GREAT BRITAIN
and the
UNITED STATES

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В.М. Кузьминова

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Автор: старший преподаватель кафедры английского языка ВГУ им. П.М. Машерова Кузьминова В.М.

Рецензент: кандидат педагогических наук доцент кафедры английского языка ВГУ им. П.М. Машерова Бобылева Л.И.

В пособие включены лекции по страноведению, а именно по географии, истории, экономике и политической системе Великобритании и США. Отдельная глава посвящена населению этническим и национальным особенностям народов этих стран.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

All societies develop ideals and values of their members, as well as language and ways of communicating both internally and with the wider world. Societies have their own expectations of behaviour and their own attitudes towards a whole range of things, such as the family, work, and education or even how to spend their leisure time. The main stumbling block for language students is that when trying to understand and appreciate a target culture they tend to assume that their own expectations and attitudes apply. Therefore, students need to develop ability to see things from a different cultural perspective and not just to learn a wholesale list of facts.

This book aims to develop students' ability to look for and interpret patterns of life and behaviour. These patterns and attitudes also need to be seen in their historical, geographical and economic context if a less superficial picture of the target culture is to be achieved.

Besides, societies are not static; they have evolved and are constantly changing. Stereotyped images of the target culture may no longer be true tomorrow; for example, very few Britons now have bacon and eggs for breakfast since dietary habits in Britain have changed a great deal in the past twenty years. What are the reasons for these changes? What social and economic forces are shaping the society? Are there any events or ideas, which have led to these developments? Facts can therefore be useful in defining culture if they are used to explain the more complex trends, which give us a deeper understanding of, what life is like in Britain today.

Thus, the main aim is to widen students' cultural horizons and to promote an active curiosity in finding out about other people and other ways. One of the fundamental concepts to be developed within this framework is that there is no one fixed or correct way of doing things but that there are many equally different and valid ways of living, worshipping and working. This approach to cultural studies encourages learners to look for similarities and differences between their culture and the stimulus culture and to look for reasons and explanations for varying customs in the social and economic history of their own and the foreign country. The overall aim is to foster an interest in, and tolerance of diversity while leading to a greater understanding of one's own culture.

PART ONE

THE UNITED KINGDOM of GREAT BRITAIN and NORTHERN IRELAND

GEOGRAPHY OF THE BRITISH ISLES

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a country in north-western Europe. When people refer to the country, most shorten its name to 1) the United Kingdom, 2) the U.K., 3) Great Britain, or 4) Britain.

More than 70 countries are larger in size than the United Kingdom, and the country has only about 1 per cent of the world's population. But the United Kingdom has a rich history. The British started the Industrial Revolution, a period of rapid industrialization that began in the 1700s. They founded the largest empire in history. They have produced some of the world's greatest explorers, scientists, artists and political leaders.

THE ISLANDS

The United Kingdom covers most of an island group called the British Isles. The British Isles consist of two large islands - Great Britain and Ireland - and thousands of small islands. The United Kingdom's area is about 244,100 square km. The total area of the British Isles is 322,246 square km, but the largest part of the island of Ireland is occupied by the independent Republic of Ireland or Eire.

Great Britain, the largest of the British Isles, is the largest island in Europe and the eighth largest island in the world. It covers 218,980 square km. It is located off the north-west coast of the mainland of Europe and is separated from the continent by the English Channel in the south and the North Sea in the east.

Politically, the island of Great Britain consists of three of the four political divisions of the country of the United Kingdom. The divisions are England, which covers most of the southern two-thirds of the island; Scotland, which covers the northern third; and Wales, a small division in the southwest. The fourth political division of the United Kingdom - Northern Ireland - lies just west of Great Britain, in the northeast of the island of Ireland. Britain stretches for over 900 km from south to north (as a Concorde flies) and is some 500 km across in the widest part and 60 km in the narrowest.

The westernmost point of the English mainland is Land's End, a mass of granite cliffs, which plunge into the sea. The most southerly point of Great Britain is Lizard Point, a mass of rock, which can be carved and polished, into ornaments, and the most north-western point is John O'Groats.

The second largest island of the British Archipelago is Ireland with an area of 84, 000 square kilometres.

Off the north-western coast of Great Britain there is a group of islands known as the Hebrides. They are divided into the Inner and Outer Hebrides, the groups of islands, separated from each other by the Sea of the Hebrides and the Little Minch. Out of the total of 500 islands of the Hebrides more than half are inhabitable. Only several families live on some of them.

The Orkney Islands, comprising about a hundred islands, are separated from the mainland by the seven-mile Pentland Firth. Only a third of the islands are inhabited.

Seventy miles north of the Orkneys are the Shetland Islands, which are far from being prosperous, and the population is steadily decreasing.

In the middle of the Irish Sea there is the Isle of Man. Another important island in the Irish Sea is Anglesey, situated off the north coast of Wales.

The Isle of Wight is in the English Channel. With its sunny beaches and pleasant varied countryside, the island forms one of the South Coast's most important tourist resorts. It is linked to London by ferry and rail services.

Off the extreme south-western coast of Great Britain there is a tiny group of the Isles of Scilly.

The Channel Islands, which lie to the southwest of the French side of the English Channel, can be better seen from a map of northwest France than southern England. The population of the islands, which is over 133,000, greatly increases in summer due to holidaymakers. Here there is a strict legislation over immigration and the purchase of property. The chief islands of the group are Jersey and Guernsey, Jersey being the largest in the group.

SEAS AND COASTLINE

The British Isles are of the continental origin. Situated off the northwest coast of Europe, they once formed part of that continent. They only became islands when they were separated from it. The separation took place thousands of years ago, after the last Ice Age. When the ice melted, the level of the ocean rose and drowned the low-lying coastlands round the continents. The English Channel, which was formerly a westward extension of the North European Plain, became a shallow stretch of sea. It was a change, which greatly affected the history as well as geography of the islands.

The zone of shallow water, which at present surrounds the continent, thus resembles a shelf above the really deep water of the ocean: it is called the continental shelf. The British Isles lie entirely on the shelf.

From the European continent the British Isles are separated by the English Channel and the North Sea. In the narrowest part, which is only 32 km, the English Channel is called the Strait of Dover. Here the two opposite coasts of England and France come so near, that on a clear day the cliffs of each side can be quite well seen from the opposite shore. In 1993 a rail tunnel between Britain and France was opened, carrying 30 million passengers a year. The Channel Tunnel, running from Calais, provides a 30-minute train ride in well-lit and air-conditioned comfort. Passengers are able to stay in their vehicles, and trains are running every three minutes. The tunnel is 7.3 meters in diameter and about 50 km long, of which 37 km are under the Channel.

In the west the British Isles are washed by the Atlantic Ocean, in the east - by the North Sea. The two largest islands of the British Archipelago, Great Britain and Ireland, are separated from each other by the Irish Sea and the two straits, the North Channel - 20 km wide, and St. George' s Channel - over 100 km wide.

The North Atlantic Current, which forms part of the Gulf Stream system, has an ameliorating effect on the British Isles. During the winter months warm water is arriving to the North Atlantic and the seasonal fall of air temperature over Britain is slow and slight.

The British Isles are known for their greatly indented coastline. There are plenty of bays and harbours, peninsulas and capes on the coast. Due to its extreme indentity the coastline of Great Britain despite its relatively modest size, is 8,000 km long.

The western coast of Scotland and Wales is much indented. The mountains here rise abruptly from the sea. In the east the coast is less lofty, land sloping gradually down to the low sea.

The coast washed by the Strait of Dover is steep with white cliffs coming right up to the sea.

RELIEF

Britain has a great diversity of physical characteristics with a contrast between the generally high relief of western and northern Britain and the lowland areas of the south and east.

The most important range of mountains in England is the Pennine range, regarded as «the backbone» of England. It stretches from the Tyne valley in the north to the Trent valley in the south for about 250 km. The

highest point is Cross Fell (983 m) Across the north end of the Pennines lie the Cheviot Hills, which serve as a natural borderland between England and Scotland. The highest point is Cheviot (816 m)

In northwest England lie the Cumbrian Mountains, with the highest peak of Scafell (978 m).

One of the most extensive plains in the British Isles is in the English Midlands and is called the Midland Plain. Another important plain in Britain is the London Basin in South East England. The Hampshire Basin includes a wide plain area of central southern England. The Lancashire and Cheshire Plain include the lowlands to the west of the Central and Southern Pennines. In Yorkshire lies the extensive Yorkshire Lowland.

Most of the land north of the Thames and up to a bay of the North Sea called the Wash is low and flat. This area has some of the country's richest farmland. A great plain called the Fens borders the Wash. In the Fens is the lowest point on the island of Great Britain. It ranges from sea level to 4.6 meters below sea level, depending on the tide of the North Sea.

Wales consists of worn down mountain ranges, representing high plateaus which are called the Cambrian Mountains with the highest peak Snowdon (1,085 m).

Scotland can be roughly divided into three physical regions: the Highlands, the Southern Uplands and the Central Lowlands. The Scottish Highlands form the most extensive and the most sparsely populated of the three regions. They are separated into two parts by Glen More, or the Great Glen, the northern part being called the North-west Highlands and the southern one - the Grampians. The North-west Highlands contain the loftiest summits, Ben Nevis (1,347 m) being the highest peak in the British Isles.

The Southern Uplands extend from the Central Valley of Scotland in the north to the Pennine Hills in the south. These uplands form a plateau, which glaciation has eroded into smooth, rounded hills.

The Central Lowlands of Scotland (the Midland Valley) is a low-lying area about eighty km wide. It is the most densely populated area of Scotland, containing 80 percent of its people.

The Central Plain of Ireland stretches west-east across the country from coast to coast. It's lowland containing innumerable lakes and peat bogs.

In the extreme northeast there are Mountains of Antrim, which are about 400 metres high. In the north and northwest are the Sperrin Mountains and the Ox Mountains, which are also not very high. The highest in Ireland are the Macgillycuddy Reeks in the southwest, about 1,104 metres.

RIVERS AND LAKES

There is a wide network of rivers in the British Isles, though generally short in length and navigable but in their lower reaches, especially during high tides. Mild maritime climate keeps them free of ice throughout the winter months.

In the Middle Ages river transport played a major role in the British internal transport system, and all the towns of the time were situated on navigable rivers. But since the beginning of the nineteenth century the waterways, including numerous canals, have steadily declined in importance, and many have fallen into disuse.

The largest river of Great Britain, the Severn (390 km) follows a particularly puzzling course. It flows at first north-eastwards, but later turns sharply southwards and south-westwards to the Bristol Channel. The other important rivers of England are the Trent (274 km) and the Thames (332 km), which show also many changes of direction. The rivers Tyne, Tees, Humber and Ouse flow into the North Sea.

The largest rivers of Scotland such as the Tweed, Forth, Dee, and Spey flow directly to the North Sea. Scotland's longest river, the River Tay is some 170 km long and also follows this course. The Clyde, on which Glasgow stands, flows into the Irish Sea.

There are many rivers in Ireland. They are short but navigable, the longest being the River Shannon (384 km), flowing from north to south of Ireland.

The largest fresh water lake in the British Isles is Lough Neagh in Northern Ireland (381 square km). The largest lake in Great Britain and the biggest one in Scotland is Loch Lomond, covering a surface area of 70 square km, although the longest lake is Loch Ness (56 square km). In England the largest lake is Lake Windermere in the Lake District with a surface area of 15 square km. The celebrated Lake District contains some other very beautiful lakes and is a most popular tourist resort.

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

The United Kingdom has a mild climate, even though it lies as far north as bitterly cold Labrador. Winter temperatures rarely drop as low as -12 degrees C, and summer temperatures seldom rise above 32 degrees C. The annual mean temperature in the British Isles is 9-10 degrees C; the mean January temperature for London is 4 degrees C and the mean July temperature is 17 degrees C. The climate is influenced by the Gulf Stream, a warm ocean current that sweeps up from the equator and flows past the

British Isles. Steady southwest winds blow across this current and bring warmth in winter. In summer, the ocean is cooler than the land. Winds over the ocean come to Britain as refreshing breezes. The sea winds also bring plentiful rain. Average annual rainfall in Britain is 1,100 mm. But the geographical distribution of rainfall is largely determined by topography. The heaviest rains fall in the highland areas of western Scotland. Some of these areas get 380 to 510 centimetres a year. The United Kingdom has rain throughout the year, and rarely is any section of the country dry for as long as three weeks. Much of the rain comes in light, but steady drizzles. Mild fogs hang over parts of the country from time to time. But the famous «pea soup» fogs of London and other big cities seldom occur any more. These thick, heavy fogs were caused chiefly by smoke and other pollution released into the air by factories, automobiles, and homes where coal was burned for heat. Antipollution laws have helped make such fogs much less severe than they once were.

VEGETATION AND ANIMAL LIFE

The 'natural vegetation' in the true sense of the term has practically disappeared from Britain. Today only a few areas of woodland remain, where oak, ash, maple, elm and hazel can be found. There are also marshes and moorlands covered with heath.

One-third of the land is arable.

Animal world of the British Isles is represented by bears, foxes, deer, wolves, rabbits and hares.

BRITISH HISTORY

EARLIEST TIMES

It is important to remember that, while ancient civilizations flourished in Africa and Asia, then in Greece and Rome, life id Britain was still primitive. In the history of world civilizations Britain was a very late starter.

About 100 BC the Celts spread across Britain and mixed with earlier settlers, a mixture which was the basis of the British population.

In AD 43, the Romans occupied Britain. The Romans won because they had a better trained army and because the Celtic tribes fought among themselves.

The Romans brought the skills of reading and writing to Britain. The Romans built towns with stone as well as wood, and had planned streets, markets and shops. Under the Romans the slave-owning system developed.

Roman control of Britain came to an end as the empire began to collapse. In AD 409 Rome pulled its last soldiers out of Britain.

The Angles, Saxons and Jutes began to settle in Britain after AD 430. They gave the larger part of Britain its new name, England, 'the land of Angles'. The Saxons divided the land into new administrative areas, based on shires, or counties. They introduced a three-field pattern of farming. The Angles developed a class system, made up of king, lords, soldiers and workers on the land.

In 865 the Vikings invaded Britain. Only King Alfred held out against the Vikings. He thought that it would be best to keep off the Danes by fighting them at sea, so he built ships bigger and faster than the Danish ships. King Alfred is considered to be the founder of the English fleet.

Later the Danish King Canute added England to his Empire (1016-1035).

THE NORMAN CONQUEST

In 1066 the Normans defeated the English in a battle near Hastings. William of Normandy (William the Conqueror) was crowned king of England on in 1066. A new period had begun.

Ireland had been conquered by Norman lords in 1169 and later became the first English colony.

THE WARS

England tried to defeat Scotland. But the Scots created a popular resistance movement. At first it was led by William Wallace, but after his execution Robert Bruce was able to raise an army and defeat the English army in Scotland. Since 1314 for further three centuries Scotland remained independent.

During the Hundred Years War (1338-1453) Scotland supported France against England.

England had lost the war but two years later a new war broke up, later called the "Wars of the Roses" (1485-1509). Two noble English families were fighting for the English crown. Almost half the lords of the sixty noble families had died in the wars. It was this fact which made it possible for the Tudors to build an absolute monarchy.

By the end of the fifteenth century England was one of a number of countries where elements of a bourgeois economy were developing.

THE NEW TRADING EMPIRE

In 1534 Henry VIII broke with the Roman Catholic Church. Now he was head of the state and head of the Church. He could control the Church and could keep its wealth in his own kingdom.

Between 1536 and 1543 Wales became joined to England under one administration. (West Wales was joined to England in 1284.) Elizabeth, Henry VIII's daughter, became queen when her father died. She wanted to make England prosperous.

English ships had already been attacking Spanish ships as they returned from America loaded with silver and gold. This was the result of Spain's refusal to allow England to trade freely with Spanish American colonies.

Spain built a great fleet of ships, an 'Armada', but in 1588 the Spanish Armada was defeated by the English. England won naval supremacy.

Elizabeth encouraged English traders to settle abroad and to create colonies. This policy led directly to Britain's colonial empire of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Elizabeth died in 1603 and James VI, the king of Scotland, became king of England – James I.

PARLIAMENT AGAINST THE CROWN (THE STUARTS)

James VI wanted to rule without parliament. His son, Charles I (1625) found himself quarrelling so bitterly with the Commons that he dissolved Parliament.

In 1641 Ireland exploded in rebellion against the Protestant English and Scottish settlers. The revolt in Ireland resulted in civil war. Parliament in the long run refused to provide the king with money and the king considered the refusal an encroachment on his divine right.

In 1642 Charles I declared war on Parliament. The Civil War had started. Parliament was supported by the navy, by most of the merchants and by the population of London. It therefore controlled the most important national and international sources of wealth. In 1645 the Royalist army was finally defeated.

The strongest commander of the parliamentarians was Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell represented more than anyone else the gentry, the developing capitalist landowners. He had created a new "model" army, the first regular force from which the British army of today developed. Instead of country people or gentry, Cromwell invited into his army educated men who wanted to fight for their beliefs.

REPUBLICAN AND RESTORATION BRITAIN

The Parliament brought Charles I to court found him guilty of making "war against his kingdom and the Parliament". King Charles was executed.

From 1649 till 1660 Britain was a republic, but the republic was not a success. Cromwell and his friends created a government far more severe

than Charles's had been. They had got rid of the monarchy, and they now got rid of the House of Lords and the Anglican Church.

