

- Restructure the presidential debate rules to include more alternative candidates, with reasonable criteria for qualifications.
- Reform campaign financing laws to diminish the disproportionate influence of money in determining who can afford the cost of running for public office.
- Ban the use of “soft money” for federal election activities. Currently, a loophole in the law allows parties to raise funds from individuals or groups otherwise prohibited from donating to federal election campaigns and in amounts exceeding federal limits. Political parties are accused of using this “soft money” to support federal campaigns, which is an unlawful use of the funds.
- Require full disclosure of sponsors and sources of funds for so-called “issue ads” (political advertising by groups other than political parties) in both print and broadcast media.
- Provide federal matching funds for Congressional candidates’ campaign costs, as currently exists only for presidential campaigns.
- Make reasonable amounts of free media air time available to candidates, matched by limits on political advertising. Reimbursement from public funds or tax deductions for donated time could finance this.

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Seeing Ourselves Through Others' Eyes

In a spirit of openness, several times this past decade The Carter Center has invited observer groups and political party representatives from other countries to observe voting in the U.S.

"These were opportunities to learn about our democracy through the eyes of people from around the world," said Dr. McCoy. "The observations were immensely worthwhile for both the Center and the observers."



Voters at the June 29-July 3, 2000 Mexican elections

One of the big lessons for observers has been that voting irregularities can occur in any election, even in advanced democracies, she said. When a delegation of high-ranking election officials from China monitored runoff primary elections in the state of Georgia in August 1998, they watched in amazement as the leader of The Carter Center delegation was denied a ballot in his own hometown precinct. It took a few phone calls to county election officials to confirm that indeed he was incorrectly listed on the wrong party's registration list.

Another recurring theme among international observers has been disappointment with the level of voter turnout in the United States, where routinely less than 50 percent of voters bother to cast ballots in local and state elections. As the Chinese observers reported, "Citizens are indifferent to participating in political

activities. It is doubtful whether an election with such a low voter turnout can be representative and speak for the interest of the majority of the people."

In its report, the group also questioned fairness of elections in which "individual candidates have to finance their campaigns and spend millions of dollars to underwrite media campaign commercials." On a positive note, the Chinese officials, who are working to standardize election procedures in some 800,000 villages where citizens elect local administrators, complimented the media's role in keeping the election transparent and lauded the rapid reporting of results.

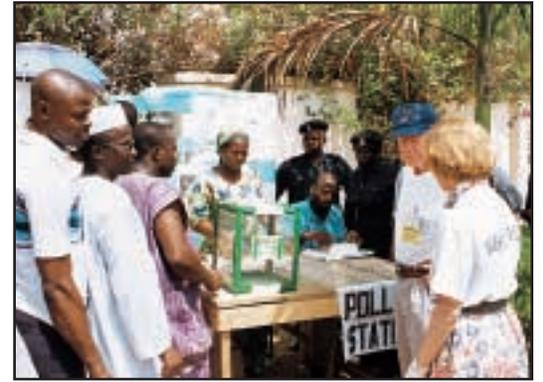
During the 1992 presidential election, 10 Mexican delegates from election observer organizations and political parties visited 34 polling sites in the Atlanta area and southern Georgia, including President Carter's hometown of Plains.

The Mexicans reported surprise at the absence of undue influence by the government and parties on the electoral process, the degree of decentralization in the U.S. electoral process, the races' competitiveness, and the independent media's role. They also said the referendum process was impressive, allowing individuals to vote on specific proposals or amend state constitutions.

But they had important recommendations for improvements, too, including:

- Moving election day to a weekend or making it a holiday to encourage greater voter turnout,
- Limiting the amount of funds that political campaigns spend,
- Taking measures to prevent election results from being projected in the media before the polls have closed in all time zones, and
- Simplifying voter registration.

Mexico, which last year saw a historic transition of power ending 71 years of one-party rule, today has a sophisticated computerized, nationwide voter registration system that can check for duplicate registrations, update records to reflect deaths and new voters, and provide voter identification cards with holograms, fingerprints, photos, and an



The Carters help monitor voting at this Nigeria polling station.

