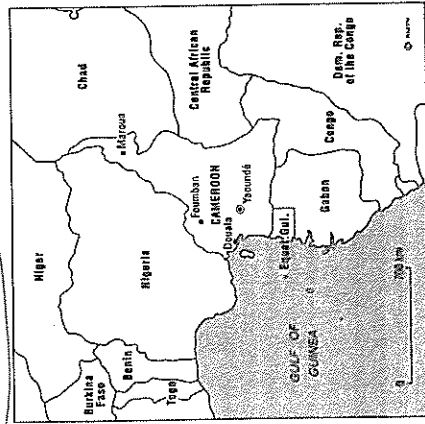


92 CAMBODIA • CAMEROON

Asia's greatest architectural achievements. By 1431 the Siamese had overrun the region, and subsequent years saw the rise of the Siamese, Vietnamese, and Lao. By the mid-1700s Cambodia's boundaries approximated those of today. During the 1800s, as French control in Indochina expanded, the area became a French protectorate. Cambodia gained independence in 1953 under King Sihanouk, who, after changing his title to "prince," became prime minister in 1955 and head of state in 1960. In 1970, after Sihanouk was ousted, Lon Nol was installed as prime minister, and the monarchy of Cambodia changed to the Khmer Republic. During this time the Vietnam War spilled over the Khmer Republic's borders, as United States forces made bombing raids against North Vietnamese bases. Resulting anti-American sentiment gave rise to discontent with Lon Nol's pro-U.S. regime. The Khmer Communists, or Khmer Rouge, seized power in 1975 and, led by Pol Pot, exiled most Cambodians to the countryside. An estimated three million people died under the Khmer Rouge; many were executed because they were either educated or had links to the former government. Vietnamese troops supported by some Cambodian Communists invaded Cambodia in late 1978, and by early 1979 had overthrown the Khmer Rouge. In 1993, elections and a new constitution resulted in Prince Sihanouk again becoming King of Cambodia. While the Khmer Rouge has finally disintegrated and their leader, Pol Pot, is dead, Cambodia is finding it difficult to transcend its violent past. ■

CAMEROON



Official name Republic of Cameroon  
**PEOPLE**  
 Population 15,240,000. Density 83/mi<sup>2</sup> (32/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 46%. Capital Yaounde, 560,785. Ethnic groups Cameroon Highlander 51%, Equatorial Bantu

19%, Kirdi 11%, Fulani 10%. Languages English, French, indigenous. Religions Bangwa and other African religions 51%, Christian 35%, Muslim 16%. Life expectancy 53 female, 50 male. Literacy 63%.  
**POLITICS**  
 Government Republic. Parties National Union for Democracy and Progress, People's Democratic Movement, Social Democratic Front, others. Suffrage Universal, 21 and over. Memberships OAU, UN. Subdivisions 10 provinces.

**ECONOMY**  
 GDP \$30,900,000,000. Per capita \$2,135. Monetary unit CFA franc. Trade partners Exports: Netherlands, France, Italy. Imports: France, Germany, U.S. Exports Petroleum, petroleum products, aluminum, coffee, cocoa, lumber, cotton. Imports Machinery, electrical equipment, food, manufactures, transportation equipment.

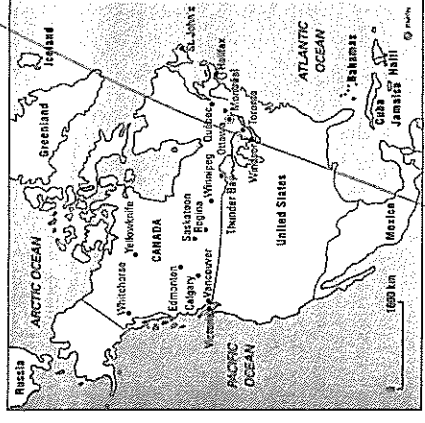
**LAND**  
 Description Central Africa. Area 483,568 mi<sup>2</sup> (475,440 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Cameroon Mtn., 13,451 ft (4,100 m). Lowest point Sea level.  
 People, Immigration and foreign rule shaped Cameroon's diverse population, composed of more than 200 groups speaking 24 major African languages. Both English and French are official languages, resulting from the merging of former French-ruled eastern and British-ruled western territories. Population is concentrated in the French-speaking eastern region. The majority of people practice indigenous beliefs that often influence Islamic and Christian practices as well.

**Economy and the Land.** Recent economic plans have focused on agriculture, industry, and the development of oil deposits. Agriculture still forms the economic base, but oil is a major export. The terrain features southern rain forests and coastal plains, central plateaus, mountainous western forests, and northern savanna and marshes. Although this has hindered transportation development and economic growth, the infrastructure is improving. Climate varies from hot and humid along the coast to fluctuating temperatures and less humidity in the north.

**History and Politics.** The Sao people reached the Cameroon area in the 10th century. The Portuguese arrived in the 1500s, and the following three centuries saw an influx of European and African peoples and an active slave trade along the coast. In 1884 Germany set up a protectorate that included modern Cameroon by 1914. During World War I British and French troops occupied the area. In 1919, the League of Nations divided Cameroon into eastern French and western British mandates. The Cameroons became trust territories in 1946, and French Cameroon became an independent republic in 1960. In 1961 the northern region of British Cameroon elected to join Nigeria, and the southern area chose to unite with the eastern Republic of Cameroon. This resulted in a two-state Federal Republic of Cameroon. A 1972 referendum combined the states into the United Republic

of Cameroon and, in 1984, the official name became the Republic of Cameroon. An October 1992 election returned an authoritarian government to power despite widespread claims of electoral fraud by foreign observers. A 1997 election was also controlled and fraudulent. Amnesty International has accused the government of human rights violations. ■

CANADA



Official name Canada

**PEOPLE**  
 Population 30,450,000. Density 7.9/mi<sup>2</sup> (3.1/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 77%. Capital Ottawa, 323,340. Ethnic groups European descent 43%, mixed European and indigenous 10%, indigenous 20%. Languages English, French. Religions Roman Catholic 46%, United Church 11%, Anglican 8% other Christian. Life expectancy 83 female, 76 male. Literacy 97%.

**POLITICS**  
 Government Federal parliamentary state. Parties Bloc Quebecois, Liberal, New Democratic, Progressive Conservative, Reform. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships CW, NATO, OAS, OECD, UN. Subdivisions 10 provinces, 3 territories.

**ECONOMY**  
 GDP \$688,000,000,000. Per capita \$22,709. Monetary unit Dollar. Trade partners U.S., Japan, U.K. Exports Wood products, petroleum, machinery, natural gas, aluminum, motor vehicles. Imports Petroleum, chemicals, transportation equipment, manufactures, computers.

**LAND**  
 Description Northern North America. Area 3,849,674 mi<sup>2</sup> (9,970,610 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Mt. Logan, 19,551 ft (5,959 m). Lowest point Sea level.  
 People. Canada was greatly influenced by French and British rule, and its culture reflects this dual nature. Descendants of British and French settlers compose the two main population groups, and languages include both English and French. French-speaking inhabitants

are concentrated in the province of Quebec. Canada does not have a single majority ethnic group. The largest groups are the indigenous peoples and those of European descent. Because of the rugged terrain and harsh climate of northern Canada, the country's population is concentrated near the United States border in such large cities of Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa, Montréal, and Québec.

**Economy and the Land.** Rich and varied natural resources—including extensive mineral deposits, fertile land, forests, and lakes—helped shape Canada's diversified economy, which ranks among the world's most prosperous. Economic problems are those common to most modern industrial countries. Agriculture, mining, and industry are highly developed. Canada is a major wheat producer; mineral output includes asbestos, zinc, silver, and nickel; and crude petroleum is an important export. The service sector is also active. Second only to Russia in land area, Canada has a terrain that varies from eastern rolling hills and plains to massive mountain ranges in the west. The Canadian Shield consists of ancient rock and extends from Labrador to the Arctic Islands. It is covered by thick forests in the south and tundra in the north. Overall, summers tend to be moderate and winters long and cold.

**History and Politics.** Canada's first inhabitants were Asian peoples and the Inuit, an Arctic people. Around the year 1000, Vikings were the first Europeans to reach North America, and in 1497 John Cabot claimed the Newfoundland coastal area for Britain. Jacques Cartier established the French claim when he landed at the Gaspé Peninsula in the 1500s. Subsequent French and British rivalry culminated in several wars during the late 17th and 18th centuries. The wars ended with the 1763 Treaty of Paris, by which France lost Canada and other North American territory to Britain. To aid in resolving the continued conflict between French and English residents, the British North America Act of 1867 united the colonies into the Dominion of Canada. Canada fought on the side of the British during World War I. In 1926, along with other dominions, Canada declared itself an independent member of the British Commonwealth and, in 1931, Britain recognized the declaration through the Statute of Westminster. Canada once again allied itself with Britain during World War II. In 1989, Canada saw vigorous debate over a free trade pact with the United States, which narrowly won approval. The Quebec separatist movement is striving for independent status for French-speaking Québec. The Inuit people of Canada achieved their goal of a separate territory in 1999 with the establishment of Nunavut. ■

CANARY ISLANDS See SPAIN.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties Liberation, Revolutionary, Social Christian Reformist, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over, married persons regardless of age. Memberships OAS, UN. Subdivisions 29 provinces, 1 district.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$38,300,000,000. Per capita \$4,692. Monetary unit Peso. Trade partners Exports: U.S., Netherlands, Korea. Imports: U.S., European Union, Venezuela. Exports Sugar, coffee, cocoa, gold, ferronickel. Imports Food, petroleum, cotton and fabrics, chemicals and pharmaceuticals.

**LAND**

Description Caribbean island (eastern Hispaniola). Area 18,704 mi<sup>2</sup> (48,442 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Pico Duarte, 10,417 ft (3,175 m). Lowest point Lago Enriquillo, -131 ft (-40 m).

People. Occupying eastern Hispaniola/Island, the Dominican Republic borders Haiti and has a population of mixed ancestry. Haitians, other blacks, Spaniards, and European Jews compose minority groups. Population growth has resulted in unemployment and has made it difficult for the government to meet food and service needs.

**Economy and the Land.** Agriculture remains important. Sugar is a main component of trade, and sugar refining is a major manufacturing activity. Farmland is limited by a northwest-to-southeast mountain range and an arid region west of the range. Mineral exploitation and iron exports contribute to trade, and a number of American firms have subsidiaries here. Tourism is growing, aided by the tropical climate.

**History and Politics.**

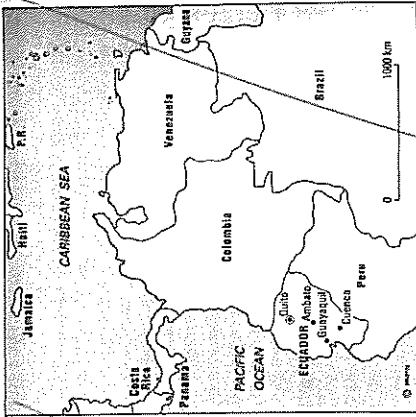
In 1492 Christopher Columbus arrived at Hispaniola Island. Spanish colonists followed, and the indigenous population was virtually wiped out, although some intermingling with Spanish probably occurred. In 1697 the western region of the island, which would become Haiti, was ceded to France. The entire island came under Haitian control as the Republic of Haiti in 1822, and an 1844 revolution established the independent Dominican Republic. Since independence, the country has experienced instability, evidenced by military coups. United States military intervention, and human rights abuses. In May 1994, an aged and ill President Balaguer was re-elected for a seventh term. His successor in 1996, Leonel Fernández, has been unable to accomplish economic reforms. ■

**ECUADOR**

Official name Republic of Ecuador

**PEOPLE**

Population 12,450,000. Density 119/mi<sup>2</sup> (46/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 60%. Capital Quito, 1,100,847. Ethnic groups Mestizo 55%, Amerindian 25%, Spanish 10%, black 10%. Languages Spanish, Quechua, indigenous. Religions Roman Catholic 95%. Life expectancy 75 female, 69 male. Literacy 90%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties Popular Democracy, Radicalist, Social Christian, others. Suffrage Universal 18 and over. Memberships OAS, UN. Subdivisions 21 provinces.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$63,400,000,000. Per capita \$4,629. Monetary unit Sucre. Trade partners Exports: U.S., Korea, Peru. Imports: U.S., Japan, Italy. Exports Petroleum, bananas, shrimp, fish, flowers. Imports Transportation equipment, manufactures, vehicles, machinery, chemicals.

**LAND**

Description Western South America. Area 105,037 mi<sup>2</sup> (272,045 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Chimborazo, 20,702 ft (6,310 m). Lowest point Sea level.

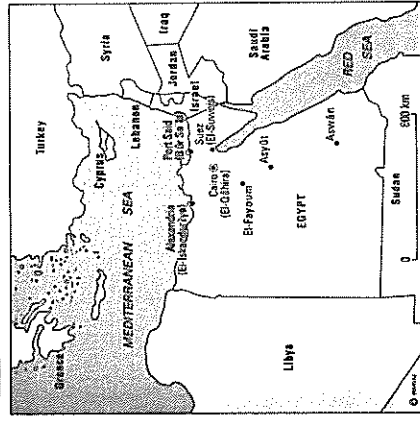
People. Ecuador's ethnicity was established by an indigenous Amerindian population and Spanish colonists. Minority whites, of Spanish or other European descent, live mainly in urban areas or operate large farms called haciendas. Of mixed Spanish-Amerindian blood, mestizos compose over half the population, although economic and political power is concentrated among whites. Minority Amerindians speak Quechua or other indigenous languages and maintain traditional customs in Andean villages or nomadic jungle tribes. Blacks are concentrated on the northern coastal plain. Recent trends show a movement from the interior highlands to the fertile coastal plain and a rural-to-urban shift. A history of economic inequality has produced a literary and artistic tradition that has focused on social reform.

**Economy and the Land.** Despite an oil boom in the 1970s, Ecuador remains underdeveloped. Minor oil production began in 1911, but since a 1967 petroleum discovery in the *oriente*, a jungle region east of the Andes, Ecuador has become an oil exporter. Agriculture remains important for much of the population, although inefficient practices continue among the poor. Rich soils of the *costa*, extending from the Pacific Ocean to the

Andes, support most of the export crops. Forestry and fishing have growth potential, and the waters around the Galapagos Islands are rich in tuna.

Manufacturing is mainly devoted to meeting domestic needs. The oriente and costa lie on either side of the *sierra*, a region of highland plateaus between the two Andean chains. Varied altitudes result in a climate ranging from tropical in the lowlands to temperate in the plateaus and cold in the high mountains. A variety of wildlife inhabits the Galapagos Islands, five large and nine small islands about 600 miles (966 kilometers) off Ecuador's coast in the Pacific Ocean.

**History and Politics.** In the 15th century, Incas conquered and united the area's various tribes. In the 1500s the Spanish gained control, using natives and African slaves to work the plantations. Weakened by the Napoleonic Wars, Spain lost control of Ecuador in 1822, and Simón Bolívar united the independent state with the Republic of Greater Colombia. Ecuador left the union as a separate republic in 1830, and subsequent years saw instability and rule by presidents, dictators, and juntas. From 1925 to 1948, no leader completed a full term in office. A new constitution was established in 1978. Elections in 1992 were won by the right-wing United Republican Party, committed to a privatization policy. After world crude oil prices dropped in 1993, Ecuador underwent a long period of austerity aimed at curbing inflation and stabilizing the economy. A long-standing border dispute with Peru was settled in 1999, freeing up money for badly needed economic reforms. ■

**EGYPT**

Official name Arab Republic of Egypt

**PEOPLE**

Population 66,660,000. Density 172/mi<sup>2</sup> (67/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 45%. Capital Cairo, 6,068,695. Ethnic groups Egyptian, Berber, Bedouin. Languages Arabic.

Religions Muslim 94%, Coptic Christian and others 6%. Life expectancy 64 female, 60 male. Literacy 51%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties National Democratic, Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships AL, OAU, UN. Subdivisions 26 governorates.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$287,100,000,000. Per capita \$4,164. Monetary unit Pound. Trade partners Exports: Italy, U.S., Germany. Imports: U.S., Germany, Italy. Exports Petroleum, petroleum products, cotton, textiles, metal products, chemicals. Imports Machinery and equipment, food, fertilizer, wood products, manufactures.

**LAND**

Description Northeastern Africa. Area 386,662 mi<sup>2</sup> (1,001,449 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Mt. Katina, 8,668 ft (2,642 m). Lowest point Qattara Depression, -436 ft (-133 m).

