

Now more than ever, citizens need alternative views on the news. Radio broadcasts, particularly talk shows, have helped to fill this void. As effective as radio is, however, the information it provides cannot be readily copied and distributed. This is especially important in situations where documentation — footnotes and other proofs of the accuracy of a statement or quotation — is necessary.

Reading several newspapers (even if your local library carries a variety) is time-consuming and expensive. A better course might be to subscribe to one or more well-documented magazines or newsletters that give the inside story on the political and cultural events shaping today's news. Here are a few that we've found particularly helpful:

Human Events

422 First St., S.E.

Washington, DC 20003

Weekly newspaper, 24-pages, covering events of major political import in the nation's capital and around the country from a conservative perspective. \$25 for a six months' subscription, \$40 for a full year.

Citizen magazine

Focus on the Family

Colorado Springs, CO 80995

Monthly, suggested donation of \$20 per year, covers debate over cultural policy issues from a Christian family perspective.

World magazine

Box 2330

Asheville, NC 28802

Weekly all but five months of the year, biweekly otherwise, 24-page full-color magazine format, covers range of public policy and cultural issues from a Christian perspective, subscriptions \$27.95 per year.

Washington Watch

Family Research Council

700 13th Street, N.W., Suite 500

Washington, D.C. 20005

Newsletter, published 10 times per year, available via suggested donation.

10. REGISTER A FRIEND TO VOTE.

No, you can't register friends directly (that practice may have died out in Chicago a few decades back), but you can convince a friend to register. The sweeping changes in Washington, D.C. in 1993 — enough to bring retired Desert Storm hero Norman Schwarzkopf back to Washington to testify against a major proposal of the Commander-in-Chief! — should put to rest forever the argument that elections don't matter.

They matter a lot, and it's still true that Americans don't vote in anywhere near the proportions of their neighbors in other democratic countries. Take a look at the sobering figures below on electoral participation:

U.S. Presidential Election 1984—53.1%

U.S. Presidential Election 1988—50.1%

U.S. Presidential Election 1992—55%

Russian Referendum on President Boris Yeltsin 1993—63%*

Italian Constitutional Referendum, April 1993—64.3/84.9%**

* On referendum question seeking vote of confidence in Yeltsin's leadership.

** Turnout in Italy's four regions ranged from 64.3% in the South to 84.9% in Northern Italy. Voters threw out Italy's system of proportional representation, government funding of political parties, and the government department that holds a vast portion of Italian industry.

In the future, true citizenship may be measured not merely in whether or not you cast your vote, but whether you care enough to help others understand that they, too, should care — and help to avert the tragedies befalling, and about to befall, this great nation. Let's face it, the radical left wants to diminish individual freedom and mediating institutions like the family, but in order to do so they use the ultimate freedom in our republic — the right to vote — to the max. It's ironic, but a valid lesson.

If you've never participated in a voter registration drive (and "drive" may be a literal term now that the Clinton Administration has won passage of a "motor voter" bill to require the states to allow registration of new voters at motor vehicle bureaus, among other places), several organizations offer valuable resources on how to engage in effective campaigns to reach voters who share your values. Contact:

Mr. Bob Thompson

Director, Center for Conservative Governance

Free Congress Research and Education Foundation