ID number. In contrast, the United States still uses county-by-county registration lists with little communication among them to track name or address changes.

"In voter registration technology, Mexico now sets a higher standard than the U.S. It shows that the U.S. has something to learn from democracies around the world," said Dr. McCoy. "At the same time, we would like to think that the Mexican observation of the U.S. elections sponsored by The Carter Center influenced the tremendous advances their democracy has made in the past decade.

"Democracies at any stage of development have something to gain by seeing themselves through the eyes of fellow democrats around the world." 

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Sudan, Uganda Work Toward Peace

The Carter Center, along with UNICEF, Uganda's Acholi community, and the governments of Sudan, Uganda, Canada, Egypt, and Libya, continue an intensive effort to end fighting in northern Uganda and restore peace to the region.

Since the Center's Conflict Resolution Program and President Carter negotiated the Nairobi Agreement between the governments of Sudan and Uganda in December 1998, all prisoners of war have been exchanged. Discussions also have continued with Ugandan rebel leader Joseph Kony, head of the Sudan-based Lord's Resistance Army. 

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Carter, Ford to Head Election Commission

Former U.S. Presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford agreed in January 2001 to serve as active honorary bipartisan co-chairs of the National Commission on Federal Election Reform, charged with recommending ways to improve the process for electing federal officials.

“We hope to bring together thoughtful people from across the political spectrum to think about how our democratic institutions can improve the way our nation elects the leaders of our federal government, including the use of state-of-the-art technology,” said Ford and Carter.

They stressed the commission will adopt a forward-looking perspective, with a focus on improving and standardizing processes now used to cast and count ballots for president, vice president, and members of Congress. “This is not a commission to rewrite the Constitution or reflight the contest in Florida,” they said.

Working with Carter and Ford as commission co-chairs will be former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker, who served as chief of staff to President Ronald Reagan, and Lloyd Cutler, former White House counsel to President Carter and President Bill Clinton. The newly established commission is organized by the Miller Center for Public Affairs of the University of Virginia and the Century Foundation with funding from private foundations, including the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. 

Guyana Maps Game Plan for Growth

Guyana President Bharrat Jagdeo submitted his country’s National Development Strategy (NDS) to parliament in July 2000, a plan developed with help from The Carter Center’s Global Development Initiative (GDI).

The NDS is a 10-year blueprint for sustainable development compiled by civil society and business leaders in cooperation with government experts. It aims to eradicate poverty, diversify the economy, and unify the South American country’s political and ethnic divisions.

Parliament plans to debate Guyana’s NDS after the March presidential election. 

Nicaragua Local Elections Observed

A Carter Center team observed generally smooth municipal elections in Nicaragua in fall 2000, but suggested technical improve-

ments be made before the 2001 national elections.

The November elections marked the first time municipal elections were held separately from national elections, and voter turnout was low: about 60 percent. Exclusion of the Yatama party from the election in the North Atlantic Autonomous Region led many indigenous people to boycott the election there. Nationwide, inaccurate voter lists left some citizens confused about where to vote.

LACP will organize observers for the November 2001 national elections. 

Venezuela Wrestles with Voting Challenges

The Carter Center observed Venezuela’s historic national elections in July 2000, subsequent disputes about the governor’s race in Merida, and preparations for local elections in December.



Venezuela President Hugo Chavez at July LACP conference

Originally scheduled for May, but postponed due to technical difficulties, the country’s “mega-elections” had more than 36,000 candidates for 6,000 positions. The July election approved a new six-year term under the new constitution for President Hugo Chavez, after serving less than two years of his original term.

The Center’s team of election observers and Latin American and Caribbean Program staff recommended for future contests more timely distribution of sample ballots to voters and tests of voting machines before an election. 