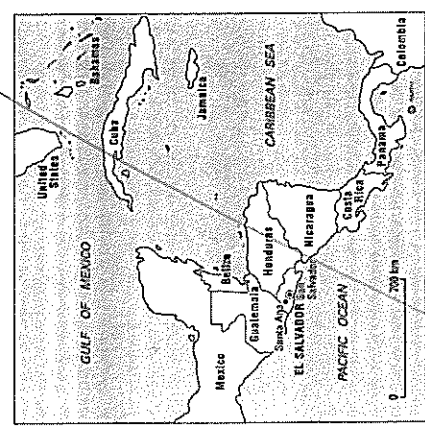
People. Egypt's population is relatively homogeneous, and Egyptians compose the largest group. Descended from ancient Nile Valley inhabitants, Egyptians have intermixed somewhat with Mediterranean and Asiatic peoples in the north and with black Africans in the south. Minorities include Bedouins, Arabic-speaking desert nomads; Nubians, black descendants of migrants from the Sudan; and Copts, a Christian group. Islam, the major religion, is also a cultural force; many Christians and Muslims lead Islamic life-styles. A desert terrain confines 99 percent of the population to less than four percent of the land, in the fertile Nile River valley and along the Suez Canal.

**Economy and the Land.** Egypt's economy has suffered from wars, shifting alliances, and limited natural resources. Government-sponsored expansion and reform in the 1950s concentrated on manufacturing, and most industry was nationalized during the 1960s. Agriculture, centered in the Nile Valley, remains an economic mainstay, and cotton, a principal crop, is both exported and processed. Petroleum is found mainly in the Gulf of Suez. Tourism is one of the country's most important economic activities. Much of Egypt is desert, with hills and mountains in the east and along the Nile River, while the climate is warm and dry.

**History and Politics.** Egypt's recorded history began when King Menes united the region around 3100 B.C., and began a series of Egyptian dynasties. Art and architecture flourished during the Age of the Pyramids, from 2700 to 2200 B.C. In time native dynasties gave way to foreign conquerors, including Alexander the Great in the 4th century B.C. The Coptic Christian church emerged between the 4th and 6th centuries A.D., but in the 600s Arabs conquered the area and established Islam as the main religion. Ruling parties changed frequently, and in 1517 the Ottoman Turks added Egypt to their empire. Upon completion of the strategically important Suez Canal in 1869, foreign interest in Egypt

increased. In 1875 Egypt sold its share of the canal to Britain, and British occupation in 1882 ended a rebellion against foreign intervention. Turkey sided with Germany in World War I, and the United Kingdom made Egypt a British protectorate in 1914. The country became an independent monarchy in 1922, but the British presence remained. In 1945 Egypt and six other countries formed the Arab League. The founding of Israel in 1948 initiated an era of Arab-Israeli hostilities, including periodic warfare in which Egypt often had a major role. Dissatisfaction over dealings with Israel and continued British occupation of the Suez Canal led to the overthrow of the king, and Egypt became a republic in 1953. Following a power struggle, Gamal Abdel Nasser was elected president in 1956, and the British agreed to remove their troops. Upon the death of Nasser in 1970, Vice President Anwar Sadat came to power. Negotiations between Egyptian president Sadat and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin began in 1977, and in 1979 the leaders signed a peace treaty ending conflicts between Egypt and Israel. As a result, Egypt was suspended from the Arab League until 1989. In 1981 President Sadat was assassinated and was succeeded by Hosni Mubarak, who faces a growing fundamentalist Muslim campaign of violence targeting tourists and government officers. ■

**EL SALVADOR**



**Official name** Republic of El Salvador  
**PEOPLE**  
 Population 5,797,000. Density 714/m<sup>2</sup> (276/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 45%. Capital San Salvador, 415,346. Ethnic groups Mestizo 94%, Amerindian 5%, white 1%. Languages Spanish, Nahuatl. Religions Roman Catholic 75%, Protestant 18%. Life expectancy 73 female, 66 male. Literacy 74%.  
**POLITICS**  
 Government Republic. Parties National Conciliation, National Liberation Front, National Republican Alliance.

others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships OAS, UN. Subdivisions 14 departments.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$17,800,000,000. Per capita \$3,027. Monetary unit Colon. Trade partners Exports: U.S., Guatemala, Germany. Imports: U.S., Guatemala, Japan. Exports Coffee, sugar cane, shrimp, textiles. Imports Raw materials, manufactures, machinery, fuels.

**LAND**

Description Central America. Area 6,124 mi<sup>2</sup> (21,041 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Cerro El Pital/8,957 ft (2,730 m). Lowest point Sea level.

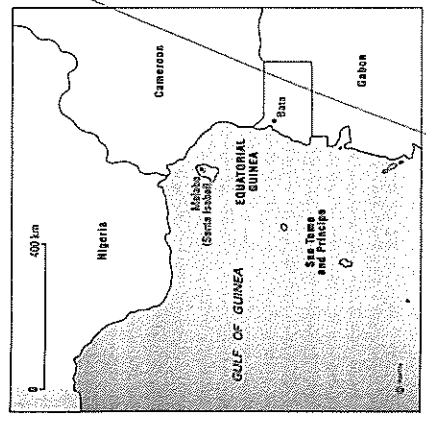
**People.** Most Salvadorans are Spanish-speaking mestizos, people of Spanish-Amerindian descent. An Amerindian minority is mainly descended from the Pipil, a Nahuatl group related to the Aztecs. The Nahuatl dialect is still spoken by some. El Salvador, the smallest Central American country in area, has the highest population density in mainland Latin America, with inhabitants concentrated in a central valley-and-plateau region.

**Economy and the Land.** El Salvador's economy has been plagued by political instability, low literacy, high population density, and high unemployment. Agriculture remains the economic mainstay of the region, and most arable land has been cultivated. Coffee, cotton, and sugar are produced on large commercial plantations, while subsistence farmers rely on corn, bean, and sorghum crops. In the 1990s the economy began to improve, becoming increasingly oriented toward manufacturing and services. East-to-west mountain ranges divide El Salvador into a southern coastal region, central valleys and plateaus, and northern mountains. El Salvador's climate is subtropical.

**History and Politics.** Maya and Pipil groups predominated the area of El Salvador prior to Spanish arrival. In the 1500s, Pipil defeated invading Spaniards but were conquered in a later invasion. In 1821, the Spanish-controlled Central American colonies declared independence, and in 1823 they united as the Federation of Central America. By 1838, the problem-ridden federation was in a state of collapse, and as the union dissolved, El Salvador became independent. With independence, however, came instability and revolution. The expansion of the coffee economy in the late 1800s exacerbated economic problems by further concentrating wealth and power among large estate holders. A dictatorship from 1931 to 1944 was followed by political instability under various military rulers. In 1969, a brief war with Honduras arose from resentment toward land-ownership laws, border disputes, and nationalistic feelings following a series of soccer games between the two countries. During the 1980s, the United States provided extensive military and economic aid in an attempt to moderate the El Salvadoran government. A 12-year civil war erupted and lasted until 1992. The transfer of land from a few major landowners

to subsistence farmers has been an important and difficult part of the peace process. ■

**EQUATORIAL GUINEA**



**Official name** Republic of Equatorial Guinea

**PEOPLE**

Population 460,000. Density 42/mi<sup>2</sup> (16/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 43%. Capital Malabo, Bioko I., 31,630. Ethnic groups Fang, Bubi. Languages Spanish, indigenous, English. Religions Roman Catholic and other Christian. Life expectancy 56 female, 52 male. Literacy 79%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties Democratic, others. Suffrage Universal adult. Memberships OAS, UN. Subdivisions 7 provinces.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$660,000,000. Per capita \$1,510. Monetary unit CFA franc. Trade partners Exports: Cameroon, Spain, Nigeria. Imports: U.S., Cameroon, Liberia. Exports Wood, cocoa, petroleum. Imports Petroleum, food, beverages, clothing, machinery.

**LAND**

Description Central Africa. Area 10,831 mi<sup>2</sup> (28,051 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Pico de Santa Isabel, 9,869 ft (3,008 m). Lowest point Sea level.

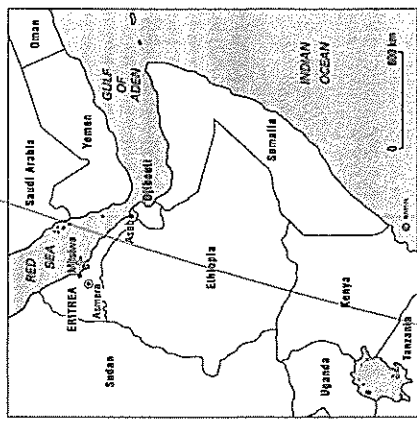
**People.** Several ethnic groups inhabit Equatorial Guinea's five islands, as well as the mainland region of Rio Muni. Although the majority Fang, a Bantu people, are concentrated in Rio Muni, they also inhabit Bioko, the largest island. Found mainly on Bioko Island are the minority Bubi, also a Bantu people. Coastal groups known as *players*, or "those who live on the beach," live on both the mainland and the small islands. The Fernando, of mixed African heritage, are concentrated on Bioko. Equatorial Guinea is the only black African state with Spanish as its official language.

**Economy and the Land.** Equatorial Guinea's economy is based on agriculture and forestry; cocoa, coffee, and wood are the main products.

Cocoa production is centered on fertile Bioko Island, and coffee in Rio Muni. The mainland's rain forests also provide for forestry. Mineral exploration has revealed large reserves of oil. Bioko is of volcanic origin, and Rio Muni consists of a coastal plain and interior hills. The climate is tropical, with high temperatures and humidity.

**History and Politics.** Pygmies most likely inhabited the Rio Muni area prior to the 13th century, when mainland Bubi came to Bioko. From the 17th to the 19th centuries, Bantu migrations brought first the coastal tribes and then the Fang. Portugal claimed Bioko and part of the mainland in the 1400s, ceding them to Spain in 1778. From 1827 to 1843, British anti-slavery activities were based on Bioko, which attracted many former slaves, the ancestors of the Fernando population. In 1959 the area became the Spanish Territory of the Gulf of Guinea, and its name was changed to Equatorial Guinea in 1963. It became independent in 1968. Opposition parties boycotted November 1993 elections, and a dictatorship remains in place. ■

**ERITREA**



**Official name** State of Eritrea

**PEOPLE**

Population 3,907,000. Density 108/mi<sup>2</sup> (42/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 17%. Capital Asmara, 358,100. Ethnic groups Tigray 50%, Tigre and Kunama 40%, Afar 4%, Saho 3%. Languages Arabic, Tigriña, Amharic, Kunama, Tigré, other. Religions Muslim, Coptic Christian, Roman Catholic, Protestant. Life expectancy 56 female, 53 male.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties Peoples Front for Democracy and Justice. Memberships OAU, UN. Subdivisions 6 administrative regions.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$2,200,000,000. Per capita \$588. Monetary unit Nakfa. Trade partners Exports: Ethiopia, Sudan.

El Salvador, Costa Rica. Imports: U.S., Mexico, El Salvador. Exports Coffee, sugar, bananas, cardamom, petroleum. Imports Petroleum products, machinery, grain, fertilizer, transportation equipment.

**LAND**

Description Central America. Area 42,042 mi<sup>2</sup> (108,869 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Volcán Tajumulco, 13,845 ft (4,220 m). Lowest point Sea level.

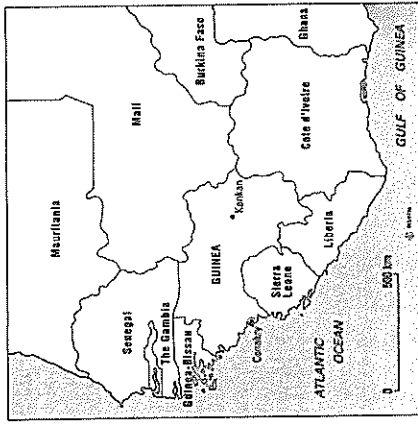
People. Guatemala's population is made up of majority ladinos and minority Amerindians. Ladinos include both mestizos, those of Spanish-American origin, and westernized Amerindians of Mayan descent. Classified on the basis of culture rather than race, ladinos follow a Spanish-American lifestyle and speak Spanish. Non-ladino Amerindians are of Mayan descent and speak several Mayan dialects. Many are poor, uneducated, and suffer from persecution. Roman Catholicism here often combines with traditional Mayan religious practice. Population is concentrated in the central highlands.

**Economy and the Land.** Most Guatemalans practice agriculture in some form. Amerindians generally operate small subsistence farms. Export crops are produced mainly on large plantations on the fertile southern plain that borders the Pacific. Although light industry is growing, it is unable to absorb rural immigrants seeking employment in the cities. Much of the landscape is mountainous, with the Pacific plain and Caribbean lowlands bordering central highlands. Northern rain forests and grasslands are sparsely populated and largely undeveloped. The climate is tropical in low areas and temperate in the highlands.

**History and Politics.** Indigenous Amerindians in the region were absorbed into the Mayan civilization that flourished in Central America by the fourth century. In 1523, the Spanish defeated the Maya and went on to establish one of the most influential colonies in Central America. Guatemala joined Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras in 1821 to declare independence from Spain, and the former Spanish colonies formed the Federation of Central America in 1823. Almost from the start, the federation was marked by dissension, and by 1838 it had, in effect, been dissolved. Following a series of dictatorships, social and economic reform began in 1944 and continued under two successive presidents. The government was ousted in a United States-backed 1954 coup, and military rule was established. In 1965, the country returned to a civilian government. The years following were marked by corruption and some of the worse human rights abuses in Central America. Guerillas signed a peace accord in 1996 that included more financial support and political power for the rural poor. In a surprise setback, voters rejected a set of reforms that grew out of this agreement, apparently because of misunderstanding and mistrust of the government.

**GUERNSEY** See UNITED KINGDOM.

**GUINEA**



Official name Republic of Guinea

**PEOPLE**

Population 7,508,000. Density 79/mi<sup>2</sup> (31/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 30%. Capital Conakry, 950,000. Ethnic groups Fulani 35%, Malinke 30%, Susu 20%, others. Languages French, indigenous. Religions Muslim 65%, Christian 8%, Animist 7%. Life expectancy 49 female, 44 male. Literacy 38%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties Party for Unity and Progress, Rally for the Guinean People, Union for a New Republic, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships OAU, UN. Subdivisions 33 regions.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$6,300,000,000. Per capita \$1,103. Monetary unit Franc. Trade partners Exports: U.S., Belgium, Ireland, Spain. Imports: France, Côte d'Ivoire, U.S. Exports Alumina, bauxite, diamonds, gold, coffee, pineapples, bananas, palm kernels. Imports Petroleum products, metals, machinery and transportation equipment, food.

**LAND**

Description Western Africa. Area 94,926 mi<sup>2</sup> (245,857 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Mont Nimba, 5,748 ft (1,752 m). Lowest point Sea level.

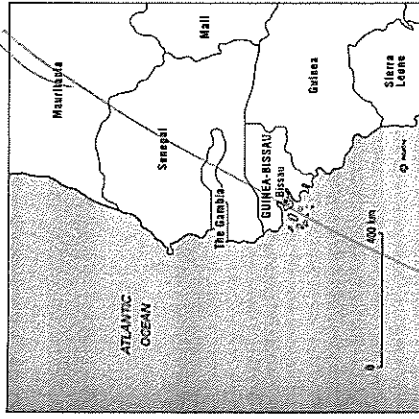
People. Guinea's population is composed of several ethnic groups, with three—the Fulani, Malinke, and Susu—forming the majority. Most Guineans are rural farmers, living in hamlets, and the only true urban center is Conakry. Mortality as well as emigration rates are high. Eight languages besides French, the language of the colonial power, are taught in the schools.

**Economy and the Land.** Rich soil and a varied terrain suited for diverse crop production have made agriculture an important economic activity. Guinea also has vast mineral reserves,

including one of the world's largest bauxite deposits. Centralized economic planning and state enterprise have characterized the republic, but Guinea now encourages private and foreign investments. The terrain is mostly flat along the coast and mountainous in the interior. The climate is tropical on the coast, hot and dry in the north and northeast, and cooler with less humidity in the highlands.

**History and Politics.** As part of the Ghana, Mali, and Songhai empires that flourished in West Africa between the 4th and 15th centuries, Guinea was a trading center for gold and slaves. The Portuguese arrived on the coast in the 1400s, and European competition for Guinean trade soon began. In the 1890s France declared the area a colony and named it French Guinea. After World War II a movement for autonomy began with a series of reforms by the French and the growth of a labor movement headed by Sékou Touré, later the country's first president. The first French colony in West Africa to attain independence, in 1958 Guinea was also the only colony to reject membership in the French Community. The country's first multiparty elections were held in December 1993 amid violence and confusion. A 1996 coup attempt was put down.