From 1653 Britain was governed by Cromwell alone. He became "Lord Protector", with far greater powers than King Charles had had. In fact, Cromwell established military dictatorship. His efforts to govern the country through the army were extremely unpopular, and the idea of using the army to maintain law and order in the kingdom has remained unpopular ever since. Cromwell's government was unpopular for other reasons. For example, people were forbidden to celebrate Christmas and Easter, or to play games on a Sunday.

When Cromwell died in 1658 Charles II was invited to return to his kingdom. The republic was over. But Restoration did not mean a return to the old order. Charles II knew that he ruled by permission of the landlords and merchants and could be dismissed as easily as he had been invited to return.

In 1688 the Parliament offered the crown to Mary who was a Protestant and married to the Protestant ruler of Holland, William of Orange. William insisted to be crowned too.

The Glorious Revolution, as the political results of the events of 1688 were called, was completely unplanned and unprepared for. It was hardly a revolution, more a *coup d'etat* by the ruling class. But the fact that Parliament made William king, not by inheritance but by their choice, was revolutionary.

Parliament was now beyond question more powerful than the king, and would remain so. Its power over the monarch was written into the Bill of Rights in 1689. The king was now unable to raise taxes or keep an army without the agreement of Parliament, or to act against any MP for what he said or did in Parliament.

In 1701 Parliament finally passed the Act of Settlement, to make sure only a Protestant could inherit the crown. Even today, if a son or daughter of the monarch becomes a Catholic, he or she cannot inherit the throne. The Act showed a further weakening of king’s power and it led to a collapse of feudalism and beginning of capitalism. Constitutional Monarchy was shaping in England.

NEW STATE

In 1707 the union of Scotland and England was completed by Act of Parliament. From that moment both countries no longer had separate parliaments, and a new parliament of Great Britain, the new name of the state, met for the first time. Scotland, however, kept its own separate legal and judicial system, and its own separate Church.

LIFE AND THOUGHT

In the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries English scientists, most of them at the University of Oxford, had led Europe. Friar Roger Bacon, one of the more famous of them, had experimented with light; heat and magnetism. Another, William of Ockham, had studied falling objects. Another, William Marlee, had been one of the first to keep a careful record of the weather. Chaucer himself wrote a book to teach his son how to use an astrolabe. At the same time, the practical effects of such curiosity were seen in new machinery, water mills and lathes.

In 1628 William Harvey discovered the circulation of blood and this led to great advances in medicine and in the study of the human body.

In 1666 the Cambridge Professor of Mathematics, Sir Isaac Newton, began to study gravity, publishing his important discovery in 1684.

Christopher Wren, the greatest British architect was also Professor of Astronomy at Oxford. He rebuilt the great medieval cathedral of St Paul after the Great Fire of London.

THE EIGHTEEN CENTURY

POLITICS AND FINANCE

In 1714 elector of Hanover was crowned George I. George couldn’t even speak English.

Government power was increased because the new king spoke only German, and did not seem very interested in his new kingdom. Among the king's ministers was Robert Walpole, who remained the greatest political leader for over twenty years. He is considered Britain's first Prime Minister. Walpole was determined to keep the Crown under the firm control of Parliament.

Walpole skilfully developed the idea that government ministers should work together in a small group, which was called the "Cabinet".

The limits to monarchy were these: the king could not be a Catholic; the king could not remove or change laws; the king was dependent on Parliament for his financial income and for his army. The king was supposed to "choose" his ministers. Even today the government of Britain is "Her Majesty's Government". But in fact the ministers belonged as much to Parliament as they did to the king.

The country was fully shaped as a constitutional monarchy.

COLONIAL WARS

In the eighteenth century Britain led several wars: the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), the War of the Austrian Succession (1740 - 1748).

The Seven Years’ War (1756-1763) put Britain, allied with Prussia, against France in alliance with Austria and Russia.

The war against France's trade went on all over the world.

In 1763 George III made peace with France. The Treaty of Paris was a diplomatic triumph. The Treaty of Paris established Britain's 18th-century empire at its height.

THE LOSS OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES

In 1764 there was a serious quarrel over taxation between the British government and its colonies in America.

Some American colonists decided that it was not lawful for the British to tax them without their agreement. They thought that there should be "no taxation without representation".

In 1773 a group of colonists at the port of Boston threw a shipload of tea into the sea rather than pay tax on it. The event became known as "the Boston Teaparty". This was rebellion, and the government decided to defeat it by force. The American War of Independence had begun.

The war in America lasted from 1775 until 1783. The government had no respect for the politics of the colonists, and the British army had no respect for their fighting ability. The result was a disastrous defeat for the British government. It lost everything except for Canada.

IRELAND and SCOTLAND

In Ulster, the northern part of Ireland, Protestants formed the first "Orange Lodges", societies which were against any freedom for the Catholics.

In order to increase British control Ireland was united with Britain in 1801, and the Dublin parliament closed. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland lasted for 120 years.

In Scotland James III started a rebellion against George I in 1715. But the rebellion was a disaster, and George's army had little difficulty in defeating the English and Scottish "Jacobites", as Stuart supporters were known.

In 1745, James II's grandson, Prince Charles Edward Stuart, better known as "Bonny Prince Charlie", made another attempt to take hold of the English crown. He landed on the west coast of Scotland. He persuaded some clan chiefs to join him.

Early in 1746 they were defeated by the British army at Culloden. The rebellion was finished. It was the last attempt of the Stuarts to win the crown.

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

By the early eighteenth century simple machines had already been invented for basic jobs. They could make large quantities of simple goods quickly and cheaply so that "mass production" became possible for the first

time. In 1764 a spinning machine was invented and in 1785 a power machine for weaving revolutionised clothmaking. It allowed Britain to make cloth more cheaply than elsewhere.

It was also rapid road travel and cheap transport by canal that made possible the economic success of the industrial revolution.

The social effects of the industrial revolution were enormous. Workers tried to join together to protect themselves against powerful employers. Riots occurred, led by the unemployed who had been replaced in factories by machines. In 1799 some of these rioters, known as Luddites, started to break up the machinery which had put them out of work.

Slave trade also contributed to the industrial revolution.

REVOLUTION IN FRANCE AND THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

In 1793 Britain went to war after France had invaded the Low Countries (today, Belgium and Holland). One by one, most of Europe fell under Napoleon's control.

The commander of the British fleet, Admiral Horatio Nelson, won brilliant victory over the French navy at Trafalgar in 1805, where he destroyed the French-Spanish fleet. Nelson was himself killed at Trafalgar, but became one of Britain's greatest national heroes.

Napoleon, weakened by his disastrous invasion of Russia, surrendered in 1814. But the following year he escaped and quickly assembled an army in France. Wellington, with the timely help of the Prussian army, finally defeated Napoleon at Waterloo in Belgium in June 1815.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
THE YEARS OF POWER AND DANGER

Britain in the nineteenth century was at its most powerful and self-confident. After the industrial revolution, nineteenth-century Britain was the "workshop" of the world. Until the last quarter of the century British factories were producing more than any other country in the world.

With the development of large-scale industry the conditions of the artisans were appalling. They had to work 16-18 hours a day and received almost nothing for their work.

Since 1824 workers had been allowed to join together in unions.

Working together for the first time, unions, workers and radicals put forward a People's Charter in 1838. The Charter demanded rights that are now accepted by everyone: the vote for all adults; the right for a man without property of his own to be an MP; voting in secret (so that people could not be forced to vote for their landlord or his party); payment for MPs, and an election every year.

The "Chartists" were not united for long. They were divided between those ready to use violence and those who believed in change by lawful means only. The improved economic conditions in the 1840s weakened the Chartist movement, which slowly died.

But the government was forced to carry out several important reforms: electoral rights were extended, the secret ballot was introduced.

In the eighteenth century Britain had been a political model now it became a model of industrial success and of free constitutional government. For much of the nineteenth century Britain was the envy of the world.

THE EMPIRE

In 1837 Victoria was crowned as the British Queen. She and her husband, Albert, came to symbolise many virtues: a close-knit family life, a sense of public duty, integrity, and respectability. These beliefs and attitudes are often known as “Victorian”.

Britain's empire had first been built on trade and the need to defend this against rival European countries. Britain watched the oceans carefully to make sure its trade routes were safe, and fought wars in order to protect its "areas of interest". In 1839 it attacked China and forced it to allow the profitable British trade in opium from India to China. The "Opium Wars" were one of the more shameful events in British colonial history. Colonial wars were in all parts of the world. For example, the war in Afghanistan (1839-42), in Pakistan, India (1857).

Britain joined the Turks against Russia in Crimea in 1854. Britain succeeded in taking over large areas of Africa. The colonisation of Australia, especially after the gold rush of 1848, and of New Zealand, was intensified. In South Africa Britain defeated the Boers only with great difficulty. In 1882, Britain invaded Egypt "to protect international shipping", and it did not leave until forced to do so in I954.

By the end of the nineteenth century Britain controlled the oceans and much of the land areas of the world.

But other countries, Germany particularly, had greater natural wealth, including coal and iron, and wheat producing lands. Besides, British workers produced less than those in other countries, and Britain was behind other countries in science and technology, as well as in management skills, and did little to change this. Britain found that Germany, France and the USA were increasingly competing with her.

Suddenly Britain realised that it no longer ruled the seas quite so assuredly, and that others had more powerful armies and more powerful industries.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Anglo-German relations were actually cordial in early 1914, and Britain was Germany's best customer. It was Germany's threat to France and its invasion of neutral Belgium that prompted Britain to declare war.

Apart from the Crimean War, this was Britain's first European war for a century, and the country was quite unprepared for the terrible destructive power of modern weapons.

By the end of the war in November 1918 over 750,000 British soldiers had died, and another two million had been seriously wounded. About fifty times more people had died than in the twenty-year war against Napoleon.

IRELAND

Before the beginning of the First World War the British government had agreed to home rule for Ireland. But the Irish republicans did not only want home rule, but full independence. At Easter 1916, these republicans rebelled in Dublin. The "Easter Rising" was quickly put down. The British executed all the leaders, which was a serious mistake. The public was shocked, not only in Ireland, but also in London.

In the 1918 elections the republicans won in almost every area except Ulster and the new parliament announced that Ireland was now a republic. Irishmen joined the republic's army, and guerrilla fighting against the British began. As a result the British government decided to make peace. In 1921 it agreed to the independence of southern Ireland. But it also insisted that Ulster, or Northern Ireland as it became known, should remain united with Britain.

Thus, since 1921 the country has been known as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Within the Republic of Ireland the majority have continued to believe that all Ireland should one day be united, but without the use of force. A minority, however, has remained since 1921 ready and willing to use violent means to achieve a united Ireland.

DISAPPOINTMENT AND DEPRESSION

Alongside the social effects of the war were far-reaching economic ones. Since 1914 there had been an outbreak of strikes.

In 1926 discontent led to a general strike by all workers.

All over Europe and America a serious economic crisis, known as "the depression", was taking place. It affected Britain most severely from 1930 to 1933, when over three million workers were unemployed.

In Germany the depression was even more severe, and it destroyed Britain's second most important market from before the war. Far worse, the economic collapse of Germany led to the rise of Adolf Hitler.

THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Memories of World War I left Britons with an overwhelming desire to avoid another war. The British government followed a policy of appeasement in dealing with Adolf Hitler's Germany after 1933.

It tried to avoid war at all costs.

When In September 1939 Germany invaded Poland, Britain and France declared war, and World War II began.

Although a German invasion plan was foiled by British air supremacy, large parts of London and other cities were destroyed.

The war had begun as a traditional European struggle, but quickly became world-wide.

The war finally ended with over 303,000 dead soldiers and 60,000 civilians killed in air raids, half as many British people had died in the First World War.

THE LOSS OF EMPIRE

In 1940s Britain gave freedom to Palestine, India, Pakistan Burma (now known as Myanmar) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

In the 1950s Britain's government followed a deliberate policy of decolonisation. The Sudan, Ghana, Nigeria, Somalia, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Kenya in Africa and also Malaysia, Cyprus, and Jamaica were given independence. In 1956 Britain Britain removed its troops from Egypt.

Britain tried to hold onto its international position through its Commonwealth, which all the old colonies were invited to join as free and equal members.

In 1982 Britain went to war to take back the Falklands after an Argentinean invasion. In spite of the great distance involved, British forces were able to carry out a rapid recapture of the islands. The operation was very popular in Britain, perhaps because it suggested that Britain was still a world power. But Britain's victory made an eventual solution to the problem more difficult, and possession of the islands extremely expensive.

Hong Kong was given back to China in 1999.

THE PERMISSIVE SOCIETY

During the 1960s, Britain experienced a widespread mood of rebellion against the conventions of the past - in dress, in music, in popular entertainment, and in social behaviour." London became a world capital of

popular music, theatre, and, for a time, fashion. Among the negative side effects, however, were a rising crime rate and a spreading drug culture.

During the later 1960s, laws on divorce were eased, abortion was legalised, curbs on homosexual practices were ended, capital punishment was abolished, equal pay for equal work was prescribed for women, and the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18.

THE THATCHER DECADE

In the seventies Britain suddenly began to slip rapidly behind its European neighbours economically.

As unemployment grew, the relationship between black immigrants and the white population of Britain was not easy. The country was troubled with a series of strikes, biggest since the years of depression.

In the elections of April 1979 the Conservatives won. Margaret Thatcher became the first woman prime minister in British or European history. She was to remain in office for the next 11 years, making hers the longest continuous prime ministership since the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

Margaret Thatcher had come to power calling on the nation for hard work, patriotism and self-help.

The years between 1982 and 1988 were economic boom years in Britain. The living standards of most Britons rose and the rate of unemployment gradually ebbed.

The most serious accusation against the Thatcher government by the middle of the 1980s was that it had created a more unequal society, a society of "two nations", one wealthy, and the other poor.

THE “NEW LABOUR”

Thatcher was succeeded as Conservative Party leader and prime minister by John Major, who received the lowest approval rating, 14 percent, of any prime minister in British history.

In national elections in 1997 Labour leader Tony Blair became prime minister. At 43 years old, Blair was the youngest man to become British prime minister since Lord Liverpool in 1812.

The new government introduced a package of reforms. The reformation of Parliament began; all but 92 hereditary peers were removed from the House of Lords in the first stage of its reform.

Tony Blair was re-elected in the 2001 General Election.

But Blair’s persistence in the support of Bush’s policy in Iraq and ignoring the opinion of most British citizens on Britain’s participation in the war cost him his career.

Throughout the course of the Iraqi war Blair was often the target of harsh criticism. All around Britain there were numerous anti-war protests.

On February 15, 2003 there were over 10 million people in the streets all over the world. But Blair's persistence in the support of Bush's policy in Iraq cost him his caree. He gave his position to his party-member Gordon Brown.

BRITAIN: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Britain cannot not make up its mind whether its first loyalty is to Europe or to the United States. Britain feels its "special relationship" with the United States is particularly important. It rests on a common language, on its wartime alliance with the United States and the Cold War which followed it.

Britain sided with the United States in other foreign policy matters too, which alarmed its European partners. In 1986, for example, it allowed US aircraft to use British airfields from which to attack the Libyan capital, Tripoli, and in 1996 to bomb Yugoslavia, later, in 2003– Iraq.

ECONOMY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom is an important manufacturing and trading nation. In fact, Britain can survive only by manufacturing and trading. The country's farms produce only about two-thirds of the food needed by the people. Except for coal, natural gas and oil, Britain has feew natural resources. The country must import about a third of its food and many of the raw materials it needs for manufacturing.

The country is a world leader in international trade. In January 1973, Great Britain became a member of the European Community (now called the European Union).

Major industries, such as transportation, communications, steel, petroleum, coal, gas, and electricity, which had been nationalised by Labour governments, were sold to private investors by the Conservative government in the 1980s.

SERVICE INDUSTRIES

Service industries account for about two-thirds of the United Kingdom's gross domestic product (GDP). The GDP is the total value of goods and services produced within the country annually. More than 70 percent of British workers are employed in service industries. The country's service industries are concentrated in and near its largest cities, especially London.

FINANCE, INSURANCE, and REAL ESTATE is the most important service industry in Britain. This industry accounts for a larger

portion of the United Kingdom's GDP than any other industry. Most of the country's financial companies operate in London, one of the world's leading financial cities. Major financial institutions in London include the Bank of England, the United Kingdom's national bank; the London Stock Exchange; and Lloyd's of London insurance society.

COMMUNITY, SOCIAL, and PERSONAL SERVICES rank second among the service industries in the United Kingdom. This industry employs more British workers than any other service industry. It includes such activities as education and health care, and advertising and data processing.

WHOLESALE and RETAIL TRADE is the third most important service industry in Britain. The most valuable wholesale trading activities include the distribution of petroleum and textiles. Aberdeen and London are important centres of petroleum refining and distribution. Leeds is the chief centre of the British clothing industry. Retail trade is centred in London, which has thousands of small shops and attracts millions of tourists yearly. More than half of all wholesale trade is carried out in London too.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE. The prominent position of British commerce in world trade during the 18th and 19th centuries resulted largely from the geographical isolation of the British Isles from the wars and political troubles that afflicted the centres of trade on the European continent. The development of the great trading companies (East India Company; Hudson's Bay Company), colonial expansion, and naval control of the high seas were corollary factors. Before the 17th century the foreign trade of England was almost completely in the hands of foreigners; wool was the principal export, and manufactured goods were the chief imports. Under the mercantile system, which in Great Britain was the prevailing economic theory of the 17th and 18th centuries, the government fostered British foreign trade, the development of shipping, and trading companies. As British overseas possessions increased, the raising of sheep for wool and mutton became a major occupation in the colonies; the practice of exporting wool from England and importing manufactured woollen articles was gradually replaced by the import of wool and the manufacture and export of yarns and fabrics. Cotton textiles, iron and steel, and coal soon became significant British exports.