Leaders Call for OAS Ruling to Protect Democracy

High-level leaders at the Center’s “Challenges to Democracy in the Americas” conference last fall called for a broader interpretation of the Organization of American States (OAS) Resolution 1080 to better defend democracy. The group also proposed that the international community establish a “scorecard” to measure the quality of a country’s democratic practices and warn of democracy’s decline.

The Center’s Latin American and Caribbean Program and its Council of Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas organized the conference. They urged the OAS to include basic electoral conditions for a free and fair election as a precondition to inviting nations to future summits and convoke an emergency meeting of its Permanent Council, under Resolution 1080, when basic electoral conditions are not met, a higher standard than presently exists.

These recommendations by former heads of state, prominent scholars, policy experts, and civil society leaders were in anticipation of the April 2001 Summit of the Americas in Quebec City. 

Nations Celebrate Progress Against Guinea Worm

The Guinea worm (*dracunculiasis*) might as well have been thousands of feet long in 1986, for it stretched over 20 Asian and African countries, infecting 3.2 million people.

But today, it is a different story – at least for Cameroon, Chad, India, Kenya, Pakistan, Senegal, and Yemen. These nations have been Guinea worm free for at least one year, prompting recognition from President Jimmy Carter and Dr. Donald Hopkins, associate executive director of The Carter Center's Health Programs, at a Guinea Worm Eradication Ceremony held in their honor at the Center last July.

The effort to eradicate the disease began with an initiative by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 1980. In 1986 The Carter Center's Global 2000 Program, partnering with the CDC, the World Health Organization (WHO), and UNICEF,

became the lead advocate for the global eradication campaign.

The disease infects people who drink water contaminated with tiny water fleas carrying Guinea worm larvae. Nearly a year later, the 2- to 3-foot long worm slowly emerges, penetrating the skin through a blister.

Although there is no cure, chemically treating ponds, straining water or boiling it with a special cloth filter, or providing clean water from borehole wells can help prevent the disease. These techniques, along with resident technical advisors and village-based

volunteers to report cases and educate others about the disease, have reduced the number of Guinea worm cases by 98 percent. Ethiopia, Uganda, and 10 northern states of Sudan also are on the verge of ending the disease's spread. 

Rick Diamond



Honorees with the Carters, staff, and General Amadou Toumani Touré (seated right) at Guinea worm ceremony

Global 2000 Launches Sudan Trachoma Program

Almost half of the children younger than 10 years old in Sudan's Malakal region have trachoma. And the country's first large-scale health survey reports that Sudan more than doubles all statistical criteria required to classify the disease as a serious public health problem.

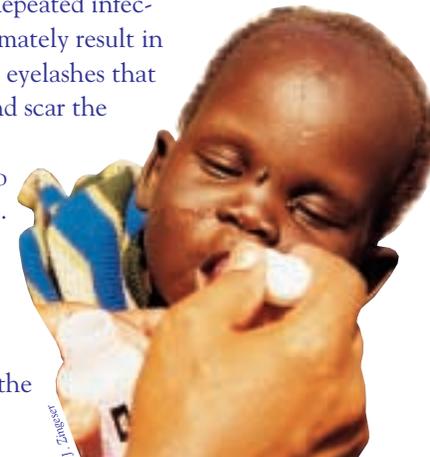
In August 2000, The Carter Center joined with the Sudanese government and other groups to launch a Trachoma Control Program (TCP) in Malakal. To date, some 13,000 have been treated. The Center also simultaneously launched a community-based health education campaign to boost awareness of trachoma and its prevention.

A chronic bacterial infection, trachoma spreads easily from person to person. Repeated infections ultimately result in turned in eyelashes that abrade and scar the eye, leading to blindness. Mostly women and children contract the disease, with 75 percent of the women becoming blind.

"Worldwide, cataracts are the leading cause of blindness. However, trachoma is the world's leading cause of preventable blindness," said Dr. Jim Zingeser, technical director for the Center's Global 2000 TCP.

Via village-based education initiatives and low-tech, cost-effective preventive methods, The Carter Center promotes proper face and hands washing and environmental changes to prevent trachoma.