**GUINEA-BISSAU**



Official name Republic of Guinea-Bissau

**PEOPLE**

Population 1,220,000. Density 87/mi<sup>2</sup> (34/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 22%. Capital Bissau, 125,000. Ethnic groups Balanta 30%, Fulani 20%, Manjaca 14%, Malinke 13%, Papel 7%. Languages Portuguese, Crioulo, indigenous. Religions Tribal religionist 65%, Muslim 30%, Christian 5%. Life expectancy 51 female, 47 male. Literacy 54%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties African Party for Independence, Resistance-Bah Fatah Movement,

Social Renovation, others. Suffrage Universal, 15 and over. Memberships OAU, UN. Subdivisions 9 regions.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$1,150,000,000. Per capita \$1,035. Monetary unit Peco. Trade partners Exports: Spain, India, Thailand. Imports: Thailand, Portugal. Exports Cashews, fish, peanuts, palm kernels, lumber. Imports Food, transportation equipment, petroleum products, machinery, equipment.

**LAND**

Description Western Africa. Area 13,948 mi<sup>2</sup> (36,125 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point 660 ft (202 m). Lowest point Sea level.

People. Guinea-Bissau's largest ethnic group, the Balanta, mainly inhabit the coastal area. Most practice traditional beliefs, although some are Christian. Predominately Muslim peoples, the Fulani and Malinke are concentrated in the northwest. The Manjaca inhabit the northern and central coastal regions. Although the official language is Portuguese, many speak Crioulo, a creole dialect also spoken in Cape Verde.

**Economy and the Land.** Guinea-Bissau's

economy is underdeveloped and dependent upon agriculture. Peanuts, cotton, corn, and sorghum are grown in the north, and palm oil production is concentrated along the coast. Timber is produced primarily in the south. Fishing, especially shrimp production, has increased since 1976. Bauxite deposits have been located, and exploration for additional resources continues. Mineral exploitation is hindered by a lack of transportation routes, however. A swamp-covered coastal plain rises to an eastern savanna. The climate is tropical. The country includes the Bijagos Archipelago, which lies just off the coast.

**History and Politics.** The area of Guinea-Bissau was inhabited by diverse peoples prior to the arrival of the Portuguese in 1446. Ruled as a single colony with Cape Verde, the region soon developed into a base for the Portuguese slave trade. In 1879 it was separated from Cape Verde as Portuguese Guinea, and its status changed to overseas province in 1951. A movement for the independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde developed in the 1950s, and a coup in Portugal in 1974 resulted in independence the same year. Attempts to unite Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde were unsuccessful, and a 1980 coup installed an anti-unification government. The country's first multiparty presidential elections were held in July 1994. In May 1999 a renegade army ousted the president. An interim government will rule the country until elections planned for November 1999.

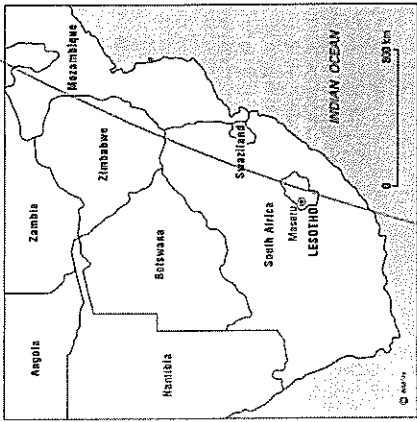
**GUYANA**

Official name Co-operative Republic of Guyana

**PEOPLE**

Population 706,000. Density 8.5/mi<sup>2</sup> (3.3/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 36%. Capital Georgetown, 78,500. Ethnic





**POLITICS**  
Government Constitutional monarchy under military rule. Parties Basotho Congress, others. Suffrage Universal, 21 and over. Memberships CW, OAU, UN. Subdivisions 10 districts.

**ECONOMY**  
GDP \$5,100,000,000. Per capita \$2,564. Monetary unit Loti. Trade partners South Africa Customs Union, North America. Exports Clothing, footwear, wool, mohair, road vehicles. Imports Corn, clothing, building materials, vehicles, machinery, medicines, fuels.

**LAND**  
Description Southern Africa, landlocked. Area 11,720 mi<sup>2</sup> (30,855 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Mt. Nlaniyana, 11,425 ft (3,482 m). Lowest point Along Orange River, 5,000 ft (1,524 m).

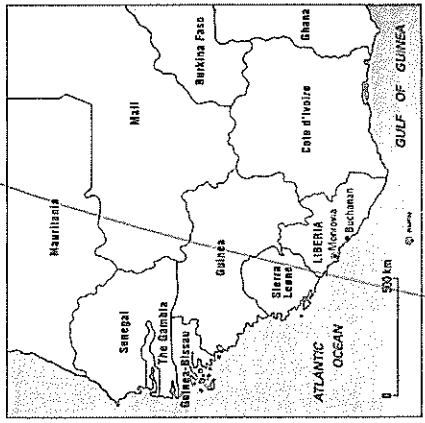
**People.** The Sotho, a black African group, comprise almost all of Lesotho's population. Most Sotho live in the lowlands and raise livestock and crops. The official languages are Sesotho, a Bantu tongue, and English. The traditional religion is based on ancestor worship, though most Sotho are Roman Catholic. A system of tribal chieftaincy is followed locally.

**Economy and the Land.** Surrounded by South Africa (and having few resources, Lesotho is almost entirely dependent on South Africa for economic survival. Much of the male population must seek employment there, usually spending several months a year in South African mines or industries. Agriculture remains at the subsistence level, and soil erosion threatens production. Livestock raising represents a significant part of Lesotho's economy. Wool and mohair are among the chief exports. Diamond mining, one of the few industries, employs a small portion of the population. Most of the terrain is mountainous; the fairly high elevations give Lesotho a temperate climate.

**History and Politics.** Refugees from tribal wars in southern Africa arrived in what is now Lesotho between the 16th and 19th centuries A.D. Chief Moshosho united the Sotho tribes in 1818 and led them in war against the Boers, settlers of

Dutch or Huguenot descent. At Moshosho's request, Basutoland came under British protection in 1868. It resisted attempts at absorption by the Union of South Africa and became the independent kingdom of Lesotho in 1966. The country was governed by a Council of Ministers until 1986, when the military took over. In 1990 King Moshosho was deposed, but he was returned to the throne in 1995 in an attempt by the government to restore political stability. After his death in 1996, his son King Letsie III succeeded him. In 1998 South Africa moved troops in to quell a rebellion, and the economy was badly damaged. ■

**LIBERIA**



Official name Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

**PEOPLE**  
Population 2,862,000. Density 75/mi<sup>2</sup> (29/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 48%. Capital Monrovia, 465,000. Ethnic groups Indigenous African 95%, descendants of freed American slaves 5%. Languages English, indigenous. Religions Animist 70%, Muslim 20%, Christian 10%. Life expectancy 62 female, 57 male. Literacy 38%.

**POLITICS**  
Government Republic. Parties Action, National Democratic, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships OAU, UN. Subdivisions 13 counties.

**ECONOMY**  
GDP \$2,600,000,000. Per capita \$1,254. Monetary unit Dólar. Trade partners Exports: Germany, U.S., Italy. Imports: U.S., Germany, Belgium. Exports Iron ore, rubber, limber, coffee, diamonds. Imports Fuel, chemicals, machinery, transportation equipment, manufactures, rice.

**LAND**  
Description Western Africa. Area 38,250 mi<sup>2</sup> (99,067 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Mt. Wuteve, 4,528 ft (1,380 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People.** Most Liberians belong to one of about 20 indigenous black groups. Few of them are descended from the freed American slaves



Petroleum, petroleum products, natural gas. Imports Machinery, transportation equipment, food, manufactures.

**LAND**

Description Northern Africa. Area 679,362 mi<sup>2</sup> (1,759,540 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Birka BWR, 7,438 ft (2,267 m). Lowest point Sabkhat Ghuzayfi, -154 ft (-47 m).

**People.** Libya, originally settled by Berbers, is largely a mix of Arab and Berber today. Almost all Libyans live along the coast, with some nomadic groups in desert areas. Large migrations from rural areas to the cities have accompanied Libya's oil-based prosperity. Islam is the majority religion, and nearly all Libyans speak Arabic. Traditional social orders still exist, despite centuries of foreign rule.

**Economy and the Land.** The discovery of oil in 1959 propelled Libya from the ranks of the world's poorest countries to one of its leading oil producers. It has used these revenues to develop industry and agriculture to diversify its economy. Most of Libya is covered by the Sahara Desert, and the limited agriculture has been further hurt by Libyan farmers migrating to the cities. The climate is desert except for the coast, which has moderate temperatures.

**History and Politics.** For much of its history, Libya was dominated by Mediterranean empires: Phoenician, Carthaginian, Greek, and Roman. In the 7th century A.D. the area was taken by Muslim Arabs, whose language and religion transformed Libyan culture. Although the Ottoman Turks conquered the region in the 16th century, local rulers remained virtually autonomous. Italy invaded Libya in 1911, and the country became an Italian colony in 1912. Following World War II, British and French forces occupied the area until a United Nations resolution made Libya an independent country in 1951. A monarchy ruled until 1969, when a military coup established a republic headed by Colonel Mu'ammār al-Qadhafi. Under his leadership, Libya has backed Arab unity and the Palestinian cause, opposed foreign influences,

who founded modern Liberia, but this relatively small group—known as Americo-Liberians—has traditionally been politically dominant. The official language is English, but more than 20 other tongues are also spoken. Most people are farmers and practice traditional religious beliefs, although Islam and Christianity also have adherents. Liberia is the only black African state to have escaped colonialism.

**Economy and the Land.** Before the recent war, Liberia owed its healthy economy largely to an open-door policy, which had made its extensive resources attractive to foreign countries. Two of the most important activities—iron-ore mining and rubber production—were developed by western firms. Large timber reserves have not yet been fully exploited. Liberia also profits from the vast merchant fleet registered under its flag. The land is characterized by a coastal plain, plateaus, and low mountains, while the hot, humid climate is marked by distinct wet and dry seasons.

**History and Politics.** Early settlers are thought to have migrated from the north and east between the 12th and 17th centuries A.D. Trade between Europeans and coastal groups developed after the Portuguese visited the area in the late 1400s. The American Colonization Society, a private United States organization devoted to resettling freed slaves, purchased land in Liberia, and in 1822 the first settlers landed at the site of Monrovia. The settlers declared their independence in 1847, setting up a government based on the U.S. model and creating Africa's first independent republic. For the next century, Liberia endured French and British attempts at colonization, as well as internal tribal opposition. The string of Americo-Libyan rulers was broken in 1980 when a group of African soldiers toppled the government and imposed martial law. A series of splinter groups have run the country since, overseen by foreign peacekeepers who withdrew in 1998 without achieving peace. Former warlord Charles Taylor was elected in 1997. Charges of human rights abuses continue. ■

**LIBYA** → Mosh Benzer

Official name Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

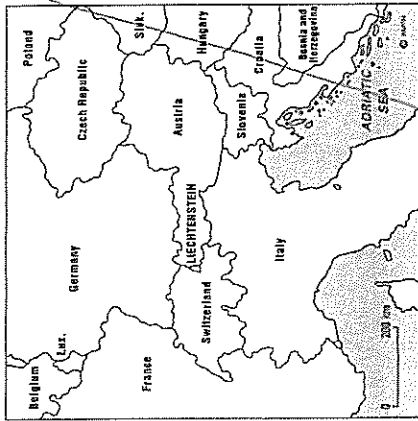
**PEOPLE**  
Population 4,934,000. Density 7.3/mi<sup>2</sup> (2.8/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 66%. Capital Tripoli, 591,062. Ethnic groups Arab-Berber 97%. Languages Arabic. Religions Sunni Muslim 97%. Life expectancy 68 female, 63 male. Literacy 97%.

**POLITICS**  
Government Socialist republic. Parties None. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships AL, OAU, OPEC, UN. Subdivisions 13 municipalities.

**ECONOMY**  
GDP \$38,000,000,000. Per capita \$6,855. Monetary unit Dinar. Trade partners Exports: Italy, Germany, Spain. Imports: Italy, Germany, U.K. Exports

and created a welfare system. Libya's support of terrorist activities resulted in a controversial United States air strike against the country in 1986, and in UN sanctions that were lifted in 1999.

**LIECHTENSTEIN**



Official name Principality of Liechtenstein

**PEOPLE**  
 Population 32,000. Density 516/mi<sup>2</sup> (200/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 21%. Capital Vaduz. 5,085. Ethnic groups Liechtensteiner (Alemannic) 95%. Languages German. Religions Roman Catholic 81%. Protestant 7%. Life expectancy 81 female, 76 male/Literacy 100%.

**POLITICS**

Government Constitutional monarchy. Parties Fatherland Union, Progressivye Citizens', Free List. Suffrage Universal, 20 and over. Memberships UN. Subdivisions 11 communes.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$713,000,000. Per capita \$23,000. Monetary unit Swiss franc. Trade partners European Union. Exports Machinery, dental products, stamps, hardware, pottery. Imports Machinery, metal goods, textiles, food, motor vehicles.

**LAND**

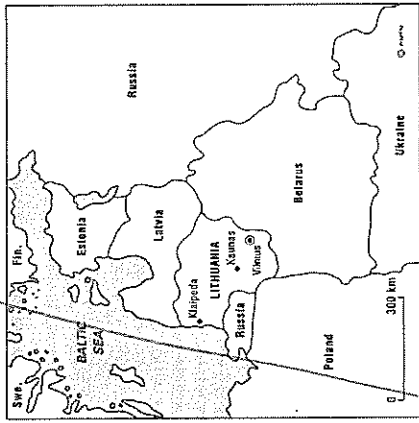
Description Central Europe, landlocked. Area 62 mi<sup>2</sup> (160 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Vorder Grauspitz, 8,527 ft (2,599 m). Lowest point Ruggeller Ried, 1,411 ft (430 m).

People. In spite of its location at the crossroads of Europe, Liechtenstein has retained a largely homogeneous ethnicity. Almost all Liechtensteiners are descended from Germanic tribes, and German is the official language. Roman Catholicism is the most widely practiced religion, but a Protestant minority also exists. Most of the country is mountainous, and population is concentrated on the fertile plains adjacent to the Rhine River, which forms the country's western boundary. Most Liechtensteiners work in factories or in trades.

**Economy and the Land.** The last few decades have seen the economy shift from agricultural to highly industrialized. An economic alliance with Switzerland dating from 1923 has been profoundly beneficial to Liechtenstein: the two countries form a customs union and use the same currency. Other important sources of revenue are tourism, the sale of postage stamps, and taxation of foreign businesses headquartered here. Most of Liechtenstein, one of the world's smallest countries, is covered by the Alps; nonetheless, its climate is mild.

**History and Politics.** Early inhabitants of what is now Liechtenstein included the Celts, Romans, and Alemanni, who arrived about A.D. 500. The area became part of the empire of the Frankish King Charlemagne in the late 700s, and following Charlemagne's death it was divided into the lordships of Vaduz and Schellenberg. By 1719, when the state became part of the Holy Roman Empire, the Austrian House of Liechtenstein had purchased both lordships, uniting them as the Imperial Principality of Liechtenstein. The country's independence dates from the abolition of the empire by France's Napoleon Bonaparte in 1806. Liechtenstein was neutral in both world wars and has remained unaffected by European conflicts. The government is a hereditary constitutional monarchy; the prince is the head of the House of Liechtenstein, thus chief of state, and the prime minister is the head of government. Women gained the right to vote in 1984.

**LITHUANIA**



Official name Republic of Lithuania

**PEOPLE**  
 Population 3,592,000. Density 142/mi<sup>2</sup> (55/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 73%. Capital Vilnius. 578,639. Ethnic groups Lithuanian 80%, Russian 9%, Polish 8%, Byelorussian 2%. Languages Lithuanian, Polish, Russian. Religions Roman Catholic, Lutheran. Life expectancy 75 female, 63 male. Literacy 98%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties Center Union, Christian Democratic, Conservative, Democratic Labor, others. Suffrage Universal, 16 and over. Memberships UN. Subdivisions 44 regions, 11 municipalities.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$15,400,000,000. Per capita \$4,232. Monetary unit Litas. Trade partners Exports: Russia, Germany, Latvia. Imports: Russia, Germany, Ukraine. Exports Food, mineral products, textiles, machinery, livestock. Imports Mineral products, machinery, transport equipment, chemicals, textiles.

**LAND**

Description Eastern Europe. Area 25,212 mi<sup>2</sup> (65,300 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Juozapinas Hill, 965 ft (294 m). Lowest point Sea level.