Manufactured goods now account for about three-fourths of British imports and also about three-fourths of its exports. Britain exports aerospace equipment, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, machinery, motor vehicles, petroleum, and scientific and medical equipment. Its imports include chemicals, clothing, foods (especially fish, fruit, vegetables, meat, coffee, and tea), machinery, metals, motor vehicles, paper and newsprint, petroleum products, and textiles.

Most of the United Kingdom's trade is with other developed countries. France, Germany, and the United States are Britain's leading customers and suppliers. A growing proportion of the country's trade is with members of the European Community, which the United Kingdom joined in 1973. Other trade partners include Canada, Ireland, Japan, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, and Switzerland.

The value of Britain's imports of goods usually exceeds the value of its exports. British banks and insurance companies make up part of the difference by selling their services to people and firms in other lands. Another important source of income is the spending by the more than 15 million tourists who visit the United Kingdom each year. The British merchant fleet also brings in money by carrying cargoes for other countries. The income from all these invisible exports exceeds $200 billion a year.

TOURISM is an essential source of overseas income. It is a growing source of income and employment. In 1969, a government organisation, the British Tourist Authority, has been set up to attract visitors and improve tourist accommodations and travel conditions. In the early 1990s some 19.3 million visitors toured Great Britain annually, spending about $13.7 billion.

COMMUNICATION

The POST OFFICE, founded in 1635, maintains about 20,000 branch offices throughout Great Britain and administers a postal savings system. The postal system was revised and penny postage established in the 1830s. The British Post Office provides many services in addition to handling mail. For example, local post offices sell TV licenses, dog licenses, and national insurance stamps. People can draw pensions and family allowances and also bank their savings at the post offices

In 1870 the government acquired the British TELEGRAPH systems, and in 1892 it began buying the private telephone companies. Telecommunications are administered by British Telecom (known as BT since 1991), founded as a state corporation but privatised in the 1980s.

The BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION (BBC) and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), both public bodies, are licensed to provide television and radio broadcasting services. Founded in 1922 and working under a royal charter, in the early 1990s the BBC operated 2 television channels as well as 5 national networks and 33 local radio stations. It is financed mainly through the sale of annual licenses for television receivers. The BBC also provides foreign radio broadcasts in many languages. The IBA, which oversees the operation of independent television and radio, was created by Parliament in 1954 (until 1972 it was known as the Independent Television Authority). In the early 1990s, independent television was provided on a regional basis by 16 commercial program companies; satellite broadcasting services have also been

introduced. Four television channels are currently broadcast and a fifth is planned. Local radio stations are run by some 90 commercial firms, centred mostly in the larger cities. Commercial advertising on both independent radio and television pays for the services. There are no commercials on BBC radio or television broadcasts. In the early 1990s an estimated 65.8 million radios and 25 million television sets were in use.

Some 101 daily newspapers and more than 2000 weekly newspapers are published in Great Britain. Fourteen London newspapers circulate nation-wide, and five of them have daily circulations of more than 1 million. Among the most respected British daily newspapers are the *Times*, the *Guardian*, the *Daily Telegraph*, and the *Financial Times*, all published in London. Noted weeklies include *New Scientist*, *New Statesman and Society*, the *Spectator*, and the *Times Literary Supplement*. Great Britain also has many well-known book publishers. Tabloid newspapers, characterised by sensationalised stories and large quantities of photographs and graphics, are both popular and influential in Great Britain.

TRANSPORTATION. Roads and railways carry most passenger and freight traffic within the United Kingdom. The ROAD system of Great Britain in the early 1990s consisted of about 362,982 km (about 225,557 mi) of public routes. Some 20,1 million passenger cars were registered in Great Britain. Automobile travel has become increasingly important in recent decades; about 90 percent of all passenger travel in Great Britain is by road.

An excellent system of high-speed MOTORWAYS links major cities and towns. Bus systems provide local and intercity transportation. Lorries (trucks) carry about 80 percent of the inland freight.

An extensive RAIL network criss-crosses the United Kingdom. The railroads are owned by the government and provide excellent high-speed passenger service, as well as freight hauling.

The irregular coastline of the British Isles, with its numerous indentations and bays and navigable streams, the improvement of the country's harbours, and the provision of dock facilities have all helped Britain grow into a maritime power. The Navigation Laws of the 17th century were instituted to give English vessels maximum advantage in the carrying of English products, and naval victories over Spain and France, chief rivals of Britain in world trade, gave the nation control of the seas and pre-eminence in world merchant shipping. This leadership lasted until World War II (1939-1945), when the destruction of British shipping by enemy action and the increased production capacity of U.S. shipyards enabled the American merchant marine to overtake and surpass the British merchant fleet. The majority of the international ports have been nationalised. Among the country's leading seaports are the extensive Port of London, Liverpool, Manchester (an inland seaport), Grimsby,

Southampton, Milford Haven (a petroleum port), and Glasgow. Other major ports include the Tees River ports and Felixstowe.

In the 15th century the English government began improving natural waterways and constructing canals. By the early 1990s Great Britain had about 5600 km (about 3500 mi) of canals and navigable rivers.

Britain has a large merchant FLEET. The ships in the fleet carry British-made goods to ports throughout the world and bring back needed imports. British ships also carry freight for other countries. There are about 80 ports of commercial significance throughout the United Kingdom.

The country's inland WATERWAYS are used to carry freight, as well as for recreational boating. The Thames, which flows through London, is Britain's busiest river and one of the busiest in the world.

FERRY services connect coastal and island communities. HOVERCRAFT (vehicles that ride over water on a cushion of air) carry passengers mainly across the English Channel between England and France. In 1987, work began on a railway tunnel to link Britain and France beneath the channel. The tunnel was scheduled for completion in 1994. On May 6, 1994, Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain and President Fran3ois Mitterrand of France rode through the tunnel as part of its inaugural ceremonies.

British AIRWAYS, the United Kingdom's largest airline (formed in 1972), operates flights to all parts of the world. Smaller airlines provide service within Britain and to other countries. Britain's largest airports are Heathrow and Gatwick, both near London, and those at Birmingham, Glasgow, and Manchester.

Other large service industries in the United Kingdom include GOVERNMENT and UTILITIES (railroads, bus routes, gas, pipelines).

MANUFACTURING

By virtue of the Industrial Revolution and the factory system initiated in the final quarter of the 18th century, Great Britain led the nations of the world in amount and value of manufactured products until the industrialisation of the United States in the latter part of the 19th century. Principal factors in the industrial prominence of Britain were its early leadership in the wool trade, favourable climate, mineral wealth, development of shipping and naval control of the seas, acquisition of territorial possessions and colonial markets, much greater freedom from political and religious wars and persecutions than existed in continental Europe, and development of improved manufacturing methods and labour-saving machinery.

The great influx of Flemish and Huguenot immigrants during the Protestant Reformation in the 16th and 17th centuries gave great impetus to the original wool industry and introduced new industries such as silk

weaving, garment making, and the manufacture of hats, pottery, and cutlery.

In terms of value, the leading branches of the manufacturing sector were food products, transportation equipment, non-electrical machinery, chemical products, and metals and metal products. The leading manufacturing regions were Greater London and the metropolitan counties of Greater Manchester, West Midlands (Birmingham), and Merseyside (Liverpool). Other important industrial centres were Glasgow, the Tees estuary region, southern Wales, and Belfast.

Early factories were located near the coal fields because coal powered the steam engines that moved the machinery. Today, the use of electricity, oil, and gas has enabled many new industries to develop far from the coal fields, especially in southern England.

Britain ranks as an important STEEL producer. It exports nearly half of its finished steel. The rest is used in Britain to make hundreds of products. Much steel is used in automobiles, buses, trucks, and motorcycles.

Britain also produces HEAVY MACHINERY for industry, farming, and mining. The country is one of the world's largest producers of tractors. Other products include cranes, earth movers, road graders, harvesters, and drilling machines. British factories also make railway equipment, household appliances, and machine tools. The city of Sheffield is famous for its high-quality knives and hand tools.

British AEROSPACE makes a wide range of jet aircraft. It is the largest aerospace company in Europe. Rolls-Royce is world famous for aeroplane engines as well as luxury automobiles. Space satellites and weapons defence systems are also produced in Britain. Aerospace equipment and heavy machinery are major British exports.

An increasing percentage of Britain's manufactured goods consists of sophisticated electronic equipment. Much of this equipment is exported. Factories produce such items as cable television equipment, data processing equipment, fibre-optic communications systems, radar devices, and undersea telephone cables.

The CHEMICAL industry in Britain produces a variety of products--from industrial chemicals to plastics and soap. Britain is the fourth largest exporter of pharmaceuticals. The country's POTTERY industry is centred in Stoke-on-Trent. Outstanding names in British pottery include Worcester, Spode, and Wedgwood.

The United Kingdom is one of the world's chief centres of PRINTING and PUBLISHING. British companies print paper money and postage stamps for many countries. Books published in Britain are exported to countries throughout the world.

The Industrial Revolution began in Britain's TEXTILE industry. Today, Britain remains an important producer of cotton and woollen textiles. Cotton and wool are produced in northern England. British manufacturers also make synthetic fibres and fabrics. England's east Midlands region is a centre for the production of lace and knitwear. Scotland produces knitwear and is famous for its fine woollen products. Northern Ireland has a world-wide reputation for its linen goods.

Britain has one of Europe's largest CLOTHING industries. The biggest centres are Leicester, Leeds, London, and Manchester. British clothing has long been famous for its quality. But today, Britain imports more clothing than it exports because many countries with lower labour costs can produce clothing more cheaply than the British can.

PROCESSING of FOODS and BEVERAGES ranks as one of Britain's major industries. Most processed foods and beverages are consumed in Britain. But some are exported. Scotch whisky has a large world market.

Other British industries manufacture bricks and cement, furniture, leather goods, glassware, and paper.

AGRICULTURE.

Compared with most other major countries, Great Britain devotes a relatively small portion of its labour force (in the early 1990s about 2 percent of the employed population) to agriculture, forestry, and fishing, and the nation must import more than three-fifths of the food supply for its large population. The imports include avocados, bananas, oranges, peppers, pineapples, and other items that cannot be easily grown in Britain's climate.

A great deal of the country’s land is not arable due to unproductive soil or inaccessibility, as in parts of the Scottish Highlands. In the early 1990s approximately 27 percent of the total land area of Great Britain was devoted to crops, and about 46 percent to permanent pasture and rough grazing. Agriculture in Great Britain is intensive and highly mechanised. Income from livestock and dairy products is about three times that from crops. Horticultural products are also important, especially in southern England. The most important crops (with approximate annual production in the early 1990s) were wheat (14.1 million metric tons), potatoes (7.8 million), barley (7.4 million), sugar beets (8.5 million), and oats (504,000). A variety of fruits and vegetables is also grown. Livestock in the same period included about 11.8 million cattle, 44 million sheep, 7.6 million pigs, and 136 million poultry.

The United Kingdom has about 240,000 farms. They average about 175 acres (71 hectares) in size. About two-thirds of Britain's farmers own the farms on which they live. The rest rent their farms. About half the people who operate or work on farms do so on a part-time basis.

Many British farmers practice mixed farming--that is, they raise a variety of crops and animals. Methods of mixed farming vary from farm to farm. In the rough highlands of Scotland, Wales, and western England, grass grows much better than farm crops. There, farmers use most of their land for grazing. The land in southern and eastern England is drier and flatter, and it is more easily worked. Farmers in eastern England use most of their land for raising crops.

Britain's most important crops are barley, potatoes, rapeseed, sugar beets, and wheat. Farmers in southern and eastern England grow almost all the country's rapeseed, sugar beets, and wheat and most of its barley. Potatoes are grown throughout the United Kingdom. Farmers in southern England grow most of Britain's fruits and garden vegetables. One of the most productive regions is the county of Kent in south-eastern England. It is called the Garden of England and is famous for the beautiful blossoms of its apple and cherry orchards in springtime. Farmers in Kent also grow hops, which are used in making beer.

SHEEP are Britain's chief livestock. Farmers in almost every part of the country raise sheep for meat and wool. British farmers also raise beef cattle, dairy cattle, and hogs. Chickens are raised mainly in special mass-production plants.

MINING

The United Kingdom is a major world producer of petroleum, coal, and natural gas. These three fuels account for about 85 percent of the value of total mineral production in the country.

PETROLEUM is Britain's most valuable mineral. British oil wells produce about 650 million barrels of petroleum a year. In the past, the country had to import petroleum to meet its needs. But during the 1970's, Britain began producing petroleum from wells in the North Sea. Today, Britain's oil wells provide nearly all the petroleum that the country uses and also supply petroleum for export.

Britain's largest COAL-mining region lies near the River Trent in central England. Coal from this area is an important source of fuel for the country's electric power plants.

Britain obtains NATURAL GAS from deposits below the North Sea. These deposits provide enough gas to meet most of the country's needs.

Britain's next most important minerals, in order of value, are SAND and GRAVEL, LIMESTONE, and CLAYS. The Southwest Peninsula has fine china clay, used in making pottery. South-eastern England has large deposits of CHALK, used for cement. Other British minerals include SANDSTONE and GYPSUM.

FORESTRY

Of the approximately 2.2 million hectares (about 5.4 million acres) of woodlands in Great Britain, about 40 percent are in England, 49 percent in Scotland, and 11 percent in Wales. The most common trees are oak, beech, ash, and elm. Pine and birch predominate in Scotland. Production of roundwood totalled about 6.7 million cu m (about 237 million cu ft) in the early 1990s. The Forestry Commission has run a reforestation program since the 1950s, under which approximately 17,800 hectares (about 44,000 acres) were replanted annually in the early 1990s, mostly in Scotland. Private owners, who held more than 60 percent of the total forestlands, were responsible for replanting some 15,500 hectares (about 38,300 acres) of the total. The reforestation of an additional 65,000 hectares (about 160,000 acres) in Northern Ireland was also planned. Despite these recent efforts, however, Great Britain still imports about 90 percent of its timber.

FISHING

The United Kingdom is an important fishing nation. About half this catch comes from the waters surrounding Britain, especially the North Sea. British fishing crews also fish as far away as the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. The principal catches include cod, haddock, herring, mackerel, plaice, pollock, sand lance, sole, and whiting. Notable fishing-product industries are located at Hull, Grimsby, Fleetwood, North Shields, Lowestoft, and Plymouth in England and at Aberdeen and Peterhead in Scotland. The British fishing fleet consists of more than 12,000 vessels, the largest fleet in the European Union (EU).

ENERGY SOURCES

Fuel-burning plants provide about 80 percent of Britain's electric power. Nuclear energy provides most of the remaining electricity. In 1956, Britain opened the world's first large-scale nuclear power station at Calder Hall, Cumbria, in north-western England. Natural gas fields under the North Sea provide most of the country's natural gas needs. Petroleum deposits off the coast of Scotland supply enough oil to meet the United Kingdom's needs.

POLITICAL LIFE OF THE UK

THE CONSTITUTION

Britain is a constitutional monarchy. That means it is a country governed by a king or queen who accepts the advice of a parliament. It is also a parliamentary democracy. That is, it is a country whose government

is controlled by a parliament which has been elected by the people. In other words, the basic system is not so different from anywhere else in Europe. However, there are features of the British system of government which make it different from that in other countries and which are not 'modern' at all. The most notable of these is the question of the constitution. Britain is almost alone among modern states in that it does not have 'a constitution' at all.

Instead, the principles and procedures by which the country is governed and from which people's rights are derived come from a number of different sources. They have been built up, bit by bit, over the centuries.

THE MONARCHY

The appearance

Oficially, the Queen has almost absolute power, and it all seems very undemocratic.

Every autumn, at the state opening of Parliament, Elizabeth II, who became Queen in I952, makes a speech. In it, she says what ‘my government’ intends to do in the coming year. And indeed, it is her government, not the people's. In fact, there is no legal concept of ‘the people’ at all. She can appoint ministers, she can also dismiss them. Officially speaking, they are all ‘servants of the Crown’ (not servants of anything like ‘the country or ‘the people’). Nothing that Parliament has decided can become law until she has agreed to it.

Other countries have ‘citizens’. But in Britain people are legally described as ‘subjects’ - subjects of Her Majesty the Queen. Moreover, there is a principle of English law that the monarch can do nothing that is legally wrong. In other words, Queen Elizabeth is above the law.

The reality

In reality the Queen has almost no power at all. In fact, the Queen cannot choose anyone she likes to be Prime Minister. In practice the Person she chooses is the leader of the strongest party in the House of Commons. Similarly, it is really the Prime Minister who decides who the other government ministers are going to be (although officially, the Prime. Minister simply ‘advises’ the monarch who to choose).

When she opens Parliament each year the speech she makes has been written for her. She cannot actually stop the government going ahead with any of its policies.