The Center collaborated with Lions Clubs International, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Pfizer Inc, and the International Trachoma Initiative for Sudan's trachoma launch. It also is working with ministries of health to help mount programs in Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Yemen. 



Malakal baby receives trachoma medicine

The Blinding Bite

On the surface, the blackfly appears to be no more than a harmless annoyance. But it is on the surface – the skin's surface – that the insect begins its assault with thousands of bites.

For several hundred years, millions of people living near rivers in Africa and Latin America have swatted and fanned swarms of blackflies, only to be bitten and later contract river blindness (*onchocerciasis*). When the insects deposit the larvae of parasitic worms in the skin, the females mature and produce millions of tiny worms called microfilariae. The microfilariae move throughout the body, causing incessant, debilitating itching and skin rashes. If the microfilariae enter the eyes, eyesight damage and eventually blindness result.

In addition to severe health problems, river blindness causes an economic dilemma. Fast-flowing streams and rivers border productive farmland, but entire villages often must abandon the area because blackflies reproduce in those waters. Alternative, less fertile land generates fewer crops and consequently lower returns.

The Carter Center's Global 2000 River Blindness Program and its partners continue to assist with administering oral doses of Mectizan®, donated by pharmaceutical company Merck & Co. Inc., once or twice a year to control river blindness. The program has assisted in more than 27 million Mectizan treatments since its launching in 1996. Through November 2000, nearly 6 million Mectizan treatments were provided in 13,080 villages to eligible people in Cameroon, Nigeria, Sudan, Uganda, and six countries of the Americas.

Preparations are under way for the February 2001 launching of the first mass Mectizan treatment programs in Ethiopia, supported by the Ministry of Health, the African Programme for Onchocerciasis Control, and the Lions-Carter Center SightFirst Initiative. 

Edward S. Ross



A blackfly

Cain Becomes New GDI Director

Bringing nearly 30 years of experience from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Edmund Cain joined The Carter Center in January 2001 as Global Development Initiative (GDI) director.

GDI helps broaden public participation in shaping national development strategies in developing countries. The program has been successful in assisting Guyana with its economic plan and is now expanding to other nations, including Albania, Mali, and Mozambique.

At UNDP, Cain was assigned to Afghanistan, Brunei, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore and Turkey. At UNDP's New York City headquarters, he was director of the Emergency Response Division, U.N. deputy security coordinator, chief of staff to the undersecretary-general for Political and General Assembly Affairs, officer-in-charge for the Office of the Administrator, and chief of Operations for the U.N. financing system for science and technology development.

Center Monitors Global Online Election

With a mouse click, nearly 34,000 voters – less than half of those eligible – elected five regional candidates online for the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) board of directors.

Carter Center delegates monitored the Oct. 1-10, 2000, election.

ICANN is a nonprofit corporation that assigns high-level domain names, and through registrars, e-mail addresses.

In spite of technical problems, marked technological differences between developed and developing nations, and voter privacy, security, and cyberspace campaigning issues, Center observers deemed the process to be reasonably free and open.

Emily Howard



Edmund Cain



Endowed Chair, Sarnat Prize Honor Rosalynn Carter

Rosalynn Carter's crusade for mental health recently received boosts from two sources.

The first was in August 2000 when The Carter Center and Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health formed the Rosalynn Carter Endowed Chair in Mental Health. This is the first of its kind at a school of public health.

The position will focus on the prevention of mental disorders and promotion of mental health.

The other was in October from the Institute of Medicine in Washington, D.C., which awarded Mrs. Carter its 2000 Rhoda and Bernard Sarnat International Prize in Mental Health. The prize – a medal and \$20,000 for the Center's Mental Health Program – honors outstanding achievements that improve mental health.

Gates Grant Revives Disease Task Force

A \$741,000 grant has reactivated a group that seeks to determine which diseases around the world are viable for eradication.

The International Task Force for Disease Eradication (ITFDE), a Carter Center-based organization, received the funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. From 1989 to 1993, the ITFDE identified six potentially eradicable diseases,

including Guinea worm, polio, and lymphatic filariasis.