People. Lithuanians are a Baltic people related to the Latvians. Although about 80 percent of the people are ethnic Lithuanians, Russian immigrants held many key positions in Lithuania under Soviet rule. Lithuanians also chafed under Soviet rules restricting religion because most are devoutly Roman Catholic. Lithuanians are known for their fine singing and splendid choral festivals.

**Economy and the Land.** Prior to Soviet rule,

Lithuania was predominately rural with an agricultural economy based on meat and dairy products. Today the Lithuanian economy is dependent on industrial production, although it lacks significant mineral fuel deposits. The country has suffered from a severe oil shortage since independence when the Russians ceased to supply subsidized oil. The land is generally flat. There are fine white-sand beaches along the coastline of the Baltic Sea.

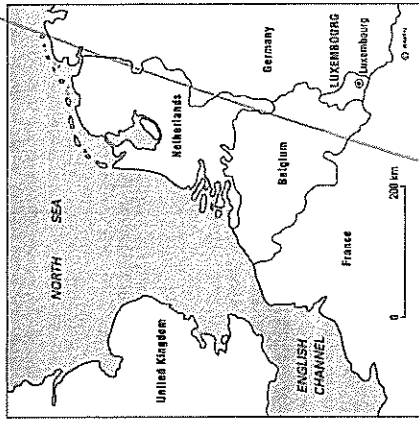
**History and Politics.** Unlike the neighboring Soviet republics of Latvia and Estonia, Lithuania has had a long tradition of independence. By the mid-1300s, Lithuania extended from the Baltic to the Black seas, and was a major regional power. Close political association with Poland led to a merger in 1569 and eventual annexation by Russia in the late 19th century. In 1918, Lithuania again claimed its independence, which it enjoyed until 1940 when it was overtaken by the Soviets. Stalin killed or deported about one-third of the Lithuanian population. Friction between Lithuania and the Soviet Union increased after the introduction of glasnost fueled Lithuanian aspirations for independence. A Soviet invasion in early 1991 was followed by international recognition of Lithuania as an independent state later in the year. The Lithuanians' disillusionment with their lagging economy led to a surprise victory by the ex-Communist Democratic Labor Party in October 1992, but by 1998 a more moderate regime was back in power.

**LUXEMBOURG**

Official name Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

**PEOPLE**

Population 427,000. Density 427/mi<sup>2</sup> (165/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban



90%. Capital Luxembourg, 75,377. Ethnic groups Luxembourgier (mixed Celtic, French, and German). Languages French, Luxembourgish, German. Religions Roman Catholic 97%, Jewish and Protestant 3%. Life expectancy 81 female, 74 male. Literacy 100%.

**POLITICS**

Government Constitutional monarchy. Parties Christian Socialist, Democratic, Socialist Workers, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships EU, NATO, OECD, UN. Subdivisions 3 districts.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$13,480,000,000. Per capita \$32,172. Monetary unit Franc. Trade partners Exports: Germany, France, Belgium. Imports: Belgium, Germany, France. Exports Aluminum, industrial products, steel goods, chemicals, rubber products, glass. Imports minerals, metals, food, consumer goods.

**LAND**

Description Western Europe, landlocked. Area 998 mi<sup>2</sup> (2,586 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Buurplatz, 1,834 ft. (559 m). Lowest point Confluence of Moselle and Sûre Rivers, 427 ft (130 m).

People. Luxembourg's population bears the imprint of foreign influences, yet retains an individual character. Most Luxembourgers are a blend of Celtic, French, and German stock. French is an official language, as is Luxembourgish, an indigenous German dialect. Roman Catholicism is observed by virtually all the population. There are significant communities of guest workers from several European countries.

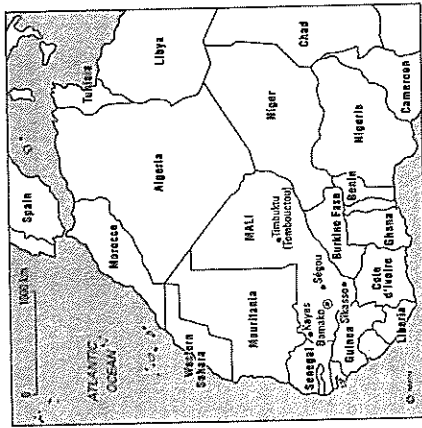
**Economy and the Land.** Luxembourg's industrial sector, previously dominated by steelmaking, has been diversified toward high technology, plastics and chemicals to compensate for the decline in demand for steel. Tourism and financial services, including banking, also have become more important. Luxembourg's trade benefits from the country's membership in the European Community and the Benelux union. Luxembourg has two distinct regions: the mountainous, wooded north and the open, rolling south, known as Bon Pays. The climate is temperate.

**Economy and the Land.** The country draws on its advantages as a union of 1,100 islands to fuel its economy, which consists of tourism, shipping, and fishing. With limited arable land and infertile soil, agriculture is marginal. The Maldives' flat coral islands, form a chain of 19 atolls. Seasonal monsoons mark the tropical climate.

**History and Politics.** The Maldives are believed to have been originally settled by southern Indian peoples. Arab sailors brought Islam to the islands in the 12th century A.D. Although a Muslim sultanate remained in power with only two interruptions from 1153 until 1968, the Portuguese and Dutch controlled the islands intermittently between the 1500s and the 1700s. The Maldives were a British protectorate from 1887 until 1965, when they achieved their independence. The country was declared a republic three years later.

**MALI**

→ Gony



Official name Republic of Mali

**PEOPLE**  
 Population 10,275,000. Density 21/mi<sup>2</sup> (8.2/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 28%. Capital Bamako, 658,275. Ethnic groups Mande 50%, Fulani 17%, Voltaic 12%, Songhai 6%. Languages French, Bambara, indigenous. Religions Sunni Muslim 90%, Animist 9%, Christian 1%. Life expectancy 48 female, 46 male. Literacy 31%.

**POLITICS**  
 Government Republic. Parties Alliance for Democracy, National Congress for Democratic Initiative, Sudanese Union/African Democratic, others. Suffrage Universal, 21 and over. Memberships OAU, UN. Subdivisions 8 regions, 1 capital district.

**ECONOMY**  
 GDP \$6,000,000,000. Per capita \$612. Monetary unit CFA franc. Trade partners Exports: Cote d'Ivoire, France, Senegal. Imports: France, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal. Exports Livestock, cotton, gold. Imports Textiles, petroleum, machinery and equipment, construction materials, food.

**LAND**

Description Western Africa, landlocked. Area 482,077 mi<sup>2</sup> (1,248,574 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Fombori Min., 3,789 ft (1,155 m). Lowest point Along Senegal River, 75 ft (23 m).

**People.** The majority of Malians belong to one of several black groups, although there is a small non-black nomadic population that includes the Tuareg, who launched a rebellion in 1990. The Tuareg continue to resist the government's efforts to encourage them to settle and farm. Most Malians are farmers who live in small villages. The official language is French, but most people communicate in Bambara, a market language. The population is concentrated in the basins of the Niger and Senegal rivers in the south. Heirs of three ancient empires, Malians have produced a distinct culture.

**Economy and the Land.** One of the poorest countries in the world, Mali depends primarily on agriculture but is limited by a climate that produces drought and a terrain that is almost half desert. Mineral reserves have not been exploited because of poor transportation and power facilities. Food processing and textiles account for most industry. A landlocked country, Mali faces a growing national debt due to its dependence on foreign goods. The climate is hot and dry, with alternating dry and wet seasons.

**History and Politics.** Parts of present-day Mali once belonged to the Ghana, Mali, and Songhai empires. These wealthy empires, which ruled from about A.D. 300 to 1600, traded with the Mediterranean world and were centers of Islamic learning. Fierce native resistance delayed French colonization until 1904, when French Sudan, as the area was called, was made part of French West Africa. In 1959 it joined Senegal to form the Federation of Mali. Senegal soon withdrew from the union, and French Sudan declared itself the Republic of Mali in 1960. In 1968 a military coup overthrew the republic, a socialist state. This government, in turn, was overthrown and the country has since moved haltingly toward democracy.

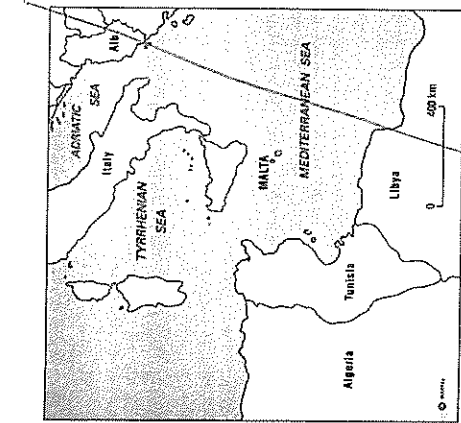
**MALTA**

Official name Republic of Malta

**PEOPLE**  
 Population 381,000. Density 3,123/mi<sup>2</sup> (1,206/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 90%. Capital Valletta, 7,262. Ethnic groups Maltese (mixed Arab, Sicilian, Norman, Spanish, Italian, and English). Languages English, Maltese, Italian. Religions Roman Catholic 98%. Life expectancy 80 female, 75 male. Literacy 88%.

**POLITICS**  
 Government Republic. Parties Labor, Nationalist. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships CW, UN. Subdivisions 6 regions.

**ECONOMY**  
 GDP \$4,900,000,000. Per capita \$12,968. Monetary unit Lira. Trade partners Exports: Italy, Germany,



France. Imports: Italy, Germany, U.K. Exports Machinery and transportation equipment, clothing, footwear, printed matter. Imports: Food, petroleum, machinery, semimanufactured goods.

**LAND**  
 Description Mediterranean island. Area 122 mi<sup>2</sup> (316 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point 829 ft (253 m). Lowest point Sea level.

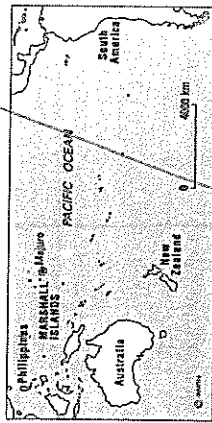
**People.** Malta's diverse population reflects centuries of rule by Arabs, Normans, and British. The official languages are English and Maltese, the latter a blend of Arabic and a Sicilian dialect of Italian. Roman Catholicism is practiced by the majority of residents. Malta is one of the world's most densely populated countries.

**Economy and the Land.** Situated strategically between Europe and Africa, Malta became an important military site for foreign powers with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Its economy, shaped by the patterns of war and peace in the Mediterranean, has recently turned toward commercial shipbuilding, construction, manufacturing, and tourism. Its soil is poor, and most food is imported. Although there are many natural harbors and hundreds of miles of coastline, fishing is not a major source of income. Malta, with its hilly terrain, is subtropical in summer and temperate the rest of the year.

**History and Politics.** The Phoenicians and Carthaginians first colonized the island of Malta between 1000 and 600 B.C. After becoming part of the Roman and Byzantine empires, Malta was ruled successively by Arabs, Normans, and various feudal lords. In the 1500s, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V ceded Malta to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, an order of the Roman Catholic church. The Knights' reign, marked by cultural and architectural achievements, ended with surrender to France's Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798. The Maltese resisted French rule and offered control to Britain, becoming part of the United Kingdom in 1814. Throughout both world wars, Malta was a vital naval base for the Allied

forces. It achieved independence from Britain in 1964 and became a republic ten years later. In 1979, the last British and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military forces departed, and Malta declared its neutrality.

**MARSHALL ISLANDS**



Official name Republic of the Marshall Islands

**PEOPLE**

Population 64,000. Density 914/mi<sup>2</sup> (354/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 70%. Capital Majuro (island). Ethnic groups Micronesians. Languages English, indigenous, Japanese. Religions Protestant, Roman Catholic. Life expectancy 66 female, 63 male. Literacy 93%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic (U.S. protection). Parties Our Islands, Ralik Ratak Democratic. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships UN. Subdivisions None.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$98,000,000. Per capita \$1,719. Monetary unit U.S. dollar. Trade partners U.S., Japan, Australia. Exports Coconut/oil, fish, shells. Imports Food, machinery and equipment, fuel, beverages, tobacco.

**LAND**

Description North Pacific islands. Area 70 mi<sup>2</sup> (181 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point 80 ft (24 m). Lowest point Sea level.

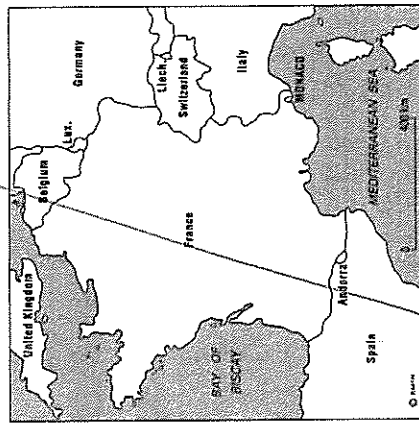
**People.** Most Marshall Islanders are Micronesian, although there is a Polynesian minority. Both English and Malay-Polynesian languages are spoken on the islands.

**Economy and the Land.** The main industry of the Marshall Islands is coconuts, and many islanders continue to practice subsistence farming and fishing. The islands depend on economic aid from the United States. Part of the area of the Pacific Ocean known as Micronesia, the two major island groups are the eastern Ratak Chain and the western Ralik Chain. The coral islands are mostly flat and low-lying, and the climate is hot and rainy.

**History and Politics.** The history of the Marshall Islands prior to the arrival of Europeans is largely unknown, but it is likely that the earliest settlers came from Southeast Asia. The islands received their name from Captain John Marshall, a Briton who reached the Marshalls in 1788. In the 1880s the Marshall Islands became a German protectorate, and in 1914, during World War I, Japan seized the islands. During World War II, the U.S.

**History and Politics.** Formerly known as Bessarabia, this region was ruled by Romanian-speaking Moldovan princes beginning in the 1300s. Bessarabia fell under the control of the Ottoman Turks from the 1600s until 1812, when the Turks were defeated by Russia. In 1918, control went to Romania and the territory was subsequently shifted back and forth between the two countries. In 1944 the Soviet Union defeated Romania and the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic was established. Moldovans began agitating for greater autonomy within the Soviet Union as early as 1989. They achieved their independence in December 1991 after the Soviet Union collapsed. A new 1994 constitution established Moldova as a neutral republic. Moldovans have since fended off pressures from neighboring Romania and Ukraine, as well as from secessionists within. ■

**MONACO**



Official name Principality of Monaco

**PEOPLE**  
Population 32,000. Density 40,000/mi<sup>2</sup> (16,000/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 100%. Capital Monaco, 32,000. Ethnic groups French 47%, Monegasque 16%, Italian 16%. Languages French, English, Italian, Monegasque. Religions Roman Catholic 95%. Life expectancy 82 female, 75 male.

**POLITICS**  
Government Constitutional monarchy. Parties National and Democratic Union. Suffrage Universal, 21 and over. Memberships UN. Subdivisions 3 communes.

**ECONOMY**  
GDP \$800,000,000. Per capita \$25,000. Monetary unit French franc.

**LAND**

Description Southern Europe (on the southeastern coast of France). Area 0.7 mi<sup>2</sup> (1.9 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point 459 ft (140 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People.** Monaco is inhabited mostly by French citizens, while Monegasques—citizens of indigenous descent—and various Europeans form the rest of the population. Many foreigners have taken up residence, drawn by the country's tax benefits. French is the official language/Monegasque, a blend of French and Italian, is also spoken, as are Italian and English. Most residents are Roman Catholic.

**Economy and the Land.** Monaco's scenic seaside location, mild Mediterranean climate, and renowned gambling casino in Monte Carlo make it a popular tourist haven. Consequently, tourism forms the backbone of the economy. Production of chemicals, food products, and perfumes, among other light industries, are additional sources of income. Monaco also profits from many foreign businesses, which are attracted by the favorable tax climate and headquartered in the principality. France and Monaco form a customs union for a mutually beneficial trade system; the French franc is Monaco's official currency. The world's second-smallest independent state in area—after Vatican City—Monaco has four regions: the old city of Monaco-Ville, site of the royal palace; Monte Carlo, the resort and major tourist center; La Condamine, the port area; and Fontvieille, the rapidly growing industrial section.