The role of the monarch

What, then, is the monarch's role? Many opinions are offered by political and legal experts. Three roles are often mentioned. First, the monarch is the personal embodiment of the government of the country.

Other countries without a monarch have to use something else as the symbol of the country. In the USA, for example, one of these is its flag, and to damage the flag in any way is actually a criminal offence.

Second, the monarch could act as a final check on a government that was becoming dictatorial. If the government ever managed to pass a bill through Parliament which was obviously terribly bad and very unpopular, the monarch could refuse the royal assent and the bill would not become law. The monarch can even dismiss the Prime Minister.

Third, the monarch has a very practical role to play. By being a figurehead and representing the country, Queen Elizabeth II can perform the ceremonial duties which heads of state often have to spend their time on. This way, the real government has more time to get on with the actual job of running the country.

The value of the monarchy

The British monarchy is probably more important to the economy of the country than it is to the system of government. Apart from this, the monarchy is very popular with the majority of the British people.

Occasions such as the state opening of Parliament, the Queen's official birthday, royal weddings, and ceremonial events such as the changing of the guard make up for the lack of colour and ceremony in most people's daily lives. In addition the glamorous lives of 'the royals' provide a source of entertainment that often takes on the characteristics of a television soap opera. When, in 1992, it became known that Prince Charles and his wife Princess Diana were separating, even the more 'serious' newspapers discussed a lot more than the possible political implications. *The Sunday Times* published a 'five-page royal separation special'.

The future of the monarchy

Most people in Britain approve of monarchy. There is, however, a great deal of debate about what kind of monarchy Britain should have. During the last two decades of the twentieth century, there has been a general cooling of enthusiasm. The Queen herself remains popular. But the various marital problems in her family have lowered the prestige of royalty in many people's eyes.

THE GOVERNMENT

The British monarch is head of state. Executive power, however, is carried out by a prime minister, who is head of government, and a committee of ministers called the cabinet. There are usually about twenty people in the cabinet (though there are no rules about this). Most of them are the heads of the government departments.

The prime minister is usually the leader of the majority party in the House of Commons. By custom, cabinet ministers are selected from among members of the two houses of Parliament.

Britain, unlike much of western Europe, normally has ‘single-party government’. In other words, all members of the government belong to the same political party. Traditionally, British politicians have regarded coalition government (with several parties involved) as a bad idea. Since the formation of modern political parties in the nineteenth century, Britain has had a total of only twenty-one years of coalition governments (1915 - 1922 and 1931 - 1945).

The habit of single-party government has helped to establish the tradition known as collective responsibility. That is, every member of the government shares the responsibility for every policy made by the government. This is true even if, as is often the case, he or she did not play any part in making it. Of course, individual government members may hold different opinions, but they are expected to keep these private. By convention, no member of the government can criticise government policy in public. Any member who does so must resign.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The government of Great Britain is unitary in structure. Local authorities, however, are essentially independent. Shire counties have county, district, and parish councils. Metropolitan areas have joint authorities, district councils, and parish councils.

Local units are responsible for police and fire services, education, libraries, highways, traffic, housing, building regulations, and environmental health.

THE PRIME MINISTER

The position of a British Prime Minister (PM) is in direct contrast to that of the monarch. Although the Queen appears to have a great deal of power, in reality she has very little. The PM, on the other hand, appears not to have much power but in reality has a very great deal indeed. As we have seen the Queen is, in practice, obliged to give the job of Prime Minister to the person who has a majority in the House of Commons. This normally means the leader of the party with the largest number of MPs.

The fiction is that the Queen appoints people to government jobs ‘on the advice of the Prime Minister’. But what actually happens is that the PM simply decides. Everybody knows this. The media do not even make the pretence that the PM has successfully persuaded the Queen to make a particular appointment, they simply state that he or she has made an appointment.

LEGISLATURE

British Parliament is the supreme legislature of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It consists, technically, of the Crown, the House of Lords, and House of Commons, but in common usage only of the last two. Today the main part is the House of Commons; its members alone are called members of Parliament. Parliament is the legislative branch of government.

The House of Lords is the highest court of appeal in Britain's judicial system.

In principle, the "Crown in Parliament" is supreme. This means that legislation passed by Parliament, which consists of the House of Commons (elected directly by the people) and the House of Lords (made up of hereditary peers and appointive members - archbishops, senior bishops, law lords, and life peers) becomes law upon royal assent. In practice, legislation is dominated by the prime minister and the cabinet, who initiate virtually all proposed bills and who are politically responsible for the administration of the law and the affairs of the nation.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

The House of Lords is composed of hereditary peers and peeresses, 2 Anglican archbishops, and 24 bishops who serve as "lords spiritual" as long as they retain their authority, and life peers whose titles are not hereditary. Life peers include lords of appeal, who make up the court of last resort on matters that can be brought to the House of Lords, and an increasing number of lords created in recognition of distinguished service (often in politics). . The full House of Lords numbers more than 1200, but average daily attendance is less than 400. Only three members are required for a quorum.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Members of the House of Commons are elected from geographical constituencies. The voting age for British subjects is 18. Those not eligible for election to the Commons include members of the House of Lords, selected clergy, government contractors, sheriffs, and certain designated election officials. Total membership of the Commons now numbers 659. Forty members are required for a quorum. By law, the life of a Parliament is five years unless dissolved earlier or extended by special statute in times of war or national emergency.

Bills can be introduced into either House, but all important bills are presented first to the House of Commons. Here they are explained and debated. If they receive a majority vote they go to the House of Lords. The

Lords only have power to delay a bill. They can throw it out once, but if presented a second time, they must pass it.

Finally the bills are taken by the prime minister to the Queen, who always signs them. The Queen is a constitutional monarch, that is to say she governs through Parliament. She acts on the advice of her prime minister and does not make any major political decisions.

The House of Commons is the main law-making body. If a major bill is defeated there the government usually resigns and there is a new election. In any case, elections must be held at least every five years.

ELECTIONS

Elections to the Commons take place at least every five years. If an elected member resigns or dies during the life of a Parliament, a by-election is held.

British citizens, other Commonwealth citizens and citizens of the Irish Republic resident in Britain have the right to vote in parliamentary and local government elections if they are aged 18 or over. Some people are not allowed to vote; these include foreign nationals, sentenced prisoners, people detained under mental health legislation and people convicted within the previous five years of corrupt or illegal election practices. Members of the House of Lords cannot vote in parliamentary elections but may do so in local elections.

Candidature for parliamentary elections is open to anyone aged 21 and over who is eligible to vote except for clergy of certain Christian churches, undischarged bankrupts, and holders of certain public offices, including judges, home civil servants and members of the police and armed forces.

The secret ballot is used in all British elections. The electoral system is the simple majority or ‘first-past-the-post’ system. The candidate with the largest number of votes is elected.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The political party system dates from the 17th century. Several parties win seats in Commons, but Great Britain has functioned basically as a two-party system for more than a century. The majority party forms His or Her Majesty’s Government, and the second party is officially recognized as His or Her Majesty’s Own Loyal Opposition. The opposition leader is paid a salary from public funds for that role. Since the end of World War I (1914-1918), the Conservative Party and the Labour Party have been dominant. The Labour Party, generally socialist, began a program of nationalization of selected industries after an overwhelming election victory in May 1945. The Conservative Party has favored private enterprise

with minimal state regulation. Since World War II, however, it has accepted social programs.

Minor parties in the early 1990s included the Scottish Nationalist, Plaid Cymru (Welsh Nationalist), Ulster Unionist, Social Democratic, Communist, and Green parties. The Liberal Party, which was in power for decades, lost electoral support and merged with dissidents from Labour and the Conservatives to form the Liberal Democrat Party.

THE PEOPLE

The population of Great Britain is about 60 million people. The overall population density is 242 persons per sq km. A small percentage of Britons live in rural areas; 89 percent live in towns. The largest cities in Great Britain are London, Leeds and Glasgow. Most Britons (94 percent) are either English, Scottish, Irish, or Welsh. The remainder include Indians, West Indians, Pakistanis, Africans, Bangladeshis, Chinese, and Arabs. The country's official language is English.

IDENTITY

THE DOMINANCE OF ENGLAND

How do British people identify themselves? Who do they feel they are? What are the loyalties and senses of identity most typically felt by British people.

There is, perhaps, an excuse for people who use the word 'England' when they mean 'Britain'. It cannot be denied that the dominant culture of Britain today is specifically English. The system of politics that is used in all four nations today is of English origin, and English is the main language of all four nations. Many aspects of everyday life are organised according to English custom and practice. But the political unification of Britain was not achieved by mutual agreement. On the contrary. It happened because England was able to exert her economic and military power over the other three nations.

Today English domination can be detected in the way in which various aspects of British public life are described. For example, the supply of money in Britain is controlled by the Bank of England (there is no such thing as a 'Bank of Britain'). The present queen of the country is universally known as 'Elizabeth the Second', even though Scotland and Northern Ireland have never had an 'Elizabeth the First'! (Elizabeth I of England and Wales ruled from 1553 to I603.) The term 'Anglo' is also commonly used. (The Angles were a Germanic tribe who settled in England in the fifth century. The word 'England' is derived from their

name.) For example, newspapers and the television news talk about ‘Anglo-American relations’ to refer to relations between the governments of Britain and the USA (and not just those between England and the USA).

NATIONAL LOYALTIES

When you are talking to people from Britain, it is safest to use ‘Britain’ when talking about where they live and ’British’ as the adjective to describe their nationality. This way you will be less likely to offend anyone. It is, of course, not wrong to talk about ‘people in England’ if that is what you mean - people who live within the geographical boundaries of England. After all, most British people live there. But it should always be remembered that England does not make up the whole of the UK.

There has been a long history of migration from Scotland, Wales and Ireland to England. As a result there are millions of people who live in England but who would never describe themselves as English. They may have lived in England all their lives, but as far as they are concerned they are Scottish or Welsh or Irish. These people support the country of their parents or grandparents rather than England in sporting contests.

ETHNIC IDENTITY

National (‘ethnic’) loyalties can be strong among the people in Britain whose ancestors were not English. For some people living in England who call themselves Scottish, Welsh or Irish, this loyalty is little more than a matter of emotional attachment. But for others, it goes a bit further and they may even join one of the sporting and social clubs for ‘exiles’ from these nations. These clubs promote national folk music, organise parties on special national days and foster a consciousness of doing things differently from the English. For people living in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the way that ethnic identity commonly expresses itself varies. People in Scotland have constant reminders of their distinctiveness. First, several important aspects of public life are organised separately, and differently, from the rest of Britain - notably, education, law and religion. Second, the Scottish way of speaking English is very distinctive. A modern form of the dialect known as Scots is spoken in everyday life by most of the working classes in the lowlands. It has many features which are different from other forms of English and cannot usually be understood by people who are not Scottish. Third, there are many symbols of Scottishness which are well-known throughout Britain.

However, the feeling of being Scottish is not that simple. This is partly because of the historical cultural split between highland and lowland Scotland. A genuinely Scottish Gaelic sense of cultural identity is, in modern times, felt only by a few tens of thousands of people in some of the

western isles of Scotland and the adjoining mainland. These people speak Scottish Gaelic (which they call ‘Gallic’) as a first language.

The people of Wales do not have as many reminders of their Welshness in everyday life. The organisation of public life is identical to that in England. Nor are there as many well-known symbols of Welshness. In addition, a large minority of the people in Wales probably do not consider themselves to be especially Welsh at all. In the nineteenth century large numbers of Scottish, Irish and English people went to find work there, and today many English people still make their homes in Wales or have holiday houses there. As a result, a feeling of loyalty to Wales is often similar in nature to the fairly weak loyalties to particular geographical areas found throughout England - it is regional rather than nationalistic.

However, there is one single highly-important symbol of Welsh identity - the Welsh language. Everybody in Wales can speak English, but it is not everybody's first language. For about 20% of the population (that's more than half a million people), the mother-tongue is Welsh. For these people Welsh identity obviously means more than just living in the region known as Wales. Moreover, in comparison to the other small minority languages of Europe, Welsh shows signs of continued vitality. Thanks to successive campaigns, the language receives a lot of public support. All children in Wales learn it at school, there are many local newspapers in Welsh, there is a Welsh television channel and nearly all public notices and signs are written in both Welsh and English.

As for English identity, most people who describe themselves as English usually make no distinction in their minds between ‘English’ and ‘British’. There is plenty of evidence of this. For example, at international football or rugby matches, when the players stand to attention to hear their national anthems, the Scottish, Irish and Welsh have their own songs, while the English one is just 'God Save the Queen' - the same as the British national anthem.

THE ENGLISH

Almost every nation has a reputation of some kind. The French are supposed to be amorous, gay, fond of champagne; the Germans dull, formal, efficient, fond of military uniforms, and parades; the Americans boastful, energetic, gregarious and vulgar. The English are reputed to be cold, reserved, rather haughty people who do not yell in the street, make love in public or change their governments as often as they change their underclothes. They are steady, easy-going, and fond of sport.

The foreigner's view of the English is often based on the type of Englishman he has met travelling abroad. Since these are largely members of the upper and middle classes, it is obvious that their behaviour cannot be

taken as general for the whole people. There are, however, certain kinds of behaviour, manners and customs which are peculiar to England.

The English are a nation of stay-at-homes. There is no place like home, they say, and when the man is not working he withdraws from the world to the company of his wife and children and busies himself with the affairs of the home. "The Englishman's home is his castle", is a saying known all over the world; and it is true that English people prefer small houses, built to house one family, perhaps with a small garden.

Foreigners often picture the Englishman dressed in tweeds, smoking a pipe, striding across the open countryside with his dog at his heels. This is a picture of the aristocratic Englishman during his holidays on his country estate since most of the open countryside is privately owned there isn't much left for the others to stride across. The average Englishman often lives and dies without ever having possessed a tweed suit.

Apart from the conservatism on a grand scale which the attitude to the monarchy typifies, England is full of small scale and local conservatisms, some of them of a highly individual or particular character. Regiments in the army, municipal corporations, schools and societies have their own private traditions which command strong loyalties. Such groups have customs of their own which they are very reluctant to change, and they like to think of their private customs as differentiating them, as groups, from the rest of the world.

Most English people have been slow to adopt rational reforms such as the metric system, which came into general use in 1975. They have suffered inconvenience from adhering to old ways, because they did not want the trouble of adapting themselves to new. All the same, several of the most notorious symbols of conservatism are being abandoned. The twenty-four hour clock was at last adopted for railway timetables in the 1960s - though not for most other timetables, such as radio programmes. In 1966 it was decided that decimal money would become regular form in 1971 - though even in this matter conservatism triumphed when the Government decided to keep the pound sterling as the basic unit

WHO ARE THE SCOTS?

The Scots are not English. Nor are the Scots British. No self-respecting Englishman calls himself a Briton, neither does any self-respecting Scot. The words Britain, Briton and British were uneasily disinterred after a long burial as a kind of palliative to Scottish feeling when our Parliament was merged with the English one at Westminster. But the attempt was not successful. The best things on either side of the Border remain obstinately English or Scottish. Are Shakespeare and Burns British poets? And is there anyone in the whole world who has ever asked for a British whisky and soda?

The two nations of the United Kingdom have each derived from mixed sources, racially and, as it were, historically. Each has developed strong national characteristics which separate them in custom, habit, religion, law and even in language.

The English are amongst the most amiable people in the world; they can also be very ruthless. They have a genius for compromise, but can enforce their idea of compromise on others with surprising efficiency.

The Scots are proverbially kindly, but at first glance are not so amiable. They abhor compromise, lean much upon logic and run much to extremes. They can be dour and grey, or highly coloured and extravagant in gesture and manner.

In general the nation of modern Scotland derives from three main racial sources. The Celts, the Scandinavians or Teutons and the mysterious and shadowy Picts. These Picts, historically speaking, were the first inhabitants of what is now called Scotland. They were a small tough people. They have left their strain in the blood and occasional marks in the land and language. They were conquered by the invading Celts from Ireland who, incidentally, were called Scots and from whom the name of the modern nation comes.

Two and three centuries later, however, the Celts retreated into the north-western hills and islands, their place in the east and south lowlands being taken by the Scandinavians, Teutons and Angles. Hence the celebrated division of the Scottish people into Highlanders and Lowlanders. It was a division which marked the distinction between people of different culture, temperament and language.

It is from the CeIts that there comes the more colourful, exciting and extravagant strain in the Scots. The Gaelic language and song; the tartan, the bagpipes, the Highland panache and, so on. In Scotland the sound denoted by the letter ‘R’ is generally a strong sound, and ‘R’ is often pronounced in words in which it would be silent in southern English.

In the Highlands and the Western Isles the ancient Scottish language, Gaelic, is still heard - in 1991 some 76,000 people spoke Gaelic. The Scots are said to be a serious, cautious, thrifty people, rather inventive and somewhat mystical. All the Celtic peoples of Britain (the Welsh, the Irish and the Scots) are frequently described as being more ‘fiery’ than the English. They are of a race that is quite distinct from the English.

THE WELSH

There is no other part of the British Isles where national spirit is stronger, national pride more intense or national traditions more cherished than in Wales. The Welsh still proudly wear their national dress on festive occasions; the Welsh language is still very much a living force and is taught side by side with English in schools; and Welshmen, who have a

highly developed artistic sense, and are distinguished in poetry, song and drama. The Welsh people are renowned for their good voices and it is rare to find a village without at least one choir competing in an ‘eistedfod’ or arts festival.