Part of the new task force's plans will focus on concluding the Guinea eradication campaign. It also will assess whether the Center's river blindness control initiative can become an eradication program and seek to expand its lymphatic filariasis, schistosomiasis, and trachoma programs in Africa and Latin America.

Liberia Office Closes

After nearly 10 years of working to advance peace, human rights, and democracy in Liberia, The Carter Center announced in November it was closing its doors there.

Citing unheeded suggestions for national, governmental improvements, human rights violations against journalists and political opposition, and diverted funds," President Carter communicated this decision in a letter to Liberia President Charles Taylor.

Liberia invited The Carter Center to assist in the peace process in 1991 and prepare for eventual elections after the country's seven-year civil war. Visiting often with interim governments and factions, the Center worked to protect human rights, helped nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) coordinate their assistance efforts, and monitored Liberia's 1977 special elections.

Caribou Rests in Garden

A life-size, Porcupine caribou sculpture found refuge in the gardens of the Jimmy Carter Library and Museum.

The Alaska Wilderness League hosted the December 2000 dedication ceremony, honoring

the Carter administration's efforts to protect Alaska lands from development. The event also marked the 20th anniversary of President Carter's signing of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, which protected 104 million acres of Alaska's public land from development.

Rick Diamond



Rosalynn Carter



President Carter with caribou

Kathryn Kolb

Satcher: Ethnic Minorities Lack Adequate Mental Health Care

Less than half of Americans with severe mental disorders seek treatment, and ethnic minorities are even less likely than Caucasians to ask for and receive treatment, said Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher at the 16th Annual Rosalynn Carter Symposium on Mental Health Policy.

The symposium on ethnic minorities and mental health, held Nov. 8-9 at The Carter Center, highlighted the surgeon general's upcoming supplemental report on that topic and ways to rectify mental health care disparities among those minorities.

"The best news of this report is that we can treat 80 to 90 percent of those with mental health disorders and return them to healthy, productive lives," Dr. Satcher said.



U.S. Surgeon General
Dr. David Satcher

However, the lack of health insurance, the stigma associated with mental illnesses, and people's distrust of doctors in the system is widespread within ethnic minority populations. African-Americans, in particular, distrust what they see to be a standard "white" health care system, and Asian-Americans are especially reluctant to ask for help.

"Our system lacks balance," said Dr. Satcher. "Eleven million children lack access to the health care system. One of three Hispanics is uninsured. One of four African-Americans is uninsured."

Dr. Satcher and former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, a longtime mental health advocate, both called for more funding for research, a national strategy for reducing the stigma of mental illnesses, and health insurance companies to provide parity among mental health treatment and other physical disorders.

Dr. Alvin Poussaint, noted psychiatrist, shown here with Mrs. Carter at the Center's November mental health symposium



AnnMarie Povo

Prevent, Promote, Practice Say Mental Health Experts

Mental health, behavioral science, and public health leaders convened the Inaugural World Conference for the Promotion of Mental Health and Prevention of Mental and Behavioral Disorders Dec. 6-8 at The Carter Center.

More than 150 scientists and experts from the U.S. and abroad addressed issues

such as achieving change in mental health systems around the world through knowledge exchange and policy initiatives.

Recommendations resulting from the conference will be published as a "Framework for Action," and a collaborative alliance will be formed to strengthen mental health's place on the worldwide public health agenda.

Seven New Journalists Receive Fellowships

To promote a better understanding of mental health issues and combat stigma and discrimination against people with mental illnesses, the fourth annual Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism have been awarded to seven new recipients.

The scholarship, sponsored by The Carter Center's Mental Health Program,

2000-2001 fellows (l-r) with Mrs. Carter: Nell Casey, Helen Demeranville and husband Carl Ginsburg, George Wehrfritz, Monica Brady, Robert Landauer, Michael Isip

provides six \$10,000 grants, allowing print and broadcast journalists to study a selected mental health or mental illness topic.

The recipients will present their completed projects in September 2001.



Peggy Cozart