**History and Politics.** Known to the Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans, the region became a Genoese colony in the 12th century A.D. Around the turn of the 14th century, the area was granted to the Grimaldi family of Genoa. France, Spain, and Sardinia had intermittent control of Monaco from 1400 until 1861, when its autonomy was recognized by the Franco-Monegasque Treaty. Another treaty providing for French protection of Monaco, was signed in 1918. The absolute rule of Monaco's princes ended with the 1911 constitution. Monaco joined the United Nations in 1993. ■

**MONGOLIA**

Official name Mongolia

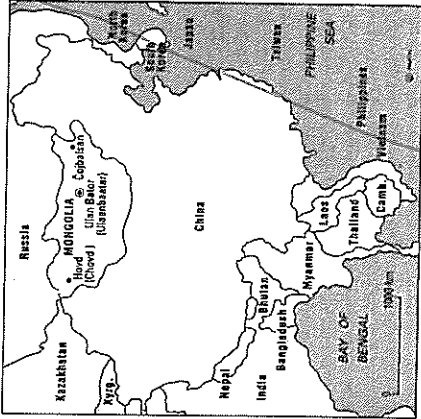
**PEOPLE**  
Population 2,599,000. Density 4.3/mi<sup>2</sup> (1.7/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 61%. Capital Ulan Bator, 616,900. Ethnic groups Mongol 90%, Kazakh 4%, Chinese 2%, Russian/2%. Languages Khalkha Mongol, Turkish, Russian. Chinese. Religions Tibetan Buddhist, Muslim. Life expectancy 64 female, 59 male. Literacy 83%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties National Democratic, People's Revolutionary, Social Democratic, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships UN. Subdivisions 18 provinces, 3 municipalities.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$5,600,000,000. Per capita \$2,223. Monetary unit Tugrik. Trade partners Russia, China. Exports Copper, livestock, animal products, cashmere, wool, hides, nonferrous metals. Imports Machinery.



equipment, fuel, food, manufactures, chemicals, building materials.

**LAND**

Description Central Asia, landlocked. Area 604,829 mi<sup>2</sup> (1,566,500 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Kuytun-Jul, 14,350 ft (4,374 m). Lowest point Hoh Lake, 1,837 ft (560 m).

**People.** Mongols, a central Asian people, make up the vast majority of Mongolia's population. Khalkha Mongol is the predominant language. Turkic-speaking Kazakhs, as well as Russians and Chinese, comprise minorities. Tibetan Buddhism was once the most common religion; however, during the years of Communist rule the government discouraged religious practice. The traditional nomadic way of life is becoming less common, as recent government policies have led to urbanization and settled agriculture.

**Economy and the Land.** Mongolia's economy, long based on the raising of livestock, has been shaped by the ideal grazing land found in most of the country. Livestock outnumber people in Mongolia by a ratio of 15 to one. Significant economic changes have taken place since the collapse of the Soviet economy because 90 percent of Mongolia's trade was with Russia and Eastern Europe. Market reforms have produced economic hardship. Mongolia's terrain varies from mountains in the north and west to steppe in the east and desert in the south. Located in the heart of Asia, remote from any moderating body of water, Mongolia has a rigorous continental climate with little precipitation.

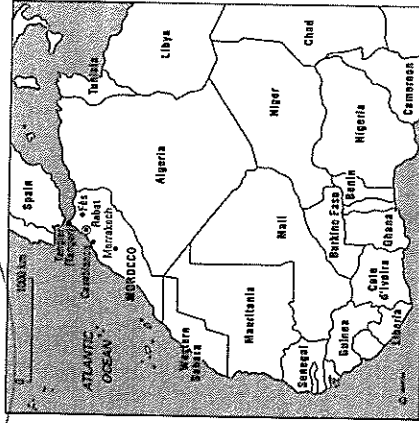
**History and Politics.** Mongolian tribes were united under the warlord Genghis Khan around A.D. 1200 and he and his successors built one of history's largest land empires. In 1691 the Manchu dynasty of China subdued Outer Mongolia—as the area was then known—but allowed the Mongol rulers autonomy. Mongolia remained a Chinese province until the Mongols ousted the Chinese in 1911. In 1912 the state accepted Russian protection, but was unable to prevent

another Chinese advance, and in 1919 Outer Mongolia again became a Chinese province. In 1921 a combined Soviet and Mongolian force defeated Chinese and Belorussian, or White Russian, troops, and the Mongolian People's Republic was declared in 1924. A mutual-assistance pact was signed by Mongolia and Russia in 1966. In 1989 the Soviets agreed to withdraw most of their troops from Mongolia. Increasing pressure for democratization led to the country's first free, multiparty elections in August 1990. A new constitution, describing Mongolia as a republic with parliamentary government, was adopted in 1992. In 1996 the Mongolians elected a non-Communist Parliament. ■

**MONTSERRAT**

See UNITED KINGDOM.

**MOROCCO**



Official name Kingdom of Morocco

**PEOPLE**

Population 29,390,000. Density 170/mi<sup>2</sup> (66/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 53%. Capital Rabat, 717,000. Ethnic groups Arab-Berber 99%. Languages Arabic, Berber dialects, French. Religions Muslim 99%. Life expectancy 71 female, 67 male. Literacy 44%.

**POLITICS**

Government Constitutional monarchy. Parties Constitutional Union, Democracy and Istiqlal, National Rally of Independents, Popular Movement, others. Suffrage Universal, 21 and over. Memberships AL, UN. Subdivisions 36 provinces, 2 prefectures.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$107,000,000,000. Per capita \$3,828. Monetary unit Dirham. Trade partners Exports: France, Spain, Japan. Imports: France, Spain, U.S. Exports Food, phosphates. Imports Manufactures, machinery, food, beverages, fuel, lubricants, raw materials.



**LAND**

Description Northwestern Africa. Area 172,414 mi<sup>2</sup> (446,550 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Mt. Toubkal, 13,665 ft (4,165 m). Lowest point Sebkhah Tah, -180 ft (-55 m). The above information excludes Western Sahara.

**People.** Moroccans, virtually homogeneous in race and culture, are mostly a mix of Arab and Berber stocks and speak Arabic. A few Berber dialects are spoken in rural mountain areas, but French and Spanish, the colonial tongues, are common in business and government. The majority of people are Sunni Muslim. The population is concentrated west of the Atlas Mountains, which border the Sahara Desert. Rural people are migrating to cities, where the standard of living is higher.

**Economy and the Land.** Although agriculture employs much of the work force and is an important activity, the country depends on mining for most of its income. Morocco is a leading exporter of phosphates, and has other mineral reserves as well. Fishing and tourism are growing sources of revenue. Recently, severe drought, rising dependency on imported oil, and a costly war in Western Sahara have slowed productivity, while investments by Arab countries have bolstered the economy. Morocco, with its varied terrain of desert, forests, and mountains, has an equally varied climate that is semitropical along the coast, and desert beyond the Atlas Mountains.

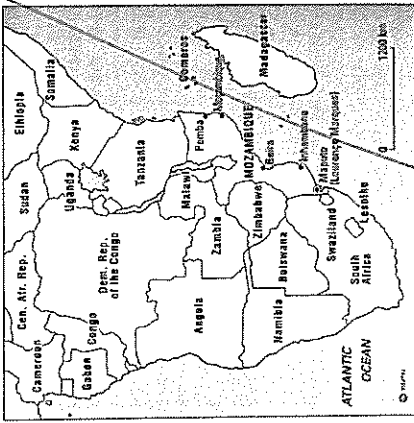
**History and Politics.** In ancient times, Morocco was a province of Carthage and Rome. Vandals and Byzantine Greeks, the subsequent rulers, were followed in the A.D. 700s by Arabs, who brought Islam. Morocco's strategic position awakened the interest of colonial powers in the 1800s, and by 1912 the area was divided into French and Spanish protectorates. A nationalist movement began in the 1920s, occasionally bringing violence, but not until 1956 did Morocco become independent from France. The last of Spain's holdings in Morocco were returned in 1969. War broke out in 1976, when Morocco claimed the northern part of Western Sahara and was challenged by the Saharan nationalist Polisario Front. In 1979 Mauritania surrendered its claim, and Morocco established the final disposition of Western Sahara have been sporadic. King Hassan shares power with directly elected groups under a complex formula. ■

**MOZAMBIQUE**

Official name Republic of Mozambique

**PEOPLE**

Population 19,895,000; Density 64/mi<sup>2</sup> (25/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 35%. Capital Maputo, 1,069,727. Ethnic groups Chopi, Makua, Lomwe, Makonde, Shona, Tonga. Languages Portuguese, indigenous. Religions Tribal religions 50%, Roman Catholic and other Christian 30%, Musli. Life expectancy 47 female, 44 male. Literacy 40%. ■



**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties Democratic Union, Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, National Resistance. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships CW, OAU, UN. Subdivisions 10 provinces, 1 independent city.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$14,600,000,000. Per capita \$799. Monetary unit Metical. Trade partners Exports: Spain, U.S., Japan. Imports: South African Customs Union, former Soviet republics, U.S. Exports Shrimp, cashews, cotton, sugar, copra, fruit. Imports Food, clothing, farm equipment, petroleum.

**LAND**

Description Southern Africa. Area 308,642 mi<sup>2</sup> (799,380 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Monte Binga, 7,995 ft (2,437 m). Lowest point Sea level.

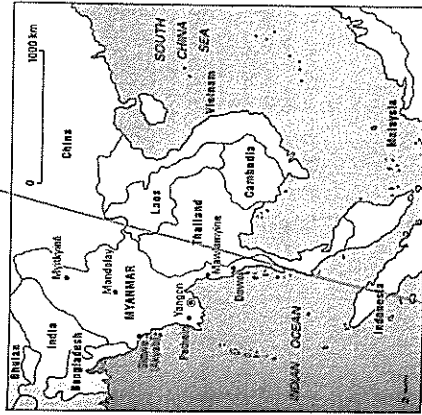
**People.** Black Africans belonging to about ten groups compose the vast majority of the population. Most black Mozambicans live in rural areas, while small European and Asian minorities live primarily in urban centers. Traditional African religions are followed by a majority, while others practice Islam and Christianity. Although Portuguese is the official language, most blacks speak Bantu tongues.

**Economy and the Land.** Mozambique's underdeveloped economy is largely the product of its colonial past, during which its human and natural resources were neglected. Recent political developments in southern Africa have created more economic woes, as lucrative trade agreements with racially divided neighbors have ceased. While the mainstays of the economy are agriculture and transport services, fishing and mining are also being developed. The Marxist government allowed some private enterprise, and foreign aid is important. The climate is tropical or subtropical along the coastal plain that covers nearly half of the country, with cooler conditions in the western high plateaus and mountains.

**History and Politics.** Bantu-speaking peoples settled in present-day Mozambique around the

first century A.D. Subsequent immigrants included Arab traders in the 800s and the Portuguese in the late 1400s. European economic interest in the area was hindered by lucrative trading with other colonies, and Mozambique was not recognized as a Portuguese colony until 1885. Portuguese policies benefited European settlers but overlooked the welfare of Mozambique and its native inhabitants. In the early 1960s the country made clear its opposition to foreign rule with the formation of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, a Marxist nationalist group that initiated an armed campaign against the Portuguese. In 1975 Mozambique became an independent state, but fighting between the socialist government and opposition forces continued. A new constitution passed in 1990 marked the end of single-party rule in Mozambique. The civil war, resulting in one million casualties and nearly two million refugees, ended in October 1992. Fragile peace and the return of more than one million refugees was complicated by the worst drought of the century. The country's first multiparty elections were held in October 1994. ■

**MYANMAR**



Official name Union of Myanmar

**PEOPLE**

Population 47,700,000. Density 163/mi<sup>2</sup> (71/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 26%. Capital Yangon (Rangoon), 2,705,039. Ethnic groups Burman 68%, Karen 7%, Rakhine 4%, Languages/Burmese, indigenous. Religions Buddhist 89%, Muslim 4%, Christian 4%. Life expectancy 56 female, 53 male. Literacy 83%.

**POLITICS**

Government Provisional military government. Parties National League for Democracy, National Unity Party, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships ASEAN/UN. Subdivisions 7 divisions, 7 states.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$55,700,000,000. Per capita \$1,200. Monetary unit Kyat. Trade partners Exports: India, China.

Singapore. Imports: Japan, China, Thailand. Exports Pulses, beans, teak, rice, hardwood, rubber. Imports Machinery, transportation equipment, construction materials, food.

**LAND**

Description Southeastern Asia. Area 261,228 mi<sup>2</sup> (676,577 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Hkakabo Razi, 19,296 ft (5,881 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People.** The population of Myanmar is highly diverse, with many ethnic groups including Tibetan-related Burman, who compose the majority; Karen, who inhabit mainly the south and east; and Thai-related Shan, found on the eastern plateaus. Diversity results in many languages, although Burmese predominates. Buddhist monasteries and pagodas dot the landscape, and minority religions include Christianity, indigenous beliefs, and Islam. The primarily rural population is concentrated in the fertile valleys and on the delta of the Irrawaddy River.

**Economy and the Land.** Fertile soils, dense woodlands, and mineral deposits provide a resource base for agriculture, forestry, and mining. Myanmar's economy has been beset with problems, however, caused mainly by the destruction of World War II, as well as post-independence instability. Today agriculture continues as the economic mainstay. The hot, wet climate is ideal for rice production. In addition, dense forests provide for a timber industry, and resource deposits include petroleum and various minerals. Myanmar's economic future depends on exploitation of natural resources and political stability. The terrain is marked by mountains, rivers, and forests, and the climate is tropical.

**History and Politics.** Myanmar's Chinese and Tibetan settlers were first united in the 11th century. Independence ended with the invasion of Mongols led by Kublai Khan, followed by national unification in the 15th and 18th centuries. Annexation to British India in the 19th century ended Myanmar's monarchy. During World War II, Japanese occupation and subsequent conflicts between Allied and Japanese forces caused much economic and physical damage. Myanmar officially became independent in 1948. After a period of initial stability, the government could not withstand separatist and political revolts, and military rule has alternated with civilian governments. The latest attempts to reestablish democracy were thwarted when the results of 1990 elections were contested by 93 opposition parties. The military government refused to relinquish control of hold new elections. The 1991 Nobel Peace Prize award to the country's main opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, focused world attention on human rights abuses. Released in 1995 after six years of house arrest, Suu Kyi continues to work to establish democracy and the rule of law. ■

groups: Melanesian 93%, Polynesian 4%. Languages English, Pidgin. Religions Anglican 34%, Roman Catholic 19%, Baptist 17%, United Church 11%. Life expectancy 74 female, 69 male.

**POLITICS**

**Government** Parliamentary state. **Parties** National Unity and Reconciliation, People's Alliance, others. **Suffrage** Universal, 21 and over. **Memberships** CW, UN. **Sub-divisions** 9 provinces, 1 town.

**ECONOMY**

**GDP** \$1,270,000,000. **Per capita** \$3,024. **Monetary unit** Dollar. **Trade partners** Exports: Japan, U.K., Thailand. Imports: Australia, Japan, Singapore. **Exports** Wood, fish, palm oil, copra, cocoa. **Imports** Machinery, manufactures, food, livestock, fuel.

**LAND**

**Description** South Pacific Islands. **Area** 10,954 mi<sup>2</sup> (28,370 km<sup>2</sup>). **Highest point** Mt. Makarakomburu, 8,028 ft (2,447 m). **Lowest point** Sea level.

**People.** More than 90 percent of the people are Melanesian, and the remainder are Polynesian, European, Chinese, and Micronesian. English is the official language, but some 90 local languages are also spoken. Most people are Anglican, Roman Catholic, Baptist, or other Protestants. The population is primarily rural, and much of its social structure is patterned on traditional village life.

**Economy and the Land.** The economy is based on subsistence farming and exports of fish, wood, copra, spices, and palm oil. Tourism is of growing importance. Food, machinery, gasoline, and manufactured goods are imported. Terrain ranges from forested mountains to low-lying coral atolls. The climate is warm and moist, with heavy annual rainfall.

**History and Politics.** Hunter-gatherers lived on the islands as early as 1000 B.C. Because of disease and native resistance, early attempts at colonization failed, and Europeans did not firmly establish themselves until the mid-1800s. Britain declared the islands a protectorate in 1893. The area was the site of fierce battles between the Japanese and Allied forces during World War II, and following the war, moves were made toward independence. In 1978 the Solomon Islands adopted a constitution and became a sovereign country.

**SOMALIA**

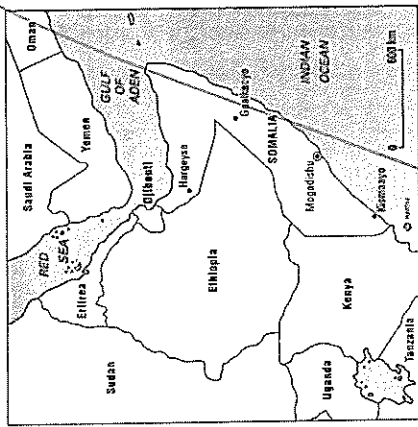
**Official name** Somalia

**PEOPLE**

**Population** 6,993,000. **Density** 28/mi<sup>2</sup> (11/km<sup>2</sup>). **Urban** 26%. **Capital** Mogadishu, 600,000. **Ethnic groups** Somali 85%, Bantu. **Languages** Arabic, Somali, English, Italian. **Religions** Sunni Muslim. **Life expectancy** 48 female, 45 male. **Literacy** 24%.