Welsh, as distinct from British history, really begins with the Anglo-Saxon victories in the sixth and seventh centuries which isolated the Welsh from the rest of their fellow-Britons. The people of Wales were troubled on two fronts: on the east they were constantly harried by the English chieftains, and until the eleventh century the Vikings made frequent raids on the coasts. Then came the Normans who penetrated into the south of the country and established many strongholds, in spite of strong resistance organised by the Welsh. Eventually, however, the subjection of the people was completed by Edward I, who built many castles and made his son, afterwards Edward II, the first Prince of Wales.

The population of Wales amounts to about two and a quarter million. The Welsh language is a Celtic branch of the Indo-Eropean languages and has some roots in common with them. The Welsh call their country Cymru, and themselves they call Cymru, a word which has the same root as "camrador" (friend, comrade).

Have you noticed the number of Welsh place-names that begin with ‘Llan’ - Llanbers, Llandudno, Llangollen, Llanfair? There are hundreds of them in Wales. Some of them are very long. Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogogoch is the name of a station in Anglesey. The name means: "The church of St. Mary in a wood of hazel trees near a rapid wirlpool and near St Tysilio's cave not far from a red cave." The town is generally known as "Llanfair P.G.".

The Welsh have preserved their language to a remarkable extent. The English generally look upon the Welsh as an emotional people who are, however, somewhat reticent and difficult to get to know easily.

The Welsh people are proud of being Celtic, different from the Anglo-Saxon English, with an ancient language and a heritage of their own.

THE IRISH

For centuries Ireland existed as one state. The first date that belongs to Northern Ireland rather than to Ireland as a whole is 1609, when thousands of Scots Presbyterians were brought over for the Plantation of Ulster. The hatred between colonised and coloniser was underlined by the difference in their religions, and the Irish were persecuted not only for being the natives but on the basis of being Catholics as well. From then on they never quite sorted out religion from politics.

The march of the Orange Order which was founded in 1795 to keep up the traditions of Protestantism in Ulster takes place every year. In fact, it is a semi-religious, semi-political organisation. All over Northern Ireland

on July l2th, branches of the Orange Order march off some three or four miles to a field where a meeting is held.

It's the same thing, but in reverse, when it comes round to the 1916 Commemoration day, or to August l5th the Nationalists, the Catholic Tories of Northern Ireland, keep it as their day, and sing anti-Orange songs; meaning every bitter word they sing.

Polarised into their religious sects, and set against each other, ordinary people have not been able to combine and fight politically for their real interests. At the bottom of the social pyramid with nothing to lose, the Catholic working man doesn't really fear the Protestant; but the Protestant working man, who has very little feels the need to hang on to his Protestant identity in case he loses what little he has. He fears the Catholic because he knows that any gain made by the Catholic minority will be his loss; for the businessmen and the landowners, Orange or Nationalist, are not going to suffer losses on anybody's behalf.

Where discrimination hurts most is in employment and housing. You come to a factory looking for a job and they ask you which school you went to. If its name was "Saint Somebody" they know you are a Catholic and you don't get taken on. Until the civil rights campaign forced a promise of reform, housing was the burning issue in Northern Ireland, because only householders have a vote in local elections: subtenants, lodgers, adult children living at home are all without the vote, and thus a quarter of the electorate cannot participate in election. So it is very important where you build houses and for whom you build them. Too many houses for Catholics could upset the majority on a Protestant council, or vice versa. The policy in both the Protestant-run councils, which are the majority, and the few Catholic-run councils, is to control the way the votes go by having separate housing estates for people of different religions, and by awarding tenancies in the interests of political dominance.

The Irish are known for their charm and vivacity, as well as for the beauty of the Irish girls.

GEOGRAPHICAL IDENTITY

A sense of identity based on place of birth is, like family identity, not very common or strong in most parts of Britain - and perhaps for the same reason. People are just too mobile and very few live in the same place all their lives. There is quite a lot of local pride, and people find many opportunities to express it. This pride, however, arises because people are happy to live in what they consider to be a nice place and often when they are fighting to preserve it. It does not usually mean that the people of a locality feel strongly that they *belong* to that place.

A sense of identity with a larger geographical area is a bit stronger. Nearly everybody has a spoken accent that identifies them as coming from

a particular large city or region. In some cases there is quite a strong sense of identification. Liverpudlians (from Liverpool), Mancunians (from Manchester), Geordies (from the Newcastle area) and Cockneys (from London) are often proud to be known by these names. In other cases, identity is associated with a county. These are the most ancient divisions of England. Although their boundaries and names do not always conform to the modern arrangement of local government they still claim the allegiance of some people. Yorkshire, in the north of England, is a notable example. Another is Cornwall, in the south-west corner of England. Even today, some Cornish people still talk about ‘going to England’ when they cross the county border - a testament to its ethnic Celtic history.

REGIONAL IDENTITIES

Regional differences can also be seen in Britons' views of each other. Most of these attitudes are "exaggerated" stereotypes and can be unkind.

Many English people see themselves as either ‘northerners’ or ‘southerners’. The fact that the south is on the whole richer than the north, and the domination of the media by the affairs of London and the south-east, leads to resentment in the north. This reinforces the pride in their northern roots felt by many northerners, who, are apt to claim that they work harder than the Southerners, and are more thorough. They are open-hearted and hospitable; foreigners often find that they make friends with them quickly. Northerners generally have hearty appetites: the visitor to Lancashire or Yorkshire, for instance, may look forward to receiving generous helpings at table. The northerners stereotypically, see themselves as tougher, more honest and warmer-hearted than the soft, hypocritical and unfriendly southerners. To people in the south, the stereotypical northerner (who is usually male) is rather ignorant and uncultured and interested only in sport and beer-drinking.

Northerners may be considered "working class" and "rough" by some people in the South. Southerners may be considered "posh" (socially superior) or snobbish (not liking people they think are lower-class) by people living in the northern parts of Britain.

Even in England there are many differences in regional character and speech. The chief division is between southern England and northern England. South of a line going from Bristol to London people speak the type of English usually learnt by foreign students, though there are local variations. This sort of English is generally heard from BBC announcers.

What southerners say about the North	What northerners say about the South
It’s dirty and ugly - miles of factories!	They don’t know what ‘real work’ is.

They all live in terraced houses.
They can't speak proper English.

They all live in big houses.
They speak with 'posh' accents.
They don't care about people less fortunate than themselves.

WHAT IS A COCKNEY?

Traditionally, a true Cockney is anybody born within the sound of Bow bells (the bells of the church of St Mary-le-Bow in the East End of London). In fact, the term is commonly used to denote people who come from a wider area of the innermost eastern suburbs of London and also an adjoining area south of the Thames.

'Cockney' is also used to describe a strong London accent and, like any such local accent, is associated with working-class origins.

BEING BRITISH

Last of all, a few words about British identity and loyalty. How important is it to British people that they are British? Do they feel they 'belong' to Britain?

Perhaps because of the long tradition of a clear separation between the individual and the state, British people, although many of them feel proud to be British, are not normally actively patriotic. They often feel uncomfortable if, in conversation with somebody from another country, that person refers to 'you' where 'you' means Britain or the British government. They are individualistic and do not like to feel that they are personally representing their country.

During the last quarter of the twentieth century there has been a dramatic and severe loss of confidence in British public institutions. Nearly one third of the people questioned in an opinion poll in the early 1990s said that they could think of nothing about Britain to be proud of. In addition, almost half said that they would emigrate if they could - suggesting a low degree of attachment to the country. This decrease in confidence has been accompanied by a change in the previous rather patronising attitude to foreigners and foreign ways. In the days of empire, foreigners were often considered amusing, even interesting, but not really to be taken seriously. These days, many foreign ways of doing things are admired (although perhaps a bit resentfully) and there is a greater openness to foreign influences.

Along with this openness, however, goes a sense of vulnerability, so that patriotism often takes a rather defensive form. For instance, there are worries about the loss of British identity in the European Union. This is perhaps why the British cling so obstinately to certain distinctive ways of

doing things such as driving on the left and using different systems of measurement.

It is in this climate of opinion that the dramatic increase in support for the government during the Falklands/Malvinas War in 1982 must be interpreted. Here was a rare modern occasion for the British people to be actively patriotic. Many of them felt that here, for once, Britain was doing something right and doing it effectively!

The British continue to be very bad about learning other peoples' languages. Fluency in any European language other than English is generally regarded as exotic. But there is nothing defensive or deliberate about this attitude. The British do not refuse to speak other languages. They are just lazy.

ATTITUDES. STEREOTYPES AND CHANGE

The British, like the people of every country, tend to be attributed with certain characteristics which are supposedly typical. However, it is best to be cautious about accepting such characterisations too easily, and in the case of Britain there are three particular reasons to be cautious. We'll deal with them in turn and comment on several stereotyped images of the British.

Societies change over time while their reputations lag behind. Many things which are often regarded as typically British derive from books, songs or plays which were written a long time ago and which are no longer representative of modern life. One example of this is the popular belief that Britain is a 'land of tradition'. This is what most tourist brochures claim. The claim is based on what can be seen in public life and on centuries of political continuity. And at this level - the level of public life - it is undoubtedly true. The annual ceremony of the state opening of Parliament, for instance, carefully follows customs which are centuries old. So does the military ceremony of 'trooping the colour'. Likewise, the changing of the guard outside Buckingham Palace never changes.

However, in their private everyday lives, the British as individuals are probably less inclined to follow tradition than are the people of most other countries. There are very few ancient customs that are followed by the majority of families on special occasions. The country has fewer local parades or processions with genuine folk roots than most other countries have. The English language has fewer sayings or proverbs that are in common everyday use than many other languages do. The British are too individualistic for these things. In addition, it should be noted that they are the most enthusiastic video-watching people in the world - the very opposite of a traditional pastime!

There are many examples of supposedly typical British habits which are simply not typical any more. For example, the stereotype image of the

London ‘city gent’ includes the wearing of a bowler hat. In fact, this type of hat has not been commonly worn for a long time. Food and drink provide other examples. The traditional ‘British’ or ‘English’ breakfast is a large ‘fry-up’ preceded by cereal with milk and followed by toast, butter and marmalade, all washed down with lots of tea. In fact, only about I0% of the people in Britain actually have this sort of breakfast. Two-thirds have cut out the fry-up and just have the cereal, tea and toast. The rest have even less. What the vast majority of British people have in the mornings is therefore much closer to what they call a ‘continental’ (i.e. European) breakfast than it is to a ‘British’ one. The image of the British as a nation of tea-drinkers is another stereotype which is somewhat out of date. It is true that it is still prepared in a distinctive way (strong and with milk) , but more coffee than tea is now bought in the country's shops. As for the tradition of afternoon tea with biscuits, scones, sandwiches or cake, this is a minority activity, largely confined to retired people and the leisured upper-middle class (although preserved in tea shops in tourist resorts).

CONSERVATISM

The British have few living folk traditions and are too individualistic to have the same everyday habits as each other. However, this does not mean that they like change. They don't. They may not behave in traditional ways, but they like symbols of tradition and stability. For example, there are some very *untraditional* attitudes and habits with regard to the family in modern Britain. Nevertheless, politicians often cite their enthusiasm for ‘traditional family values’(both parents married and living together, parents as the main source of authority for children etc.) as a way of winning support.

In general, the British value continuity over modernity for its own sake. They do not consider it especially smart to live in a new house and, in fact, there is prestige in living in an obviously old one. They have a general sentimental attachment to older, supposedly safer, times. Their Christmas cards usually depict scenes from past centuries; they like their pubs to look old; they were reluctant to change their system of currency.

Moreover, a look at children’s reading habits suggests that this attitude is not going to change. Publishers try hard to make their books for children up-to-date. But perhaps they needn't try so hard. In 1992 the two most popular children's writers were noticeably un-modern (they were both, in fact, dead). The most popular of all was Roald Dahl, whose fantasy stories are set in a rather old-fashioned world. The second most popular writer was Enid Blyton, whose stories take place in a comfortable white middle-class world before the I960s. They contain no references to other races or classes and mention nothing more modern than a radio. In other words, they are mostly irrelevant to modern life.

BEING DIFFERENT

The British can be particularly and stubbornly conservative about anything which is perceived as a token of Britishness. In these matters, their conservatism can combine with their individualism; they are rather proud of being different. It is, for example, very difficult to imagine that they will ever agree to change from driving on the left-hand side of the road to driving on the right. It doesn't matter that nobody can think of any intrinsic advantage in driving on the left. Why should they change just to be like everyone else? Indeed, as far as they are concerned, not being like everyone else is a good reason not to change.

Developments at European Union (EU) level which might cause a change in some everyday aspect of British life are usually greeted with suspicion and hostility. The case of double-decker buses is an example. Whenever an EU committee makes a recommendation about standardising the size and shape of these, it provokes warnings from British bus builders about 'the end of the double-decker bus as we know it'. The British public is always ready to listen to such predictions of doom.

Systems of measurement are another example. The British government has been trying for years and years to promote the metric system and to get British people to use the same scales that are used nearly everywhere else in the world. But it has had only limited success. British manufacturers are obliged to give the weight of their tins and packets in kilos and grams. But everybody in Britain still shops in pounds and ounces. The weather forecasters on the television use the Celsius scale of temperature. But nearly everybody still thinks in Fahrenheit. British people continue to measure distances, amounts of liquid and themselves using scales of measurement that are not used anywhere else in Europe. Even the use of the 24-hour clock is comparatively restricted.

British governments continue to put their clocks back at the end of summer on a different date from every other country in Europe; they have so far resisted pressure from business people to adopt Central European Time, remaining stubbornly one hour behind; they continue to start their financial year not, as other countries do, at the beginning of the calendar year but at the beginning of April!

IDENTITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

In this part of the UK, the pattern of identity and loyalty outlined above does not apply. Here, ethnicity, family, politics and religion are all inter-related, and social class has a comparatively minor role in establishing identity. Northern Ireland is a polarised society where most people are born into, and stay in, one or other of the two communities for the whole of their lives.

On one side of the divide are people whose ancestors came from lowland Scotland or England. They are self-consciously Protestant and want Northern Ireland to remain in the UK. On the other side are people whose ancestors were native Irish. They are self consciously Catholic and would like Northern Ireland to become part of the Irish Republic.

Although the two communities live side-by-side, their lives are almost entirely segregated. They live in different housing estates, listen to different radio and television programmes, register with different doctors, have prescriptions made up by chemists of their own denominations, march to commemorate different anniversaries and read different newspapers. Their children go to different schools, so that those who go on to university often find themselves mixing with people from the 'other' community for the first time in their lives. For the majority who do not go to university, merely talking to somebody from the other community is a rare event.

In this atmosphere, marrying a member of the other community is traditionally regarded with horror, and has sometimes even resulted in the deaths of the Romeos and Juliets concerned (as punishment for the 'betrayal' of their people) . The extremes of these hard-line attitudes are gradually softening. It should also be noted that they apply to a much lesser extent among the middle-classes. It is illustrative of this that while in football, a mainly working-class sport, Northern Ireland and the Republic have separate teams, in rugby, a more middle-class sport, there is only one team for the whole of Ireland, in which Protestants from the north play alongside Catholics from the south with no sign of disharmony whatsoever.

ETHNIC IDENTITY: THE NON-NATIVE BRITISH

The long centuries of contact between the peoples of the four nations of the British Isles means that there is a limit to their significant differences. With minor variations, they look the same, speak the same language, eat the same food, have the same religious heritage (Christianity) and have the same attitudes to the roles of men and women.

The situation for the several million people in Britain whose family roots lie in the Caribbean or in south Asia or elsewhere in the world is different. For them, ethnic identity is more than a question of deciding which sports team to support. Non-whites (about 6% of the total British population) cannot, as white non-English groups can, *choose* when to advertise their ethnic identity and when not to.

Most non-whites, although themselves born in Britain, have parents who were born outside it. The great wave of immigration from the Caribbean and south Asia took place between I950 and 1965. These immigrants, especially those from south Asia, brought with them different languages, different religions (Hindu and Muslim) and everyday habits and attitudes that were sometimes radically different from traditional British

ones. As they usually married among themselves, these habits and customs have, to some extent, been preserved. For some young people brought up in Britain, this mixed cultural background can create problems. For example, many young Asians resent the fact that their parents expect to have more control over them than most black or white parents expect to have over their children. Nevertheless, they cannot avoid these experiences, which therefore make up part of their identity.

As well as this 'given' identity, non-white people in Britain often take pride in their cultural roots. This pride seems to be *increasing* as their cultural practices, their everyday habits and attitudes, gradually becoming *less* distinctive. Most of the country's non-whites are British citizens. Partly because of this, they are on the way to developing the same kind of division of loyalties and identity that exists for many Irish, Scottish and Welsh people. Pride can increase as a defensive reaction to racial discrimination. There is quite a lot of this in Britain. There are tens of thousands of racially motivated attacks on people every year, including one or two murders. All in all, however, overt racism is not as common as it is in many other parts of Europe.

RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL IDENTITY

Article 18 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights reads: everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom ... to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Numerically, the Church of England (or Anglican Church) has the largest number of adherents of any religion in Great Britain, accounting for 48 percent of the population; most members reside in England. The second largest religion, statistically, is Roman Catholicism (16 percent); Catholics reside throughout the kingdom. Other religions include Protestantism (which includes the state religions of both Wales and Scotland), Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Sikhism.