**POLITICS**

**Government** None. **Parties** United Somali Congress. **Suffrage** Universal, 18 and over. **Memberships** AL, OAU, UN. **Subdivisions** 18 regions.



**ECONOMY**

**GDP** \$8,000,000,000. **Per capita** \$1,010. **Monetary unit** Shilling. **Trade partners** Exports: Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Italy. Imports: Kenya, Djibouti, Pakistan. **Exports** Bananas, livestock, fish, hides. **Imports** Manufactures, petroleum products, food, construction materials.

**LAND**

**Description** Eastern Africa. **Area** 248,201 mi<sup>2</sup> (637,657 km<sup>2</sup>). **Highest point** Shimbiris, 7,897 ft (2,407 m). **Lowest point** Sea level.

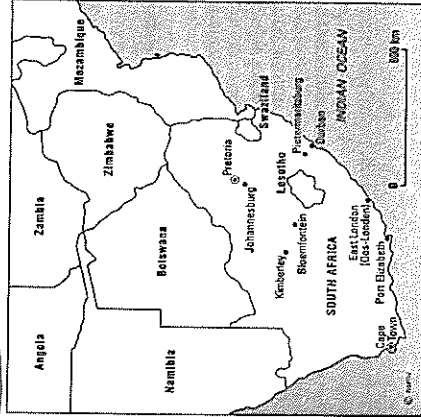
**People.** Unlike the population in many African countries, the people of Somalia are remarkably homogeneous in their language, culture, and identity. Most of the Somalis are nomadic or seminomadic herders; only a quarter of the people have settled in permanent communities in southern Somalia. While Arabic and Somali are official languages, English and Italian are spoken by many. Nearly all the Somali people practice the Sunni Muslim religion.

**Economy and the Land.** Somalia is a developing country that has not exploited its rich deposits of iron ore and gypsum. There is little manufacturing in Somalia. The economy is agricultural, though activity is restricted to the vicinity of the rivers and certain coastal areas. A hot climate with recurring droughts, as well as a lack of transportation infrastructure such as railroads and paved highways, hamper economic development. The terrain ranges from central and southern flatlands to northern hills.

**History and Politics.** In the A.D. 800s or 900s, Arabs converted the ancestors of the Somalis who settled the region to Islam. They fought many religious wars with the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia between the 1300s and 1500s. The British, Italians, and French arrived in the region in the latter half of the 1800s and divided the Somali territory among themselves, with Ethiopia seizing Ogaden in the west. After World War II, Italy was made administrator of its former colony to prepare it for independence. In 1960

British Somaliland and Italian Somalia joined to form an independent republic. Since that time, Somalia has had many border clashes with Kenya and Ethiopia over the rights of Somalis living in these countries to determine their own destiny. Military leaders staged a successful coup in 1969, subsequently changed the country's name to Somali Democratic Republic, and abolished all political parties. Military activity has since resulted in a civil war, famine, and the killing of thousands of civilians. In 1991 rebel forces overcame the government, and northern Somalia seceded from the rest of the country. Clan-based fighting led to mass starvation and the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. In late 1992 the United States military intervened in an attempt to enable worldwide relief efforts to proceed safely. The United Nations took over in 1993 but withdrew in 1995, having failed to find a solution to Somalia's political and economic instability.

**SOUTH AFRICA**



**Official name** Republic of South Africa

**PEOPLE**

**Population** 43,140,000. **Density** 92/mi<sup>2</sup> (35/km<sup>2</sup>). **Urban** 50%. **Capital** Pretoria (administrative), 525,583; Cape Town (legislative), 854,916; Bloemfontein (judicial), 128,867. **Ethnic groups** Black 77%, white 13%, mulatto (coloured) 9%, Asian 2%. **Languages** Afrikaans, English, Sotho, Tswana, Zulu, others. **Religions** Black independent 17%, Dutch Reformed 10%, Roman Catholic 8%. **Life expectancy** 58 female, 54 male. **Literacy** 82%.

**POLITICS**

**Government** Republic. **Parties** African National Congress, Inkatha Freedom, National, others. **Suffrage** Universal, 18 and over. **Memberships** CW, OAU, UN. **Subdivisions** 9 provinces.

**ECONOMY**

**GDP** \$270,000,000,000. **Per capita** \$6,410. **Monetary unit** Rand. **Trade partners** Exports: Italy, Japan, U.S. Imports: Germany, U.S., Japan. **Exports** Gold, minerals

and metals, food, chemicals. **Imports** Machinery, transportation equipment, chemicals, oil, textiles.

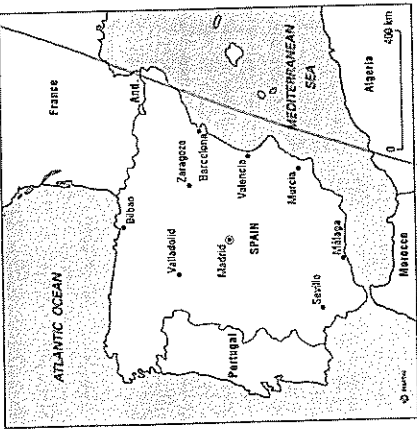
**LAND**

**Description** Southern Africa. **Area** 471,010 mi<sup>2</sup> (1,219,909 km<sup>2</sup>). **Highest point** enjeshu, 11,306 ft (3,446 m). **Lowest point** Sea level.

**People.** South Africa's population is classified into four main groups: black, white, coloured, and Indian. The black population, which is of African heritage, makes up the majority. The white minority are either British or Afrikaner (who are of Dutch, German, and French descent). The coloured population has a mixed black, white, and Indian ancestry. The remainder of the population are of Indian descent. Afrikaans and English are the official languages, although the blacks, coloureds, and East Indians speak their own languages as well. The dominant religions are Christian; however, many groups follow traditional practices. For decades the South African government enforced apartheid, a policy of racial segregation widely criticized for violating the rights of blacks, coloureds, and Indians.

**Economy and the Land.** The discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa in the late 1800s shaped the country's prosperous economy. Revenue from mining promoted industry, and today South Africa is one of the richest and most highly developed countries in Africa. Mining remains a mainstay, as does agriculture; the country is almost self-sufficient in food production. Many effects of apartheid, including discriminatory systems of education and job reservation, kept the majority population from the benefits of national prosperity. The varied landscape features coastal beaches, plateaus, mountains, and deep valleys. The climate is temperate.

**History and Politics.** Southern Africa has been inhabited for many thousands of years. Ancestors of the area's present African population had settled there by the time Portuguese explorers reached the Cape of Good Hope in the late 1400s. The first white settlers, ancestors of today's Afrikaners, established colonies in the 17th century. Britain gained control of the area in the late 18th century, and relations between Afrikaners and the British soon became strained. To escape British rule, many Afrikaners migrated northward to lands occupied by black Africans. The discovery of gold and diamonds in the late 1800s brought an influx of Europeans and further strained relations between Afrikaners and the British, with both groups striving for control of valuable mineral deposits. Two wars broke out, and in 1902 the British defeated the Afrikaners, or Boers, and incorporated the Boer territories into the British Empire. The British also subdued black Africans, and in 1910 they formed the white-controlled Union of South Africa. African nationalism grew in the early 20th century and led to the formation of the National party, which



gained control in 1924 and again in 1948. The party began the apartheid system of separation of the races in the late 1940s, and subsequent decades saw increasing apartheid legislation and racial tension. In 1951 South Africa embarked on a program to create a white majority by setting up "independent" black republics, or homelands, within its borders. During the 1980s, the government began to force blacks to move into the homelands and to renounce their citizenship, thereby sparking international outcry. Foreign and internal pressure forced the government to respond with reforms and to dismantle apartheid. The 1990 release of Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress (ANC), after 27 years in prison, paved the way for a new South Africa. Under the leadership of Mandela and President F.W. de Klerk, the country was led to relatively peaceful elections in April 1994. Mandela was elected president and an interim constitution abolishing the homelands was established. In 1996 a new constitution was approved, and de Klerk resigned from the coalition government. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's two-year probe into human rights abuses during the apartheid era ended in 1998. It is hoped that their report will bring about a process of national reconciliation. The 1999 landslide victory by the ANC endangers the hard-won multiparty system. ■

**ECONOMY**  
GDP \$642,400,000,000. Per capita \$16,379. Monetary unit Peseta. Trade partners France, Germany, Italy. Exports Transportation equipment, manufactures, food, machinery. Imports Machinery, transportation equipment, fuel, food, manufactures.

**LAND**  
Description Southwestern Europe. Area 194,865 mi<sup>2</sup> (504,750 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Pico de Teide, 12,198 ft (3,718 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People.** The population of Spain is a mixture of ethnic groups from northern Europe and the area surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. Spanish is the official language; however, several regional dialects of Spanish are commonly spoken. The Basque minority, one of the oldest surviving ethnic groups in Europe, lives mainly in the Pyrenees in northern Spain, preserving its own language and traditions. Since the 1978 constitution was approved, Spain has not had an official religion, yet nearly all its people are Roman Catholic. Spain has a rich artistic tradition, blending Moorish and Western cultures.

**Economy and the Land.** Spain has benefited greatly from an economic restructuring program that began in the 1950s. The country has concentrated on developing its industry, which now employs more than 90 percent of the population. The chemical industry, high technology, electronics, and tourism are important sources of revenue. The agricultural contribution to the economy has declined to about half of peak production. Spain's terrain is mainly composed

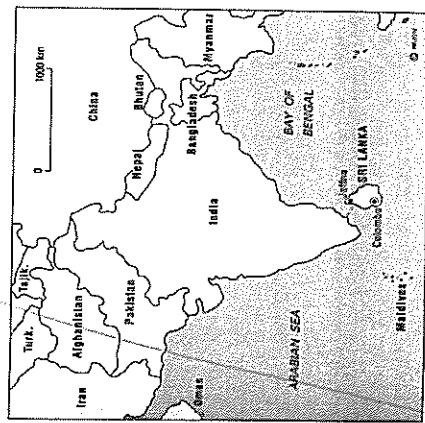
Entity	Status	Area	Population	Capital/Population
Balearic Islands (Mediterranean Sea)	Province	1,936 mi <sup>2</sup> (5,014 km <sup>2</sup> )	870,000	Palma, 249,000
Canary Islands (North Atlantic; northwest of Africa)	Part of Spain (2 provinces)	2,808 mi <sup>2</sup> (7,273 km <sup>2</sup> )	1,771,000	None
Spanish North Africa (Cities of northern coast of Morocco)	Five possessions	12 mi <sup>2</sup> (32 km <sup>2</sup> )	153,000	None

**Places and Possessions of Spain**

of a dry plateau area; mountains cover the northern section, and plains extend down the country's eastern coast. The climate in the eastern and southern regions is Mediterranean, while the northwest has more rainfall and less sunshine throughout the year.

**History and Politics.** Spain is among the oldest inhabited regions in Europe. A Roman province for centuries, Spain was conquered by the Visigoths in the A.D. 500s, only to change hands again in the 700s when the Arab-Berber, or Moors, seized control of all but a narrow strip of northern Spain. Christian kings reclaimed the country from the 11th to the 14th centuries. Controlled by the three kingdoms of Navarre, Aragon, and Castile, Spain was united in the late 1400s under King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. At the height of its empire, Spain claimed territory in North and South America, northern Africa, Italy, and the Canary Islands. A series of wars burdened Spain financially, however, and in the 1500s the country entered a period of decline under King Philip II. Throughout the 1700s and 1800s, the country lost most of its colonial possessions through either treaty or revolution. In 1836, a bitter civil war erupted between an insurgent fascist group and supporters of the republic. General Francisco Franco, leader of the successful insurgent army, ruled as dictator of Spain from the end of the war until his death in 1975. Spain has prospered but has had to grapple with separatist movements in Catalonia and the Basque region. Since Franco's death, King Juan Carlos has led the country toward a more democratic form of government. ■

**SRI LANKA**



Official name Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

**PEOPLE**

Population 19,040,000. Density 763/mi<sup>2</sup> (293/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 22%. Capital Colombo (designated), 612,000; Sri Jayawardanapura (seat of government), 108,000. Ethnic groups Sinhalese 74%, Sri Lankan Tamil 7%, Moor 7%, Indian Tamil 5%. Languages English, Sinhala, Tamil. Religions Buddhist 70%, Hindu 16%, Muslim 8%, Christian 7%. Life expectancy 75 female, 70 male. Literacy 90%.

**POLITICS**

Government Socialist republic. Parties Eelam People's Democratic, People's Alliance, Tamil United Liberation, United National, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships CW, UN, Subdivisions 8 provinces.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$72,100,000,000. Per capita \$3,887. Monetary unit Rupee. Trade partners Exports: U.S., U.K., Germany. Imports: Japan, India, Korea, China. Exports Textiles, clothing, tea, gems, rubber products, petroleum products. Imports Machinery and equipment, textiles, transportation equipment, petroleum, sugar.

**LAND**

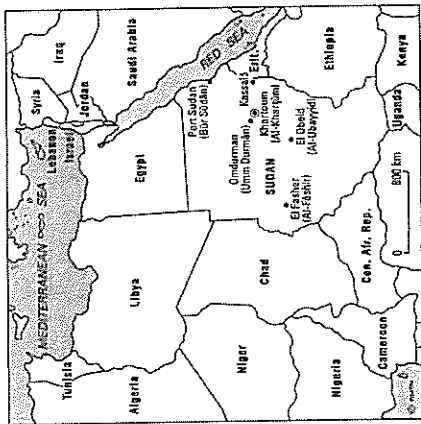
Description Southern Asian island. Area 24,962 mi<sup>2</sup> (64,652 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Pidurutalagala, 8,281 ft (2,524 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People.** The two principal groups in Sri Lanka are the majority Sinhalese and the minority Tamils. Other minorities include the Moors; Burghers, who are descendants of Dutch, Portuguese, and British colonists; Malays; and Veddhah aborigines. Sinhala, Tamil, and English are official languages. Most Sinhalese are Buddhist, most Tamils are Hindu, and the majority of the Moors and Malays are Muslims.

**Economy and the Land.** Sri Lanka's economy is based on agriculture, which employs nearly half the people in producing tea, rubber, and coconuts. Industrial production has increased, and major exports include rubber and textile products. The country also sponsors several internal development programs. Continuing high government subsidy and welfare policies threaten economic growth, however. A low coastal plain, mountainous and forested southern interior, and tropical climate characterize Sri Lanka.

**History and Politics.** The Sinhalese dynasty was founded by a northern Indian prince in about 500 B.C. Later, the Tamils from southern India settled in the north of Sri Lanka. European control began in the 1500s, when the Portuguese and Dutch ruled the island. It became a British possession in 1796 and the independent country of Ceylon in 1948. In 1972 it changed its name to Sri Lanka. Tensions between the ruling Sinhalese and the minority Tamils resulted in violence. The country has been in the grip of a civil war since 1983, when Tamils in northern Sri Lanka began a secessionist rebellion. ■

**SUDAN**



Official name Republic of the Sudan

**PEOPLE**  
 Population 34,010,000. Density 35/mi<sup>2</sup> (14/km<sup>2</sup>).  
 Urban 22%. Capital Khartoum, 473,597. Ethnic groups Black 52%, Arab 39%, Beja 6%. Languages Arabic, Nubian and other indigenous, English.  
 Religions Sunni Muslim 70%, Animist 25%, Christian 5%. Life expectancy 57 female, 55 male. Literacy 46%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties None. Suffrage Universal. Memberships AL, OAU, UN. Subdivisions 26 states.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$26,600,000,000. Per capita \$913. Monetary unit Pound. Trade partners Exports: Saudi Arabia, Japan, Thailand. Imports: Saudi Arabia, U.S., U.K. Exports Cotton, sesame, livestock, meat, gum arabic. Imports Food, petroleum, manufactures, machinery, medicine, chemicals, textiles.

**LAND**

Description Eastern Africa. Area 967,500 mi<sup>2</sup> (2,505,813 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Kinyeti, 10,456 ft (3,187 m). Lowest point Sea level.