In comparison with some other European countries, and with the one notable exception of Northern Ireland neither religion nor politics is an important part of people's social identity in modern Britain. This is partly because the two do not, as they do in some other countries, go together in any significant way.

CLASS

Historians say that the class system has survived in Britain because of its flexibility. It has always been possible to buy or marry or even work your way up, so that your children (and their children) belong to a higher social class than you do. As a result, the class system has never been swept

away by a revolution and an awareness of class forms a major part of most people's sense of identity.

People in modern Britain are very conscious of class differences. They regard it as difficult to become friends with somebody from a different class. This feeling has little to do with conscious loyalty, and nothing to do with a positive belief in the class system itself. Most say they do not approve of class divisions. Nor does it have very much to do with political or religious affiliations. It results from the fact that the different classes have different sets of attitudes and daily habits. Typically, they tend to eat different food at different times of day (and call the meals by different names), they like to talk about different topics using different styles and accents of English, they enjoy different pastimes and sports, they have different values about what things in life are important and different ideas about the correct way to behave. Stereotypically, they go to different kinds of school.

An interesting feature of the class structure in Britain is that it is not just, or even mainly, relative wealth or the appearance of it which determines someone's class. Of course, wealth is part of it - if you become wealthy, you can provide the conditions to enable your children to belong to a higher class than you do. But it is not always possible to guess reliably the class to which a person belongs by looking at his or her clothes, car or bank balance. The most obvious and immediate sign comes when a person opens his or her mouth, giving the listener clues to the speaker's attitudes and interests, both of which are indicative of class.

But even more indicative than *what* the speaker says is the *way* that he or she says it. The English grammar and vocabulary which is used in public speaking, radio and television news broadcasts, books and newspapers (and also - unless the lessons are run by Americans - as a model for learners of English as a foreign language) is known as ‘standard British English’. Most working-class people, however, use lots of words and grammatical forms in their everyday speech which are regarded as ‘non-standard’.

Nevertheless, nearly everybody in the country is capable of using standard English (or something very close to it) when they judge that the situation demands it. They are taught to do so at school. Therefore, the clearest indication of a person's class is often his or her accent. Most people cannot change this convincingly to suit the situation. The most prestigious accent in Britain is known as ‘Received Pronunciation’(RP). It is the combination of standard English spoken with an RP accent that is usually meant when people talk about 'BBC English' or 'Oxford English' (referring to the university, not the town) or ‘the Queen's English’.

RP is not associated with any particular part of the country. The vast majority of people, however, speak with an accent which is geographically

limited. In England and Wales, anyone who speaks with a strong regional accent is automatically assumed to be working class. Conversely, anyone with an RP accent is assumed to be upper or upper-middle class. (In Scotland and Northern Ireland, the situation is slightly different; in these places, some forms of regional accent are almost as prestigious as RP.)

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, the way that people wish to identify themselves seems to have changed. In Britain, as anywhere else where there are recognised social classes, a certain amount of 'social climbing' goes on; that is, people try to appear as if they belong to as high a class as possible. These days, however, nobody wants to be thought of as snobbish. The word 'posh' illustrates this tendency. It is used by people from all classes to mean 'of a class higher than the one I (the speaker) belong to' and it is normally used with negative connotations. To accuse someone of being posh is to accuse them of being pretentious.

Working-class people in particular are traditionally proud of their class membership and would not usually wish to be thought of as belonging to any other class. Interestingly, a survey conducted in the early 1990s showed that the proportion of people who describe themselves as working class is actually greater than the proportion whom sociologists would classify as such! This is one manifestation of a phenomenon known as 'inverted snobbery', whereby middle-class people try to adopt working-class values and habits. They do this in the belief that the working classes are in some way 'better' (for example, more honest) than the middle classes.

In this egalitarian climate, the unofficial segregation of the classes in Britain has become less rigid than it was. A person whose accent shows that he or she is working class is no longer prohibited from most high-status jobs for that reason alone. Nobody takes elocution lessons any more in order to sound more upper class. It is now acceptable for radio and television presenters to speak with 'an accent', (i.e. not to use strict RP). It is also notable that, at the time of writing, none of the last five British Prime Ministers went to an elitist school for upper-class children, while almost every previous Prime Minister in history did.

In general, the different classes mix more readily and easily with each other than they used to. There has been a great increase in the number of people from working-class origins who are house owners and who do traditionally middle-class jobs. The lower and middle classes have drawn closer to each other in their attitudes.

FORMALITY AND INFORMALITY

The tourist view of Britain involves lots of formal ceremonies. Some people have drawn the conclusion from this that the British are rather formal in their general behaviour. This is not true. There is a difference

between observing formalities and being formal in everyday life. Attitudes towards clothes are a good indication of this difference. It all depends on whether a person is playing a public role or a private role. When people are 'on duty', they have to obey some quite rigid rules. A male bank employee, for example, is expected to wear a suit with a tie, even if he cannot afford a very smart one. So are politicians.

On the other hand, when people are not playing a public role - when they are just being themselves - there seem to be no rules at all. The British are probably more tolerant of ‘strange’ clothing than people in most other countries. You may find, for example, the same bank employee, on his lunch break in hot weather, walking through the streets with his tie round his waist and his collar unbuttoned. He is no longer ‘at work’ and for his employers to criticise him for his appearance would be seen as a gross breach of privacy.

Similarly, most British people do not feel welcomed if, on being invited to somebody's house, they find the hosts in smart clothes and a grand table set for them. They do not feel flattered by this, they feel intimidated. It makes them feel they can't relax.

It is probably true that the British, especially the English, are more reserved than the people of many other countries. They find it comparatively difficult to indicate friendship by open displays of affection. For example, it is not the convention to kiss when meeting a friend. Instead, friendship is symbolised by behaving as casually as possible. If you are in a British person's house, and you are told to ‘help yourself’ to something, your host is not being rude or suggesting that you are of no importance - he or she is showing that you are completely accepted and just like ‘one of the family’.

In the last decades of the twentieth century, the general amount of informality has been increasing. Buffet.--type meals, at which people do not sit down at a table to eat, are a common form of hospitality.

At the same time, the traditional reserve has also been breaking down. More groups in society now kiss when meeting each other (women and women, and men and women, but still never men and men!).

THE FAMILY

In comparison with most other places in the world, family identity is rather weak in Britain, especially in England. Of course, the family unit is still the basic living arrangement for most people. But in Britain this definitely means the nuclear family. There is little sense of extended family identity, except among some racial minorities. This is reflected in the size and composition of households. It is unusual for adults of different generations within the family to live together. The average number of people living in each household in Britain is lower than in most other

European countries. The proportion of elderly people living alone is similarly high.

Significant family events such as weddings, births and funerals are not automatically accompanied by large gatherings of people. It is still common to appoint people to certain roles on such occasions, such as ‘best man’ at a wedding, or godmother and godfather when a child is born. But for most people these appointments are of sentimental significance only. They do not imply lifelong responsibility. In fact, family gatherings of any kind beyond the household unit are rare. For most people, they are confined to the Christmas period.

Even the stereotyped nuclear family of father, mother and children is becoming less common. Britain has a higher rate of divorce than anywhere else in Europe except Denmark and the proportion of children born outside marriage has risen dramatically and is also one of the highest (about a third of all births). However, these trends do not necessarily mean that the nuclear family is disappearing. Divorces have increased, but the majority of marriages in Britain (about 55%) do not break down. In addition, it is notable that about three-quarters of all births outside marriage are officially registered by both parents and more than half of the children concerned are born to parents who are living together at the time.

MEN AND WOMEN

Generally speaking, British people invest about the same amount of their identity in their gender as people in other parts of northern Europe do. On the one hand, society no longer overtly endorses differences in the public and social roles of men and women, and it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of sex. On the other hand, people still (often unconsciously) expect a fairly large number of differences in everyday behaviour and domestic roles.

In terms of everyday habits and mannerisms, British society probably expects a sharper difference between the sexes than most other European societies do. For example, it is still far more acceptable for a man to look untidy and scruffy than it is for a woman; and it is still far more acceptable for a woman to display emotions and be demonstrably friendly than it is for a man to do so.

As far as roles are concerned, most people assume that a family's financial situation is not just the responsibility of the man. On the other hand, they would still normally complement the woman, not the man, on a beautifully decorated or well-kept house. Everyday care of the children is still seen as mainly the woman's responsibility. Although almost as many women have jobs as men, nearly half of the jobs done by women are part-time. In fact, the majority of mothers with children under the age of twelve either have no job or work only during school hours. Men certainly take a

more active domestic role than they did forty years ago. Some things, however, never seem to change. A comparison of child-rearing habits of the 1950s and the I980s showed that the proportion of men who never changed a baby's nappy had remained the same (40%)!

In general, the sharpest distinction between the expected roles and behaviour of the two sexes is found in the lower and upper classes. The distinction is far less clear among the middle classes, but it is still there.
At the public level there are contradictions. Britain was one of the first European countries to have a woman Prime Minister and a woman chairperson of debate in its Parliament. However, in the early nineties women formed only a tiny fraction of the total number of MPs (about 5%), only one out of five lawyers in Britain was a woman, less than one in ten accountants was a woman and there was only one female consultant brain surgeon in the whole country.

Nearly every institution in the country has opened it doors to women now. One of the last to do so was the Anglican Church, which, after much debate, decided in favour of the ordination of women priests in 1993. However, there are a few institutions which still don't accept female members for example, the Oxford and Cambridge Club in London, an association for graduates of these two universities.

PRIVACY AND SEX

Respect for privacy underlies many aspects of British life. It is not just privacy in your own home which is important. Just as important is the individual's right to keep information about himself or herself private. Despite the increase in informality, it is still seen as rude to ask people what are called 'personal' questions (for example, about how much money they earn or about their family or sex life) unless you know them very well. Notice that the conventional formula on being introduced to someone in Britain, 'how do you do?', is not interpreted as a real request for information at all; the conventional reply is not to 'answer the question' but to reply by saying 'how do you do?' too.

The modern British attitude to sex is an example of how, while moral attitudes have changed, the habit of keeping things private is still deeply ingrained. British (like American) public life has a reputation for demanding puritanical standards of behaviour. Revelations about extra-marital affairs or other deviations from what is considered normal in private life have, in the past, ruined the careers of many public figures. This would seem to indicate a lack of respect for privacy and that the British do not allow their politicians a private life. However, appearances in this matter can be misleading. In most of these cases, the disgrace of the politician concerned has not been because of his sexual activity. It has happened because this activity was mixed up with a matter of national

security, or involved breaking the law or indicated hypocrisy (in acting against the stated policy of the politician's party). In other words, the private sexual activity had a direct relevance to the politician's public role. The scandal was that in these cases, the politicians had not kept their private lives and public roles separate enough. When no such connections are involved, there are no negative consequences for the politicians. In fact when, in 1992, a leading politician announced that five years previously he had had an affair with his secretary, his popularity actually increased!

In 1992 a million copies of very explicit and realistic videos with titles such as *Super Virility, Better Sex, The Gay Man's Guide to Safer Sex* and *The Lovers' Guide* were sold in Britain. There was some debate about whether they should be banned. However, an opinion poll showed that the British public agreed that they were not ‘pornographic’ but 'educational'. Three out of four of those asked were happy for the videos to be freely on sale. Examples such as this suggest that modern Britons have a positive and open attitude to sex. However, they continue to regard it as an absolutely private matter. Sex may no longer be ‘bad’, but it is still embarrassing. Take the example of sex education in schools. Partly because of worries about AIDS, this is now seen as a vital part of the school curriculum. It is the legal responsibility of schools to teach it. However, research in the early 1990s suggested that little or no sex education was taking place in nearly half of the schools in the country. Why? The most common reason was that teachers simply felt too embarrassed to tackle the subject. Similarly, public references to sex in popular entertainment are very common, but they typically take the form of joking innuendo and clumsy double-entendre.

The same mixture of tolerance and embarrassment can be seen in the official attitude to prostitution in Britain. It is not illegal to be a prostitute in Britain, but it is illegal to publicly behave like one. It is against the law to ‘solicit’ - that is, to do anything in public to find customers.

THE LOVE OF NATURE

Most of the British live in towns and cities. But they have an idealised vision of the countryside. To the British, the countryside has almost none of the negative associations which it has in some countries, such as poor facilities, lack of educational opportunities, unemployment and poverty. To them, the countryside means peace and quiet, beauty, good health and no crime. Most of them would live in a country village if they thought that they could find a way of earning a living there. Ideally, this village would consist of thatched cottages built around an area of grass known as a ‘village green’. Nearby, there would be a pond with ducks on it. Nowadays such a village is not actually very common, but it is a stereotypical picture that is well-known to the British.

Perhaps this love of the countryside is another aspect of British conservatism. The countryside represents stability. Those who live in towns and cities take an active interest in country matters and the British regard it as both a right and a privilege to be able to go ‘into the country’ whenever they want to. Large areas of the country are official ‘national parks’ where almost no building is allowed. There is an organisation to which thousands of enthusiastic country walkers belong, the Ramblers' Association. It is in constant battle with land-owners to keep open the public ‘rights of way’ across their lands. Maps can be bought which mark, in great detail, the routes of all public footpaths in the country. Walkers often stay at youth hostels. The Youth Hostels Association is a charity whose aim is ‘to help all, especially young people of limited means, to a greater knowledge love and care of the countryside’. Their hostels are cheap and rather self-consciously bare and simple. There are more than 300 of them around the country, most of them in the middle of nowhere!

THE LOVE OF ANIMALS

The British tend to have a sentimental attitude to animals. Nearly half of the households in Britain keep at least one domestic pet.

But the love of animals goes beyond sentimental attachment to domestic pets. Wildlife programmes are by far the most popular kind of television documentary. Millions of families have ‘bird-tables’ in their gardens.

PART TWO

THE UNITED STATES of AMERICA

GEOGRAPHY OF THE USA

"*America is so vast that almost everything said about it is likely to be true, and the opposite is probably equally true*."

(James T. Farrell)

The United States of America is the third largest country in the world in population, and it is the fourth largest country in area. In area, population, and economic output, some of the states are comparable to many nations.

China and India are the only countries with more people. Only Russia, Canada, and China have larger areas. The United States covers the entire midsection of North America, stretching from the Atlantic Ocean in the east to the Pacific Ocean in the west. It also includes Alaska, in the northwest corner of North America; and Hawaii, far out in the Pacific. The United States is often called the U.S., U.S.A., or America.

The United States of America, popularly referred to as the United States or as America, a federal republic on the continent of North America, consisting of 50 states. The 48 states border on Canada in the north and Mexico in the south. In east the USA is washed by the Atlantic Ocean, in the south by the Gulf of Mexico, and in the west by the Pacific Ocean. The northern boundary is partly formed by the Great Lakes and the Saint Lawrence River; the southern boundary is partly formed by the Rio Grande. New York City is the largest city in the United States. Washington, D.C., is the capital.

The sate of Alaska is the largest of America's 50 states. It is nearly 400 times the size of Rhode Island, which is the smallest state; but Alaska, with 521,000 people, has half the population of Rhode Island.

The total area of the United States (including the District of Columbia) is 9,629,047 sq km, of which 1,593,440 sq km are in Alaska and 16,729 sq km are in Hawaii.

SURFACE FEATURES

The United States has an enormous variety of physical features and a wide diversity of animal and plant life.

The country may be divided into the following five main geographical divisions.

(1) The Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain.
(2) The Appalachian Highland.
(3) The Interior Plain.
(4) The Cordilleran, or Western, Highland.
(5) The Pacific Slope.

THE ATLANTIC AND GULF COASTAL PLAIN runs parallel the Atlantic Ocean and becomes much wider along the Gulf of Mexico.

THE APPALACHIAN HIGHLAND runs roughly side by side in a north-south direction from New England to Alabama.

THE INTERIOR PLAIN is the chief agricultural section of the country. It stretches from the Appalachian Highland westward to the edge of the Rocky Mountains. The Great Plains just east of the Rockies are part of the Interior Plain.

THE CORDILLERAN, or WESTERN, HIGHLAND extends westward from the Interior Plain to the Pacific Ocean. The Rocky Mountains make up the first subdivision of the Cordilleran Highland.

The second subdivision is the Colorado Plateaus are great steppe lands through which the Colorado River has carved deep canyons. The most famous of these is the Grand Canyon in northwestern Arizona.

The third subdivision of the Cordilleran Highland is the Sierra Nevada-Cascade range, which extends from the Canadian boundary southward almost to the Mexican border.

ALASKA lies beyond the boundaries of the USA stretching southward from the Arctic Ocean to the Pacific. This peninsula is sharply divided into three distinct regions. In the north are the Brooks Range. Central Alaska lies between the Brooks Range and the Alaska Range, where Mount McKinley rises 6,187 meters - the highest peak in North America. The Bering Straight separates Alaska from Russia, and the island chain of the Aleutians extends far to the southwest.

The eight major islands and over 100 small islets of HAWAII - like a chain of beads some 2,575 kilometers long - lie upon the Pacific. The largest island is Hawaii with wonderful beaches of yellow, white and black sands.

Mauna Loa, the world's largest active volcano, towers above the scenic Hawaiian National Park. Tropical plants, sandy desert, waterfalls, craters and caves make the 780-square-kilometer park a tourist attraction.