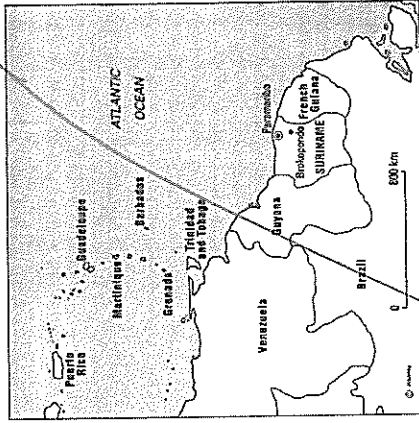
People. Sudan's population is composed of two distinct cultures—black African and Arab. African blacks of diverse ethnicity are a majority and are concentrated in the south, where they practice traditional lifestyles and beliefs and speak indigenous languages. Arabic-speaking Muslims, belonging to several ethnic groups, live mainly in northern and central regions.

**Economy and the Land.** The economy is based on agriculture, and irrigation has made arid Sudan a leading producer of cotton, although the land is vulnerable to drought. Forests provide for production of gum Arabic, used in making candy and perfumes, while other crops include peanuts and sesame seeds. Economic activity is concentrated near the Nile River and its branches, as

well as near water holes and wells. The mostly flat terrain is marked by eastern and western mountains; southern forests and savanna give way to swampland, scrubland, and northern desert. The climate varies from desert in the north to tropical in the south.

**History and Politics.** Egypt mounted repeated invasions of what is now northern Sudan beginning about 300 B.C. Sudan remained a collection of small independent states until 1821, when Egypt conquered and unified the northern portion. Egypt was unable to establish control over the south, which was often raided by slave traders. In 1881 a Muslim leader began uniting various groups in a revolt against Egyptian rule, and success came four years later. His successor ruled until 1898, when British and Egyptian forces reconquered the land. Renamed the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, the region was ruled jointly by Egypt and Britain, with British administration dominating. Since Sudan became independent in 1956, a series of military coups, a continuing civil war, and severe famine have burdened it with political and economic instability. Sudan's government supports international terrorism, abuses human rights, and has been accused of producing a famine in southern Sudan by destroying agricultural resources and blocking food relief. The UN Human Rights Commission denounced the government in 1986. ■

**SURINAME**

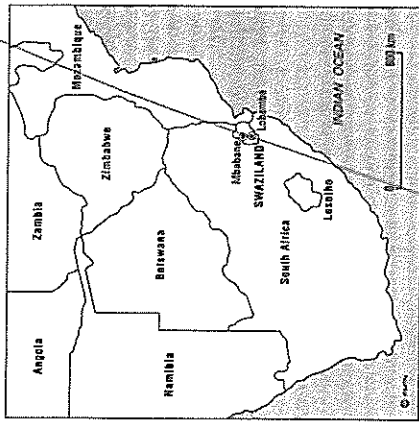


Official name Republic of Suriname

**PEOPLE**

Population 430,000. Density 6.8/mi<sup>2</sup> (2.6/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 50%. Capital Paramaribo, 241,000. Ethnic groups East Indian 37%, Creole 31%, Javanese 15%, black 10%, Amerindian 3%, Chinese 2%. Languages Dutch Sranan Tongo, English, Hindustani, Javanese. Religions Hindu 27%, Protestant 25%, Roman

**SWAZILAND**



Official name Kingdom of Swaziland

**PEOPLE**

Population 975,000. Density 145/mi<sup>2</sup> (56/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 32%. Capital Mbabane (administrative), 38,290; Lobamba (legislative). Ethnic groups Swazi 90%. Languages English, siSwati. Religions African Protestant and other Christian 77%, tribal religionist 21%. Life expectancy 40 female, 37 male. Literacy 77%.

**POLITICS**

Government Monarchy. Parties None. Suffrage Restricted, 21 and over. Memberships CW, OAU, UN. Subdivisions 4 districts.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$3,900,000,000. Per capita \$3,842. Monetary unit Lilangeni. Trade partners Exports: South Africa, European Union, Mozambique, Imports: South Africa, Japan. Exports Soft drink concentrates, sugar, wood, cotton yarn. Imports Transportation equipment, machinery, food, petroleum products, chemicals.

**LAND**

Description Southern Africa, landlocked. Area 6,704 mi<sup>2</sup> (17,364 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Emlembe, 6,109 ft (1,862 m). Lowest point Along Usutu River, 70 ft (21 m).

People. About 90 percent of the people of Swaziland are black Africans called Swazi, though small minorities of white Europeans and Zulus also live in the country. The two official languages are English and siSwati. Government and official business is conducted primarily in English. Most of the Swazi belong to Christian churches, while others practice traditional African religions.

**Economy and the Land.** Most Swazi are subsistence farmers. Cattle are highly prized for their own sake but are being used increasingly for milk, meat, and profit. Europeans own nearly half the land in Swaziland and raise most of the cash crops, including fruits, sugar, tobacco,

Catholic 23%, Muslim 20%. Life expectancy 73 female, 68 male. Literacy 93%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties Democratic Alternative 91, National Democratic, New Front, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships OAS, UN. Subdivisions 10 districts.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$1,440,000,000. Per capita \$3,280. Monetary unit Guilder. Trade partners Exports: Netherlands, Norway, France. Imports: U.S., Netherlands, Japan. Exports Alumina, aluminum, rice, seafood, bananas, wood. Imports Machinery, petroleum, food, cotton, manufactures.

**LAND**

Description Northeastern South America. Area 63,251 mi<sup>2</sup> (163,820 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Julliana Mtn., 4,035 ft (1,230 m). Lowest point Sea level.

People. Descendants of East Indians and Creoles—of mixed European-black African heritage—compose Suriname's two major groups. Black African slaves and contract laborers, imported from the east, resulted in various ethnic populations. Minority groups include the Javanese; Bush/Negroes, a black group; Amerindians, descendants of Arawak and Caribs; Chinese; and Europeans. Dutch is the official language, but most groups have preserved their distinct language, culture, and religion.

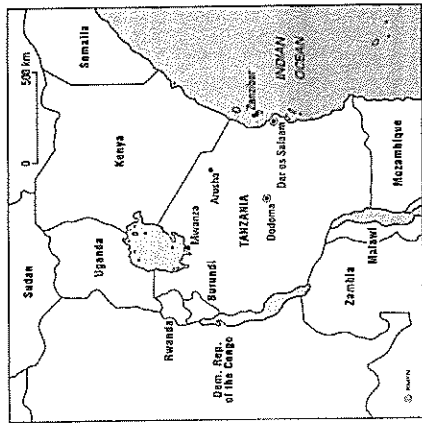
**Economy and the Land.** The economy is based on mining and metal processing, and bauxite and alumina are the major exports. Agriculture plays an economic role as well and, together with fishing and forestry, offers potential for expansion. A narrow coastal swamp, central forests and savanna, and southern jungle-covered hills mark the country's terrain. The climate is tropical.

**History and Politics.** Prior to the arrival of Europeans, present-day Suriname was inhabited by indigenous Amerindians. Christopher Columbus sighted the coast in 1498, but the area's lack of gold slowed Spanish and Portuguese exploration. The British established the first settlement in 1651, and in 1665 Jews from Brazil erected the first synagogue in the Western Hemisphere. In 1667 the British traded the area to the Netherlands for the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam—present-day Manhattan, New York. Subsequent wars and treaties shifted ownership of Suriname among the British, French, and Dutch until 1815, when the Netherlands regained control. In 1954 Suriname became an autonomous part of the Netherlands, with status equal to that of the Netherlands Antilles. Suriname gained independence in 1975. In 1980, the military seized power and soon established a military-civilian government. The military has retained considerable control. A general election in May 1991 resulted in a degree of democratic representation. ■



and Islamic fundamentalists have been fighting for control of the country since 1992. ■

**TANZANIA** → Rose



Official name United Republic of Tanzania

**PEOPLE** Population 30,935,000. Density 85/mi<sup>2</sup> (33/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 25%. Capital Dar es Salaam (de facto). 1,096,000; Dodoma (legislative), 85,000. Ethnic groups African (Sukuma, Masai, Haya, other). Languages English, Swahili, indigenous. Religions Christian 45%, Muslim 35%, Animist 20%. Life expectancy 49 female, 44 male. Literacy 68%.

**POLITICS** Government Republic. Parties Civic United Front, Revolutionary, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships CW, OAU, UN. Subdivisions 25 regions.

**ECONOMY** GDP \$21,100,000,000. Per capita \$720. Monetary unit Shilling. Trade partners Exports: Germany, U.K., Netherlands. Imports: U.K., Japan, Germany. Exports Coffee, manufactures, cotton, cashews, minerals, tobacco, sisal. Imports Manufactures, machinery, transportation equipment, petroleum.

**LAND** Description Eastern Africa. Area 364,900 mi<sup>2</sup> (945,087 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Kilimanjaro, 19,341 ft (5,895 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People**, The largely rural African population of Tanzania consists of more than 130 ethnic groups; most speak a distinct language. Religious beliefs include Christian, Muslim, and traditional faiths.

**Economy and the Land**. Agriculture accounts for the most export earnings and employs 80 percent of the work force. Yet two-thirds of the land cannot be cultivated because of tsetse-fly infestation and lack of water. Mainland farmers grow cassava, corn, and beans, while other cash crops include coffee and cashews. The islands of Zanzibar and Pemba are famous sources of

cloves. Diamonds, salt, and iron are important mineral resources. Hot, humid coastal plains; an arid central plateau; and temperate lake and highland areas characterize mainland Tanzania. The climate is equatorial and the country experiences monsoons.

**History and Politics**. The northern mainland has fossil remains of some of humanity's earliest ancestors. Subsequent early inhabitants were gradually displaced by Bantu farmers and Nilotes. Arabs were trading with coastal groups as early as the 8th century, and by the early 1500s the Portuguese had claimed the coastal region. They were displaced in the 1700s by Arabs, who established a lucrative slave trade. Germans began colonizing the coast in 1884 and six years later signed an agreement with Great Britain, which secured German dominance along the coast and made Zanzibar a British protectorate. After World War I, Britain received part of German East Africa from the League of Nations as a mandate and renamed it Tanganyika. The area became a trust territory under the United Nations following World War II. The country achieved independence in 1961, and two years later Zanzibar received its independence as a constitutional monarchy under the sultan. A 1964 revolt by the African majority overthrew the sultan, and Zanzibar and Tanganyika subsequently united and became known as Tanzania. Tanzania developed a special African brand of Socialism in the 1960s, which served as a model throughout the continent. In 1996, the first multiparty election results were voided due to irregularities. ■

**TASMANIA** See AUSTRALIA.

**THAILAND**

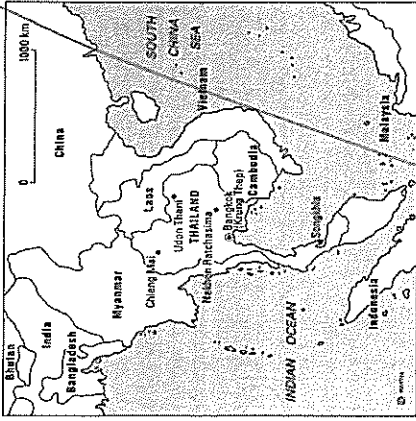
Official name Kingdom of Thailand

**PEOPLE** Population 60,330,000. Density 305/mi<sup>2</sup> (118/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 20%. Capital Bangkok, 5,620,591. Ethnic groups Thai 75%, Chinese 14%. Languages Thai, indigenous. Religions Buddhist 95%, Muslim 4%. Life expectancy 73 female/65 male. Literacy 94%.

**POLITICS** Government Constitutional monarchy. Parties Democrat, National Development, New Aspiration, Thai Nation, others. Suffrage Universal, 21 and over. Memberships ASEAN, UN. Subdivisions 76 provinces.

**ECONOMY** GDP \$525,000,000,000. Per capita \$8,876. Monetary unit Baht. Trade partners Exports: U.S., Japan. Manufactures. Imports: Japan, U.S., Singapore. Exports Manufactures, food, fish. Imports Machinery and manufactures, fuels.

**LAND** Description Southeastern Asia. Area 198,115 mi<sup>2</sup> (513,115 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Mt. Inthanon, 8,530 ft (2,600 m). Lowest point Sea level.



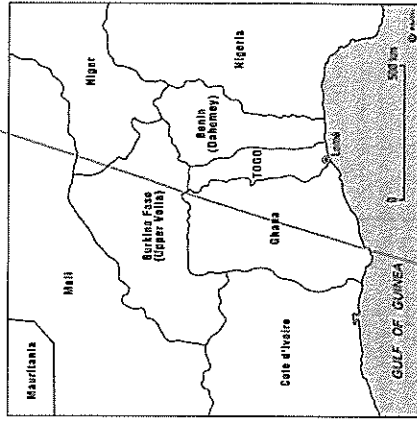
**People**. Thailand's society is relatively homogeneous. More than 80 percent of its people speak varying dialects of Thai and share a common culture and common religion, Buddhism. Chinese immigrants are a substantial minority. Thai society is rural, with most people living in the rice-growing regions. The government has sponsored a successful family-planning program, which has greatly reduced the annual birth rate.

**Economy and the Land**. With an economy based on agriculture, Thailand exports large quantities of rice each year. Forests produce teak and rattan, and tin is another valuable natural resource. Tourism is the largest source of foreign income. Future industrialization may hinge on deposits of coal and natural gas. Thailand is experiencing a period of prosperity and economic growth which provides an ideal climate for foreign investment. A mountainous and heavily forested country, Thailand has a tropical climate, dominated by monsoons, high temperatures, and humidity.

**History and Politics**. Thai communities were established as early as 4000 B.C., although a Thai kingdom founded in the 13th century A.D. began the history of modern Thailand. In the late 1700s Burmese armies overwhelmed the kingdom. Rama I, founder of the present dynasty, helped to drive the invaders from the country in 1782. He subsequently renamed the country Siam and established a capital at Bangkok. Siam allowed Europeans to live within its borders during the period of colonial expansion, but the country never succumbed to foreign rule. As a result, Siam was the only South and Southeast Asian country never colonized by a European power. In 1932 a revolt changed the government from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy. Military officers assumed control in 1938, and the country reverted to its former name, Thailand, in 1939. The country was invaded by Japan in World War II. Following the war, Thailand was ruled by military officers until 1973,

when civilians seized control and instigated a period of democracy that ended in 1976, when the military again took control. In May 1992, soldiers opened fire on anti-government demonstrators, killing at least 50 people. Ensuing outrage led to the formation of a new, more democratic government. In July 1997 Thailand placed its currency on the international open market. Its value quickly dropped, causing an economic crisis that spread throughout Asia. In 1997 the King signed a new constitution that had previously been approved by the Parliament. ■

**TOGO**



Official name Republic of Togo

**PEOPLE**

Population 4,992,000. Density 228/mi<sup>2</sup> (88/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 31%. Capital Lomé, 500,000. Ethnic groups Black (Ewe, mlha, Kabye, others) 99%. Languages French, Ewe, mlha, Kabye, Dagomba. Religions Animist 70%, Christian 20%, Muslim 10%. Life expectancy 61 female, 57 male. Literacy 52%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties Action Committee for Renewal, Rally of the People, others. Suffrage Universal/adult. Memberships OAU, UN. Subdivisions 21 prefectures.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$6,200,000,000. Per capita \$1,332. Monetary unit CFA franc. Trade partners Exports: Canada, Bolivia, Indonesia. Imports: France, Germany, Côte d'Ivoire. Exports Cotton, phosphates, cocoa. Imports Machinery and equipment, manufactures, petroleum products.

**LAND**

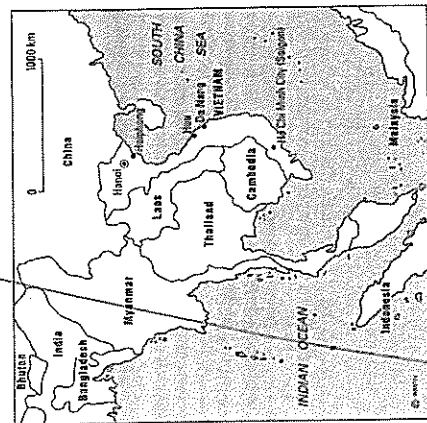
Description Western Africa. Area 21,925 mi<sup>2</sup> (56,785 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Mont Agou, 3,235 ft (986 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People**. Almost all the people of Togo are black Africans, coming primarily from the Ewe, Mina, and Kabye ethnic groups. Most of the population

**Economy and the Land.** Since the expansion of the petroleum industry in the 1920s, Venezuela has experienced rapid economic growth, but unevenly distributed wealth, a high birthrate, and fluctuations in the price of oil have hampered the economy. Partly because of the emphasis on oil production, agriculture has declined; its contribution to the gross national product is minimal. Manufacturing and hydroelectric power are being developed. The varied Venezuelan landscape is dominated by the Andes Mountains, a coastal zone, high plateaus, and plains, or *llanos*. The climate is tropical, but temperatures vary with altitude. Most of the country experiences rainy and dry seasons.

**History and Politics.** The original inhabitants of modern Venezuela included the Arawak and Carib peoples. In 1498 Christopher Columbus was the first European to visit Venezuela. The area became a colony of Spain and was briefly under German rule. Independence was achieved in 1821 under the guidance of Simón Bolívar, Venezuela's national hero. Venezuela became a sovereign state in 1830. The 19th century saw political instability and revolutionary fervor, followed by a succession of dictators in the 20th century. Since 1958, Venezuela has tried to achieve a representational form of government and has held a number of democratic elections. The fall in oil prices, for a country heavily dependent upon oil export, has been an economic hardship in recent years. Abortive coups and presidential corruption have underscored Venezuela's continuing political instability. ■

**VIETNAM**



Official name Socialist Republic of Vietnam

**PEOPLE**

Population 76,790,000. Density 603/mi<sup>2</sup> (233/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 19%. Capital Hanoi, 905,939. Ethnic groups Kinh 87%, Hao 2%, Thai 2%. Languages

Vietnamese, French, Chinese, English, Khmer, indigenous. Religions Buddhist, Taoist, Roman Catholic, Animist, Islamic. Life expectancy 70 female, 65 male. Literacy 94%.

**POLITICS**

Government: Socialist republic. Parties Communist. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships ASEAN, UN. Subdivisions 50 provinces, 3 municipalities.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$128,000,000,000. Per capita \$1,717. Monetary unit Dong. Trade partners Exports: Japan, Singapore, China. Imports: Singapore, Japan, Korea. Exports Petroleum, marine products, rice, coffee, rubber, tea, clothing, shoes. Imports Machinery and equipment, petroleum products, fertilizer, steel products.

**LAND**

Description Southeastern Asia. Area 127,428 mi<sup>2</sup> (330,039 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Phan Si Pang, 10,312 ft (3,143 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People.** Despite centuries of foreign invasion and domination, the people of Vietnam remain remarkably homogeneous; Vietnamese ethnic groups compose the majority of the population. Chinese influence is seen in the major religions of Buddhism and Taoism. Most people live along two rivers, the Red in the north and the Mekong in the south, separated by mountains. The official language is Vietnamese, but a history of foreign intervention is reflected in wide use of French, English, Chinese, and Russian.

**Economy and the Land.** The Vietnamese economy has struggled to overcome the effects of war and the difficulties inherent in unifying the once-divided country. Agriculture, centered in the fertile southern plains, continues to employ nearly 70 percent of the people. Vietnam intends to expand its war-damaged mining industry, which has been slowed by lack of skilled personnel and a poor transportation network. Vietnam's economic picture is not likely to improve until the country can resolve its political and social problems. The landscape of Vietnam ranges from mountains to plains, and the climate is tropical.

**History and Politics.** The first Vietnamese lived in what is now northern Vietnam. After centuries of Chinese rule, Vietnam finally became independent in the 1400s, but civil strife continued for nearly two centuries. French missionary activity began in the early 17th century, and by 1883 all of present-day Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos were under French rule. When Germany occupied France during World War II, control of French Indochina passed to the Japanese until their defeat in 1945. The French presence continued until 1954, when Vietnamese Communists led by Ho Chi Minh gained control of North Vietnam. U.S. aid to South Vietnam began in 1961 and ended, after years of conflict, with a cease-fire in 1973. Communist victory and unification of the country as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was achieved in 1975. Vietnamese military policy resulted in fighting with China and the occupation of Cambodia until 1989. A U.S. economic embargo was lifted in 1994. ■

**VIRGIN ISLANDS, BRITISH** See UNITED KINGDOM.

**VIRGIN ISLANDS, UNITED STATES** See UNITED STATES.

**WAKE ISLAND** See UNITED STATES.

**WALLIS AND FUTUNA** See FRANCE.

**WESTERN SAHARA**

Official name Western Sahara

**PEOPLE**

Population 237,000. Density 2.3/mi<sup>2</sup> (0.9/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 94%. Capital Nona. Ethnic groups Arab, Berber. Languages Arabic. Religions Muslim. Life expectancy 50 female, 47 male.

**POLITICS**

Government Occupied by Morocco. Suffrage none. Memberships None.

**ECONOMY**

Monetary unit Moroccan dirham. Trade partners Morocco. Exports Phosphates. Imports Fuel, food.

**LAND**

Description Northwestern Africa. Area 102,703 mi<sup>2</sup> (266,000 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point 2,640 ft (805 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People.** Most Western Saharans are nomadic Arabs or Berbers. Because these nomads often cross national borders in their wanderings, the population of Western Sahara is in a constant state of flux. Islam is the principal religion, and Arabic is the dominant language.

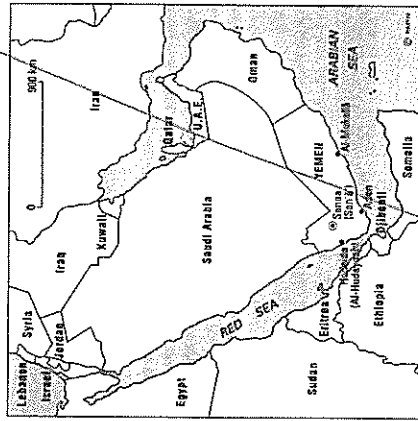
**Economy and the Land.** Most of Western Sahara is desert, with a rocky, barren soil that severely limits agriculture. Mining of phosphate deposits began in 1972, and phosphates are now the primary export. Western Sahara is almost completely arid; rainfall is negligible, except along the coast.

**History and Politics.** By the 4th century B.C. Phoenicians and Romans had visited the area. Spain explored the region in the 16th century and gained control of the region in 1860, but Spanish Sahara was not designated a province of Spain until 1958. When Spanish control ceased in 1976, the area became known as Western Sahara. Mauritania and Morocco subsequently divided the territory, and Morocco gained control of valuable phosphate deposits. Fighting soon broke out between an independence movement, the Polisario Front, and troops from Morocco and Mauritania. In 1979 Mauritania gave up its

claim to the area and withdrew. After years of conflict, Morocco and the Polisario Front agreed in 1988 to a cease-fire and a referendum to offer Western Saharans a choice between independence and integration with Morocco. The UN's attempts to organize a referendum have been consistently thwarted. ■

**WESTERN SAMOA** See SAMOA.

**YEMEN**



Official name Republic of Yemen

**PEOPLE**

Population 16,660,000. Density 82/mi<sup>2</sup> (32/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 34%. Capital Sanaa, 427,150. Ethnic groups Arab, Afro-Arab, south Asians. Languages Arabic. Religions Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Hindu. Life expectancy 61 female, 58 male. Literacy 38%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties General People's Congress, Reform Grouping, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships AL, UN. Subdivisions 17 governorates.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$31,800,000,000. Per capita \$2,082. Monetary unit Rial. Trade partners Exports: Italy, Saudi Arabia. Imports: Japan, Saudi Arabia, U.K. Exports Petroleum, cotton, coffee, hides, vegetables, fish. Imports Textiles, consumer goods, petroleum, food, cement, machinery, chemicals.

**LAND**

Description Southwestern Asia. Area 203,850 mi<sup>2</sup> (527,968 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Mt. Nabi Shuyayb, 12,098 ft (3,660 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People.** Most inhabitants of Yemen are Arab, with small minorities of Indians, Pakistanis, and East Africans. Islam is the predominant religion, while Arabic is the primary language. The population includes both Sunni and Shiite Muslims. Small numbers of Christians, Hindus,

1-1

and Jews also exist. Most of the population lives in the western part of the country.

**Economy and the Land.** Much of northwestern Yemen has a terrain suited for agriculture, the backbone of the country's economy. However, ineffective agricultural techniques combined with regional instability often hinder production. Industrial activity is growing slowly, with production based on domestic resources, but exploitation of oil, iron ore, and salt deposits is financially prohibitive at this time. Subsistence farming and nomadic herding characterize the drier, eastern part of the country. Yemen varies from arid lowlands to fertile, well-cultivated highlands. The climate is temperate in the highlands and hot and dry in the lowlands.

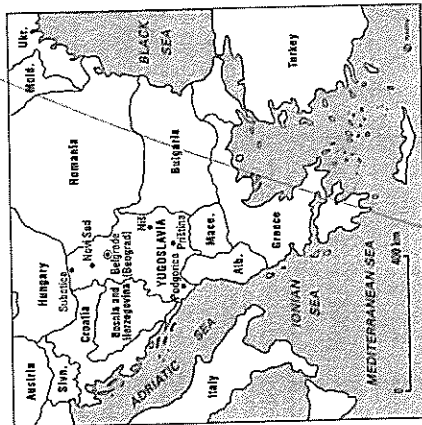
**History and Politics.** Between 1200 B.C. and A.D. 525, trade empires occupied the area of present-day Yemen, and it was part of the Kingdom of Sheba in the 900s B.C. Christian and Hebrew societies thrived before the 7th century, when Islam was introduced. The region's flourishing economy made it a focal point in the development of Islam. The country was divided in the early 16th century, when the Ottoman Empire conquered northwestern Yemen. The Turks stayed in power until 1918, when the Turkish military withdrew and gave control to the Zaidis, who established a monarchy. The Imam Badr was overthrown in 1962, when the Yemeni army proclaimed creation of the Yemen Arab Republic. Meanwhile, Aden and the southeastern part of the country were under British domination since 1839, and became a protectorate in the 1930s. By the mid-1960s, Aden had become the focus of Arab nationalists, and in 1967 Britain granted independence to the People's Republic of South Yemen. After a coup by a Marxist faction in 1970, the country's name changed to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. The two countries merged in 1990 to form the Republic of Yemen. Four years later, civil war broke out, fueled by dual military forces. It was won by the North, and unity was restored. Rising oil prices have triggered violent protests that threaten a nascent democracy. ■

**YUGOSLAVIA**

Official name Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

**PEOPLE**  
 Population 11,205,000. Density 284/mi<sup>2</sup> (110/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 57%. Capital Belgrade 1,136,786. Ethnic groups Serb 63%, Albanian 14%, Montenegrin 6%, Hungarian 4%. Languages Serbo-Croatian, Albanian. Religions Orthodox 65%, Muslim 19%, Roman Catholic 4%. Life expectancy 76 female, 71 male. Literacy 93%.

**POLITICS**  
 Government Republic. Parties Democratic Party of Socialists, Montenegrin, Serbian Radical, Serbian Socialist, Zajedno, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over; 16 if employed. Memberships None. Subdivisions 2 republics (2 autonomous provinces).



**ECONOMY**

GDP \$24,300,000,000. Per capita \$2,285. Monetary unit Dinar. Trade partners Exports: Former Soviet republics, Italy, Germany. Imports: Germany, Italy, former Soviet republics. Exports Manufactures, food, livestock, raw materials. Imports Machinery, transportation equipment, fuels, lubricants, manufactures, food.

**LAND**

Description Eastern Europe. Area 39,449 mi<sup>2</sup> (102,173 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Đavica, 8,714 ft (2,656 m). Lowest point Sea level.

**People.** The population of Yugoslavia is mainly Serb, although there are important Montenegrin, Albanian, and Hungarian minorities. Relations between the Orthodox Serbs and the Muslim Albanians are particularly tense in Kosovo province, where the Albanians form the majority.

**Economy and the Land.** Before the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1991, most industry was located in the republics of Croatia and Slovenia. As a result, the new Yugoslavia is struggling to improve its industrial base and move away from an agricultural economy. Economic conditions, which improved rapidly after World War II, are now poor as a result of political instability and failed economic restructuring. The country has many mineral resources, including coal. Much of the land is hilly or mountainous, although there are broad, fertile river valleys.

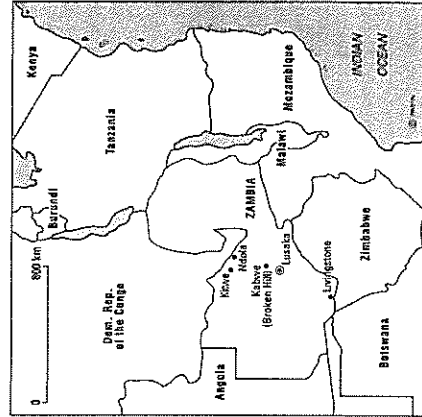
**History and Politics.** The area now known as Yugoslavia was originally inhabited by the Thracians and the Illyrians, who were eventually conquered by the Roman Empire. The Romans were, in turn, overtaken by Slavs who migrated to the area from Poland and Russia in the 7th century. Orthodox Christianity came to the area in the 10th century. In the 13th century, Serbia was established as an independent kingdom, and gained control over Montenegro. The Ottoman Turks conquered the region in the mid-1300s, and Turkey held the area for almost 500 years. The nation gained its independence in

1878, but was politically and economically dominated by Austria. Calls for Slavic unity began in the early 1800s. In 1914, a Slavic patriot assassinated Archduke Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary and triggered World War I. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was formed in 1918. Fighting among the various groups encouraged King Alexander I to declare himself dictator in 1929, and change the country's name to Yugoslavia, which was retained after Alexander's assassination in 1934. Germany and the other Axis powers invaded Yugoslavia during World War II. After the war, Josip Broz Tito assumed leadership, and Yugoslavia became a Communist republic. Tito's policy of nonalignment caused the Soviet Union to break off diplomatic relations from 1948 to 1955. After Tito's death in 1980, the country was governed by a presidency rotating among the republics. In June 1991, the federation began to break apart as Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence, followed by Macedonia and then Bosnia and Herzegovina, leaving Serbia and Montenegro as the remaining Yugoslav republics. Continuing aggression against its neighboring former republics led to international economic sanctions and an economy in a shambles. By the end of 1995, a peace agreement was signed and war-weary civilians began to put their lives back together. The economic sanctions were lifted in 1996. A short-lived peace ended in 1998 when war erupted in Kosovo, a part of Serbia in which the majority of the citizens are ethnic Albanians. ■

**ZAMBIA**

See CONGO, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE.

**ZAMBIA**



Official name Republic of the Zambia

5/91

**PEOPLE**

Population 9,561,000. Density 33/mi<sup>2</sup> (13/km<sup>2</sup>). Urban 43%. Capital Lusaka, 982,362. Ethnic groups African 99%, European 1%. Languages English, Tonga, Lozi, other indigenous. Religions Christian 50-75%, Muslim and Hindu 24-49%. Life expectancy 37 female, 37 male. Literacy 78%.

**POLITICS**

Government Republic. Parties Movement for Multiparty Democracy, others. Suffrage Universal, 18 and over. Memberships CW, OAU, UN. Subdivisions 9 provinces.

**ECONOMY**

GDP \$8,900,000,000. Per capita \$950. Monetary unit Kwacha. Trade partners Exports: Japan, France, Thailand. Imports: South Africa Customs Union, U.K., Japan. Exports Copper, zinc, cobalt, lead, tobacco. Imports Machinery, transportation equipment, food, manufactures, chemicals.

**LAND**

Description Southern Africa, landlocked. Area 290,586 mi<sup>2</sup> (752,614 km<sup>2</sup>). Highest point Namitowa, 7,100 ft (2,164 m). Lowest point Along Zambezi River, 1,079 ft (329 m).

**People.** Virtually all Zambians are black Africans belonging to one of more than seventy Bantu-speaking ethnic groups. Besides the indigenous Bantu languages, many speak English, a reflection of decades of British influence. Although most Zambians are Christian, small minorities are Hindu, Muslim, or hold indigenous beliefs. Many Zambians are subsistence farmers in small villages; however, the mining industry has caused many people to move to urban areas, where wages are rising.

**Economy and the Land.** The economy is based on copper, Zambia's major export. In an attempt to diversify the economy, the government has emphasized the development of agriculture to help achieve an acceptable balance of trade. Zambia is a subtropical nation marked by high plateaus and great rivers.

**History and Politics.** European explorers in the 19th century discovered an established society of Bantu-speaking inhabitants. In 1888 Cecil Rhodes and the British South Africa Company obtained a mineral-rights concession from local chiefs, and Northern and Southern Rhodesia, now Zambia and Zimbabwe, came under British influence. Northern Rhodesia became a British protectorate in 1924. In 1953 it was combined with Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, now Malawi, to form a federation, despite African-nationalist opposition to the white-controlled minority government in Southern Rhodesia. The federation was dissolved in 1963, and Northern Rhodesia became the independent Republic of Zambia in 1964. In 1991 the first multiparty elections in decades brought a landslide victory for democratic forces. This momentum was not maintained, however, and the country has slid back toward dictatorship and human rights abuses. ■

END