The best known of all the islands is the third largest, Oahu. Honolulu, the capital is situated here.

RIVERS, LAKES, AND BAYS

The United States has many thousands of streams. The longest is the Mississippi. One of its folk names is "father of waters".

Two of the Mississippi's branches, the Ohio River and the Missouri River, also rank among the most important rivers of the world.

Where the Missouri pours into the Mississippi from the west, it colors the river deep brown. Farther downstream, where the clear waters of the principal eastern tributary, the Ohio, join the Mississippi, the difference between the dry west and rainy east becomes apparent. For kilometers, the

waters of the two rivers flow on side by side, without mixing. Those from the west are brown with small pieces of soil. The waters from the east are clear and blue; they come from hills and valleys where plentiful forest and plant cover has kept the soil from being washed away.

The long Rio Grande (3,200 km) forms most of the border between the United States and Mexico.

In the northwest, the Columbia River and its chief branch, the Snake River, drain parts of Idaho, Washington, and Oregon. The Sacramento River and its chief branch, the San Joaquin, drain the great valley of central and northern California. The Colorado River and its many branches drain much of southwestern United States. These three river systems have great value as sources of water power.

The Yukon is a river as long as the Rio Grande but considerably greater in volume. It rises in the Canadian Rockies, but in its lower course it flows westward across Alaska to its mouth in Bering Sea.

The United States has thousands of lakes of all kinds and sizes. The northern state of Minnesota, for example, is known as the land of 10,000 lakes.

The Great Lakes make up the largest group of lakes in the country, as well as the greatest collection of fresh-water lakes in the world. Only Lake Michigan lies entirely inside the United States. The Superior, Huron, Erie, and Ontario form a border between north-eastern United States and Canada. They stretch 1600 km from east to west. This is nearly half the distance across the country. The lakes contain about half of the world's fresh water.

The St. Lawrence Seaway, which the U.S. shares with Canada, connects the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean allowing seagoing vessels to travel 3,861 kilometers inland, as far as Duluth, Minnesota, during the spring, summer and fall shipping season.

Another region of many lakes lies along the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic shore. There are hundreds of small lakes and lagoons deep in dark coastal swamps, or protected behind sandy coastal dunes.

A fourth group of lakes lies west of the Rocky Mountains. Some of these lakes are high in the mountains, others are shallow sheets of salty water. The most famous of these salty lakes are the Great Salt Lake, in Utah, and the Salton Sea, which lies about 72 m below sea level in Southern California.

Great bays cut deeply into parts of the United States coast line. There is an almost continuous series of bays along the Atlantic Coast. Many of the deep inlets form excellent harbors. Some of the country's most important ports lie near the heads of these bays. These ports include Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Newfolk.

The South Atlantic and Gulf coasts have fewer bays. The most important ports here are Charleston, Tampa, Mobile, Galveston and Corpus Christi. Here the harbors are deep enough for ocean-going vessels. The southern coasts also have important coastal river ports, which include Savannah, Jacksonville, New Orleans, and Houston on the Houston Ship Canal.

The Pacific Coast has the fewest bays of any part of the United States coast line. The City of Los Angeles has built an artificial bay to form a harbor for its ocean trade.

CLIMATE

The USA is a land of physical contrasts, including the weather. The southern parts of Florida, Texas, California, and the entire state of Hawaii, have warm temperatures year round; most of the United States is in the temperate zone with four distinct seasons and varying numbers of hot and cold days each season, while the northern tier of states and Alaska have extremely cold winters. The United States has many kinds of climates. The weather ranges from the warm, wet conditions of the Appalachian Highland to the desert conditions of some of the western states. It varies from almost winterless climates in southern Arizona and southern Florida to long, very cold winters in the Dakotas and Montana.

The climate along the northern part of the Atlantic coast is similar to that of England. But in the north central part of the country, summer and winter are worlds apart. There the average difference between July and January is 36 degrees centigrade and more violent extremes are common. The coldest days of a typical January may be 40 degrees centigrade, and the hottest July day may be 45 degrees. This is the sort of climate that is also found in central Asia, far from the moderating influence of the oceans. In the eastern part of the United States, the difference between summer and winter is also very distinct, but not nearly so extreme.

The variations in temperature within the United States have had a marked effect on the country's economy and living standards. There is a long crop-growing season along the south - but in the north it last as long as three months.

West of the Rocky Mountains, running all the way from the Canadian border to Mexico, there are vast areas where almost no trees grow. In this section of the country are the deserts which receive as little as 12.7 centimeters of rainfall a year. Yet, west of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, there are places in which 250 centimeters of rain falls annually.

Although the state of Hawaii is located in the tropical zone, its climate is comfortable because of the ocean currents that pass its shores and the winds that blow across the land from the northeast. The

temperature usually remains close to the annual average of 24 degrees centigrade.

VEGETATION and ANIMAL LIFE

The vegetation of the United States is marked by great diversity.

At the time European settlement began, about one-half of the United States was covered by forests. Today, because of extensive human modification, about 30 percent of the country's land area is forested Grasslands and other natural vegetative cover decreased as the continent was settled.

Northern Alaska, located in the northernmost part of the United States, is characterized by a windswept tundra., a region of lichens, mosses, hardy low shrubs, and flowering plants. Inland and to the south, the growing season lengthens and certain trees can survive. A few species of needle-leaf trees, notably spruces and firs, dominate a vast but slow-growing evergreen forest, known as the taiga. South of the taiga the growing season is still longer and more tree species can survive. Here is found a mixed forest containing both needle-leaf and broadleaf trees, and including pines, maples, elms, birches, and oaks, as well as hickory, beech, and sycamore.

Still farther south, in western Oregon and Washington, a true rain forest appears as the dry periods shrink to less than a few weeks in midsummer. This luxuriant forest consists primarily of a great variety of needle-leaf trees: Douglas firs, true firs, hemlocks, cedars, spruces, and pines, each occupying its own preferred elevation zone here, and together constituting the second richest forest resource for the nation. The coastal forests of Alaska have fewer species than the rich rain forest to the south but a faster growth than the taiga to the north.

The Gulf of Mexico coast is even warmer and favors the fast-growing pines that now represent the major forest resource of the nation. Other species found here include southern magnolia, pecan, red gum, and black gum (tupelo). A number of subtropical and tropical trees flourish in southern Florida.

Death Valley, which lies below sea level, is but one of the many nearly barren lowlands.

ANIMALS

Animals depend, either directly or indirectly, on plants for their survival. Each major vegetation region thus has its own characteristic kinds of animal life. In the Arctic areas and regions of mountain tundra are found burrowing marmots, ground squirrels, cold-water fish such as grayling and trout, and an occasional bear. Alaskan coastal waters are the habitat of a number of large mammals, including walrus and fur seals. Caribou and elk

spend summers on the tundra but migrate into the conifer forest for winter. Many birds migrate even farther, going from the polar regions to the Tropics each winter. The mountainous western states, especially Alaska, are the last refuges in the United States of most big-game animals. Here may be found elk, pronghorn, moose, deer, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, timber wolves, and, in a few remote areas, brown bears. The Kodiak bear, the largest carnivore in North America, is found in Alaska.

The hardwood forests of the eastern United States contain moose, black bears, deer, foxes, raccoons, skunks, squirrels, and a diversity of small birds. Along the Gulf of Mexico coast live larger and more colorful birds such as pelicans, flamingos, and green kingfishers, as well as alligators and warmwater fish such as catfish. Several varieties of venomous snakes are also found here.

Bison (buffalo) are popularly associated with the grasslands, although in fact they once ranged over most of eastern North America before being nearly exterminated by hunting; they now exist only in captivity or in protected areas. Gophers, rabbits, prairie dogs, ferrets, ants, and other burrowing creatures are best suited to the grasslands, which were once swept by fires.

The deserts have few plants, fewer small animals, and almost no large animals. Kangaroo rats, lizards, and wide-ranging birds are typical animals in this harsh region.

The animals of Hawaii include many endemic species (those not found elsewhere), but many of these have been driven to near extinction by human alteration of the habitat and by competition from introduced animals. Hawaii's only indigenous mammal is the bat.

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

A NEW LAND

Around the year 1000, a party of Icelandic Vikings under Leif Ericson sailed to the eastern coast of North America. They landed at a place they called Vinland. They failed, however to establish any permanent settlements, and they soon lost contact with the new continent.

Five hundred years later, the need for increased trade and an error in navigation led to another European encounter with America. In late l5th-century Europe, there was a great demand for spices, textiles and dyes from Asia. Christopher Columbus, a mariner from Italy, mistakenly believed that he could reach the Far East by sailing 4,000 miles (6 400 kilometers) west from Europe. In 1492, he persuaded the king and queen of Spain to finance such a voyage. Columbus sailed west, but he did not

reach Asia. Instead he landed on one of the Bahama Islands in the Caribbean Sea.

Columbus eventually explored most of the Caribbean area. He never reached the Far East; but he did return home with some gold, and within 40 years treasure-hungry Spanish adventurers had conquered a huge empire in South and Central America. The Spanish also established some of the earliest settlements in North America - St. Augustine in Florida, Santa Fe in New Mexico (1609) and San Diego m Califomia (1769).

The Europeans were initially drawn to the New World in search of wealth. When Columbus and later Spanish explorers returned to Europe with stories of abundant gold in the Americas, each European sovereign hastened to claim as much territory as possible in the New World - along with whatever wealth might be extracted from it.

Enforcing these claims could only be accomplished by establishing settlements of Europeans on the territory. This requirement combined with the zeal of Spanish priests to convert the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas to Christianity, the need of European religious and political dissenters for refuge from persecution in their homelands, and the thirst for adventure of some individuals - fueled the drive for the establishment of colonies.

ENGLISH SETTLMENTS

The first successful English colony in the Americas was founded at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. The settlement was financed by a London company which expected to make a profit from the settlement. It never did. Of the first 105 colonists, 73 died of hunger and disease within seven months of their arrival. But the colony survived and eventually grew and became wealthy. The Virginians discovered a way to earn money by growing tobacco, which they began shipping to England in 1614.

In New England, the northeastern region of what is now the United States, several settlements were established by English Puritans. These settlers believed that the Church of England had adopted too many practices from Roman Catholicism, and they came to America to escape persecution in England and to found a colony based on their own religious ideals. One group of Puritans, called the "Pilgrims," crossed the Atlantic in the ship Mayflower and settled at Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620. A much larger Puritan colony was established in the Boston area in 1630. By 1635, some settlers were already migrating to nearby Connecticut.

One Puritan who disagreed with the decisions of the community, Roger Williams, protested that the state should not interfere with religion. Forced to leave Massachusetts in 1635, he set up the neighboring Rhode

Island colony that guaranteed religious freedom and the separation of church and state. The colonies of Maryland, settled in 1634 as a refuge for Roman Catholics, and Pennsylvania, founded in 1681 by the Quaker leader William Penn, were also characterized by religious toleration. This toleration, in its turn, attracted further groups of settlers to the New World.

Over time, the British colonies in North America were also occupied by many non-British national groups. German farmers settled in Pennsylvania, Swedes founded the colony of Delaware, and African slaves first arrived in Virginia in 1619. In 1626, Dutch settlers purchased Manhattan Island from local Native American, or "Indian" chiefs and built the town of New Amsterdam; in 1664, the settlement was captured by the English and renamed New York.

COLONIAL ERA

By 1770, several small but growing urban centers had emerged, each supporting newspapers, shops, merchants and craftsmen. Philadelphia with 28,000 inhabitants, was the largest city, followed by New York, Boston and Charleston, South Carolina. Unlike most other nations, the United States never had a feudal aristocracy. Land was plentiful and labor was scarce in colonial America, and every free man had an opportunity to achieve economic independence, if not prosperity.

All of the colonies shared a tradition of representative government. The English king appointed many of the colonial governors, but they all had to rule in cooperation with an elected assembly. Voting was restricted to landowning white males, but most white males owned enough property to vote. Britain could not exercise direct control over her American colonies. London was too far away, and the colonists were too independent-minded.

By 1733, English settlers had occupied 13 colonies along the Atlantic coast, from New Hampshire in the north to Georgia in the south. The French controlled Canada and Louisiana, which included the entire Mississippi watershed - a vast empire with few people. Between 1689 and I815, France and Britain fought several wars, and North America was drawn into every one of them. By 1756, England and France were fighting the Seven Years' War, known in America as the French and Indian War. William Pitt the British prime minister, invested soldiers and money in North America and won an empire. British forces captured the Canadian strong points of Louisburg (1758), Quebec (1759) and Montreal (1760). The Peace of Paris, signed in 1763 gave Britain title to Canada and all of North America east of the Mississippi River.

Britain's victory led directly to a conflict with its American colonies. To prevent fighting with the Native Americans, known as

Indians to the Europeans, a royal proclamation denied colonists the right to settle west of the Appalachian mountains. The British government began punishing smugglers and charged new taxes on sugar, coffee, textiles and other imported goods. The Quartering Act forced the colonies to house and feed British soldiers; and with the passage of the Stamp Act, special tax stamps had to be attached to all newspapers, pamphlets, legal documents and licenses.

These measures seemed quite fair to British politicians, who had spent large sums of money to defend their American colonies during and after the French and Indian War. Surely, they reasoned, the colonists should pay a part of those expenses. But the Americans feared that the new taxes would make trading difficult, and that British troops stationed in the colonies might be used to crush the civil liberties which the colonists had heretofore enjoyed. Overall, these fears were quite groundless, but they were precursors of what have become ingrained traditions in American politics. Americans distrust the power of "big government"; after all, millions of immigrants came to this country to escape political repression. Americans also have always insisted on exercising some control over the system of taxation which supports their government. Speaking as freeborn Englishmen, colonial Americans insisted that they could be taxed only by their own colonial assemblies. "No taxation without representation" was their rallying cry.

In 1765, representatives from nine colonies met as the "Stamp Act Congress" and spoke out against the new tax. Merchants refused to sell British goods, mobs threatened stamp distributors and most colonists simply refused to use the stamps. The British Parliament was forced to repeal the Stamp Act, but it enforced the Quartering Act, enacted taxes on tea and other goods and sent customs officers to Boston to collect those tariffs. Again the colonists refused to obey, so British soldiers were sent to Boston.

Tensions eased when Lord North, the new British chancellor of the exchequer, removed all the new taxes except that on tea. In 1773, a group of patriots responded to the tea tax by staging the "Boston Tea Party": disguised as Indians, they boarded British merchant ships and tossed 342 crates of tea into Boston harbor. Parliament then passed the "Intolerable Acts": The independence of the Massachusetts colonial government was sharply curtailed, and more British soldiers were sent to the port of Boston, which was now closed to shipping. In September 1774, the First Continental Congress, a meeting of colonial leaders opposed to what they perceived to be British oppression in the colonies, met in Philadelphia. These leaders urged Americans to disobey the Intolerable Acts and to boycott British trade. Colonists began to organize militias and to collect and store weapons and ammunition.

REVOLUTION

On April 19, 1775, 700 British soldiers marched from Boston to forestall a rebellion of the colonists by capturing a colonial arms depot in the nearby town of Concord. At the village of Lexington, they confronted 70 militiamen. Someone - no one knows who - fired a shot, and the American War of Independence began. The British easily captured Lexington and Concord, but as they marched back to Boston they were harassed by hundreds of Massachusetts volunteers. By June, 10,000 American soldiers had besieged Boston, and the British were forced to evacuate the city in March 1776.

In May 1775, a second Continental Congress had met in Philadelphia and began to assume the functions of a national government. It founded a Continental Army and Navy under the command of George Washington, a Virginia planter and veteran of the French and Indian War. It printed paper money and opened diplomatic relations with foreign powers. On July 2, 1776, the Congress finally resolved "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states." Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, assisted by others, drafted a Declaration of Independence, which the Congress adopted on July 4, 1776.

The Declaration presented a public defense of the American Revolution, including a lengthy list of grievances against the British king, George III. Most importantly, it explained the philosophy behind the revolution - that men have a natural right to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness"; that governments can rule only with "the consent of the governed"; that any government may be dissolved when it fails to protect the rights of the people. This theory of politics came from the British philosopher John Locke, and it is central to the Anglo-Saxon political tradition.

Early in 1776 the British government decided to use overwhelming military force to crush the American revolt. The task looked easy. England, Wales, and Scotland had a combined population of about 9 million, compared with 2.5 million in the 13 rebel colonies, nearly 20 percent of whom were black slaves. Militarily, Britain was clearly superior, with a large standing army and the financial resources to hire additional troops, and the most powerful navy in the world. The British government also counted on mobilizing thousands of Loyalists in America and Native Americans who were hostile to white expansion.

Nonetheless, the Americans had a number of important advantages. They were fighting on their own territory, close to the sources of supply and amid a mostly friendly population. In addition, the Patriots had some resourceful military leaders, who had been tested in the French and Indian War. Finally, later in the war, the rebellious colonies received crucial aid

from France and Spain. This assistance offset British superiority in wealth and military power, and made possible a clear-cut American victory. However, few of these American advantages were obvious when the war began.

At first, the war went badly for the Americans. The British captured New York City in September 1776, and Philadelphia was captured a year later. The tide turned in October 1777, when a British army under General John Burgoyne surrendered at Saratoga, in northern New York. Encouraged by that victory, France seized an opportunity to humble Britain, her traditional enemy. A Franco-American alliance was signed in February 1778. With few provisions and little training, American troops generally fought well, but they might have lost the war if they had not received aid from the French treasury and the powerful French Navy.

After 1778, the fighting shifted largely to the south. In 1781, 8,000 British troops under General George Cornwallis were surrounded at Yorktown, Virginia, by a French fleet and a combined French-American army under George Washington's command. Cornwallis surrendered, and soon afterward the British government asked for peace. The Treaty of Paris, signed in September 1783, recognized the independence of the United States and granted the new nation all the territory north of Florida, south of Canada and east of the Mississippi River.

WAR LESSONS

The War of Independence was the central event in the lives of a generation of Americans. For nearly a decade it entangled them in experiences of a remarkable intensity, shaping their thoughts about themselves, their society, and their government. Of the approximately 400,000 adult white men who lived in the colonies in 1775, probably about 175,000 fought in the war - 120,000 as Patriot soldiers or militia, 55,000 as Loyalists. Thus, husbands or sons from nearly half of all white families were part of the “shooting” war. Many others - black as well as white, women and children as well as men - were shot at or suffered personal harm. Thousands of homes were looted or burned, and tens of thousands of people were detained, molested, or forced to flee from the cities occupied by British or Patriot troops and the intensely contested battle zones around New York City, throughout central New Jersey, and nearly everywhere in Georgia and the Carolinas.

For all these families the war was a political education. They learned, first, that one had to choose sides; it was more dangerous to remain neutral, without friends, than to join the Patriot militia or declare for the British cause. The war itself created loyalty to the new state governments and to the United States.

Second, they learned to question social and political authority. Once ordinary people had sensed the power of their united strength - whether in mobs, or militia, or armies, or popular conventions - they were less willing to defer to men of wealth and high status. In this sense, the war was a democratizing experience that solidified support for republicanism and began to overturn the deeply ingrained deferential habits of the colonial era.

Finally, some of the American people learned that success in war, and presumably in peace, required not only a loyal and purposeful population but also direction by a strong central government. The economic trials of the war, especially the difficulty of raising money without the power of taxation, encouraged them to enhance the powers of Congress at the expense of those of the states. Thus, the war developed sentiment for national political institutions.

The legacy of the war was a volatile mix of forces: patriotic fervor, democratic energy, republican values, and nationalist sentiment. Their interaction would determine the fate of the new nation.

DEVISIVG A CONSTITUTION

The 13 colonies were now "free and independent states" - but not yet one united nation. Since 1781, they had been governed by the Articles of Confederation, a constitution that set up a very weak central government. The American people had just rebelled against a parliament in distant London, and they did not want to replace it with a tyrannical central authority at home. Under the Articles of Confederation, Congress, comprised of representatives of the people, could not make laws or raise taxes. There was no federal judiciary and no permanent executive. The individual states were almost independent: They could even set up their own tax barriers.

In May 1787, a convention met in Philadelphia with instructions to revise the Articles of Confederation. The delegates among whom were George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and James Madison went beyond their mandate and drafted a new and more workable Constitution. It established a stronger federal government empowered to collect taxes, conduct diplomacy, maintain armed forces, and regulate foreign trade and commerce among the states. It provided for a Supreme Court and lesser federal courts, and it gave executive power to an elected president. Most importantly, it established the principle of a "balance of power" to be maintained among the three branches of government - the executive, the legislative and the judicial. Under this principle, each branch was provided the independent means to exercise checks on and to balance the activities of the others, thus guaranteeing that no branch could exert dictatorial authority over the workings of the government.

The Constitution was accepted in 1788, but only after much bitter debate. Many Americans feared that a powerful central government would trample on the liberties of the people, and in 1791, 10 amendments - the Bill of Rights - were added to the Constitution. This document guaranteed freedom of religion, a free press, free speech, the right of citizens to bear arms, protection against illegal house searches, the right to a fair trial by jury and protection against "cruel and unusual punishments."

The Constitution and the Bill of Rights thus struck a balance between two conflicting but fundamental aspects of American politics - the need for a strong, efficient central authority and the need to ensure individual liberties. America's first two political parties divided along those ideological lines. The Federalists favored a strong president and central government; the Democratic Republicans defended the rights of the individual states, because this seemed to guarantee more "local" control and accountability. This party appealed to small farmers; the Federalist party was the party of the prosperous classes, and it would die out by 1820.

NEW NATION

As the first president of the United States, George Washington governed in a Federalist style. When Pennsylvania farmers refused to pay a federal liquor tax, Washington mobilized an army of 15,000 men to put down the "Whiskey Rebellion." The federal government took over the debts of the individual states and set up a national bank. These fiscal measures were designed to encourage investment and to persuade business interests to support the new government.

In 1801, Thomas Jefferson was elected president. As a Republican, Jefferson was an informal, accessible chief executive. Although he wanted to limit the power of the president, political realities forced Jefferson to exercise that power vigorously. In 1803, he bought the huge Louisiana territory from France for $15 million: Now the United States would extend as far west as the Rocky Mountains.

The United States enjoyed a period of rapid economic expansion. A national network of roads and canals was built, steamboats traveled the rivers, and the first steam railroad opened in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1830. The Industrial Revolution had reached America: There were textile mills in New England; iron foundries in Pennsylvania. By the 1850s, factories were producing rubber goods, sewing machines, shoes, clothing, farm implements, guns and clocks.

The frontier of settlement was pushed west to the Mississippi River and beyond. In 1828, Andrew Jackson became the first man born into a poor family and born in the West, away from the cultural traditions of the

Atlantic seaboard, to be elected president. He made land available to western settlers - mainly by forcing Indian tribes to move west of the Mississippi.

SECTIONAL CONFLICT

The Jacksonian era of optimism was clouded by the existence in the United States of a social contradiction - increasingly recognized as a social evil-that would eventually tear the nation apart: - slavery. The words of the Declaration of Independence 'that all men are created equal' - were meaningless for the 1.5 million black people who were slaves. Thomas Jefferson, himself a slaveowner, recognized that the system was inhumane and wrote an attack on slavery into the Declaration, but Southern delegates to the Continental Congress forced him to remove the passage.

The importation of slaves was outlawed in 1808, and many Northern states moved to abolish slavery, but the Southern economy was based on large plantations, which used slave workers to grow cotton, rice, tobacco and sugar. Still, in several Southern states, small populations of free blacks also worked as artisans or traders.

In 1820, Southern and Northern politicians disputed the question of whether slavery would be legal in the western territories. Congress agreed on a compromise: Slavery was permitted in the new state of Missouri and the Arkansas territory, and it was barred everywhere west and north of Missouri. But the issue would not go away, some organized themselves into abolitionist societies, primarily in the North, Southern whites defended slavery with increasing ardor. The nation was also split over the issue of high tariff, which protected Northern industries but raised prices for Southern consumers.

Meanwhile, thousands of Americans had been settling in Texas, then a part of Mexico. By the 1830s, American settlers in the large Mexican province of Texas outnumbered Mexicans. They also talked about independence from Mexico. This desire for Texas to become independent sharply increased in 1833 when General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna overthrew the Mexican government and set himself up as dictator of all Mexico. Santa Anna cut off all new American migration to Texas and increased taxes on Americans already living there. In response, the Texans revolted in October 1835 and proclaimed the Lone Star Republic.

Many Texans didn't want independence; they wanted their land to be part of the United States. Several requests were made to have the United States annex (take over) the Lone Star Republic. These requests were politely refused As a result, the government of Texas started showing increased friendship for Britain. This caused some Americans to

worry that Texas might become linked to British North America. Finally, in 1845, Texas became a state of the United States of America. Mexico refused to recognize this action. War was declared against Mexico, and Mexico was defeated in the war.

A peace treaty between Mexico and the United States set the boundary between Texas and Mexico along the Rio Grande River. For a payment of $18,250,000 Mexico turned over the immense California and New Mexico regions to the United States. These regions include the present states of California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico.

In 1846 by settling a long-standing border dispute with British Canada, the United States had acquired clear title to the southern half of the Oregon Country - the present states of Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Thus America became a truly continental power, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

The acquisition of these new territories revived a troubling question: Would newly acquired territories be open to slavery? In 1850, Congress voted another compromise: Califomia was admitted as a free state, and the inhabitants of the Utah and New Mexico territories were allowed to decide the issue for themselves. Congress also passed the Fugitive Slave Act, which helped Southerners to recapture slaves who had escaped to the free states. Some Northern states did not enforce this law, however, and abolitionists continued to assist fleeing blacks. Harriet Beecher Stowe of Massachusetts wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin, a sentimental but powerful anti-slavery novel which converted many readers to the abolitionist cause. The issue of slavery became, in American politics, economics and cultural life, the central point of contention.

There were bitter clashes between pro-slavery and anti-slavery settlers. In Virginia in 1859 John Brown, who was against slavery, tried to raise a revolt of the black slaves. Though this attempt was crushed by the government and John Brown was executed his example was never forgotten. The anti-slavery movement became a mass movement in the country.

Abraham Lincoln (I809-1865) demanded a halt to the spread of slavery. He was willing to tolerate slavery in the Southern states, but at the same time he affirmed that "this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free."

Lincoln was the son of a poor farmer, a settler of Kentucky. His father could not even read. Their rich neighbor, a planter and slave-holder, took a dislike to the Lincoln family, because they were friendly with the Negroes. As a result Lincoln's father had to sell his farm and move west, to the new territory. Young Lincoln helped his father on the farm. He was an excellent worker and was well known for his physical strength. Lincoln took up different jobs in his youth. He was a clerk in a

store, a raftsman on the Mississippi River. He was respected in his home country and was elected postmaster. During the period he held this post, he prepared for his law examinations. In 1848 Lincoln was elected member of Congress. In 1858 during the election campaign the whole country followed with great attention the speeches made by Lincoln against his opponent Senator Douglas who supported slavery. In his speeches he said: "Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people". Here is another part of his speech: "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all of the time".

CIVIL WAR

In the election in1860 the majority in every Southern and border state voted against Lincoln, but the North supported him and he won the election. A few weeks later, South Carolina voted to leave the Union. It was soon joined by Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina. These 11 states proclaimed themselves an independent nation - the Confederate States of America - and the American Civil War began.

Southerners proclaimed that they were fighting not just for slavery; after all, most of Confederate soldiers were too poor to own slaves. The South was waging a war for independence - a second American Revolution. The Confederates usually had the advantage of fighting on their home territory, and their morale was excellent. They had superb soldiers, cavalrymen and generals, but they were greatly outnumbered by Union (Northern) forces.

To fight the war, both sides suspended some civil liberties, printed mountains of paper money and resorted to conscription.

Lincoln's two priorities were to keep the United States one country and to rid the nation of slavery. Indeed, he realized that by making the war a battle against slavery he could win support for the Union at home and abroad. Accordingly, on January 1, 1863, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which granted freedom to all slaves in areas still controlled by the Confederacy.

The Southern army (Confederates) won some victories in the early part of the war, but in the summer of 1863 their commander, General Robert E. Lee, marched north into Pennsylvania. He met a Union army at Gettysburg, and the largest battle ever fought on American soil ensued. After three days of desperate fighting, the Confederates were defeated. At the same time, on the Mississippi River, Union General Ulysses S. Grant captured the important city of Vicksburg. Union forces now controlled the entire Mississippi Valley, splitting the Confederacy in two.

In 1864, a Union army under General William T. Sherman marched across Georgia, destroying the countryside. Meanwhile, General Grant relentlessly battled Lee's forces in Virginia. On April 2, 1865, Lee was forced to abandon Richmond, the Confederate capital. A week later he surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Court House, and all other Confederate forces soon surrendered. On April 14, Lincoln was assassinated by the actor John Wilkes Booth.

The Civil War was the most traumatic episode in American history. Even today, the scars have not entirely healed. All of America's later wars would be fought well beyond the boundaries of the United States, but this conflict devastated the South and subjected that region to military occupation. America lost more soldiers in this war than in any other - a total of 635,000 dead on both sides.

The war resolved two fundamental questions that had divided the United States since 1776. It put an end to slavery which was completely abolished by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution in 1865. It also decided, once and for all, that America was not a collection of semi-independent states, but a single indivisible nation.

Though the victory of the North in the American Civil War assured the integrity of the United States as an indivisible nation, much was destroyed in the course of the conflict, and the secondary goal of the war, the abolition of the system of slavery, was only imperfectly achieved.

In 1869, the western territory (later the state of Wyoming) became the first place in the world where women could vote and hold elected office.

RECONSTRUCTION

The defeat of the Confederacy left what had been the country's most fertile agricultural area economically destroyed and its rich culture devastated. At the same time, the legal abolition of slavery did not ensure equality in fact for former slaves. Immediately after the Civil War legislatures in the Southern states attempted to block blacks from voting.

Congress nevertheless was able to press forward with its program of "Reconstruction," or reform, of the Southern states, occupied after the war by the army of the North. By 1870, Southern states were governed by groups of blacks, cooperative whites and transplanted Northerners (called "carpetbaggers"). Many Southern blacks were elected to state legislatures and to the Congress.

Reconstruction was bitterly resented by most Southern whites, some of whom formed the Ku Klux Klan, a violent secret society that hoped to protect white interests and advantages by terrorizing blacks and preventing them from making social advances. By 1872, the federal government had suppressed the Klan, but white Democrats continued to

use violence and fear to regain control of their state governments. Reconstruction came to an end in 1877, when new constitutions had been ratified in all Southern states and all federal troops were withdrawn from the South.

Despite Constitutional guarantees, Southern blacks were now "second-class citizens" - that is, they were subordinated to whites, though they still had limited civil rights. In some Southern states, blacks could still vote and hold elective office. There was racial segregation in schools and hospitals, but trains, parks and other public facilities could still generally be used by people of both races.

Toward the end of the century, this system of segregation and oppression of blacks grew far more rigid.

In 1896 laws enforced strict segregation in public transportation, theaters, sports, and even elevators and cemeteries. Most blacks and many poor whites lost the right to vote because of their inability to pay the poll taxes (which had been enacted to exclude them from political participation) and their failure to pass literacy tests. Blacks accused of minor crimes were sentenced to hard labor, and mob violence was sometimes perpetrated against them. Most Southern blacks, as a result of poverty and ignorance, continued to work as tenant farmers. Although blacks were legally free, they still lived and were treated very much like slaves.

MOVING WEST

In the years following the end of the Civil War in 1865, Americans settled the western half of the United States. Miners searching for gold and silver went to the Rocky Mountain region. Farmers, including many German and Scandinavian immigrants, settled in Minnesota and the Dakotas. Enormous herds of cattle grazed on the plains of Texas and other western states, managed by hired horsemen (cowboys) who became the most celebrated and romanticized figures in American culture. Most of these horsemen were former Southern soldiers or former slaves, both of whom headed west after the defeat of the South. The cowboy was America's hero: He worked long hours on the open range for low wages. He was not nearly as violent as movies later represented him to be.

Settlers and the United States Army fought frequent battles with Indians, upon whose lands the stream of white settlers was encroaching, but here, too, the bloodshed has been exaggerated. A total of perhaps 7,000 whites and 5,000 Indians were killed in the course of the 19th century. Many more Indians died of hunger and disease caused by the westward movement of settlers. White men forced the Indians from their land and nearly destroyed all of the buffalo, the main source of food and hides for the tribes of the Great Plains.

INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

During this period, the United States was becoming the world's leading industrial power, and great fortunes were made by shrewd businessmen. The first transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869.

The petroleum industry prospered, dominated by John D. Rockefeller's giant Standard Oil Company. Andrew Carnnegie, who came to America as a poor Scottish immigrant, built a vast empire of steel mills and iron mines. Textile mills multiplied in the South, and meatpacking plants sprang up in and around Chicago. An electrical industry was created by a series of inventions - the telephone, the phonograph, the light bulb, moving pictures, the alternating-current motor and transformer. In Chicago architect Louis Sullivan used steelframe construction to develop a peculiarly American contribution to the cities of the world - the skyscraper.

But unrestrained economic growth created many serious problems. Some businesses grew too big and too powerful. The United States Steel Corporation, formed in 1901, was the largest corporation in the world, producing 60 percent of the nation's steel. To limit competition, railroads agreed to mergers and standardized shipping rates. "Trusts" - huge combinations of corporations - tried to establish monopoly control over some industries, especially oil.

These giant enterprises could produce goods efficiently and sell them cheaply, but they could also set prices and destroy smaller competitors. Farmers in particular complained that railroads charged high rates for hauling produce. Most Americans, then as now, admired business success and believed in free enterprise; but they also believed that the power of monopolistic corporations had to be limited to protect the rights of the individual.

LABOR, IMMIGRANTS, FARMERS

Industrialization brought with it the rise of organized labor. Many of the workers in these new industries were immigrants. Between 1865 and 1910, 25 million people came to the United States, many of them settling in large enclaves in major American cities. At the insistence of laborers who feared Asian immigrants because of their willingness to accept low wages for unskilled work, federal legislation barred the entry of Chinese in 1882. The Japanese were largely excluded in 1907, but most other arrivals were free to enter the United States. Immigrants often encountered prejudice from native-born Americans - who, of course, were themselves descended from immigrants. Still, America offered the immigrants more religious liberty, more political freedom and greater economic opportunities than they could find in their native lands. The

first-generation immigrant usually had to struggle with poverty, but his children and grandchildren could achieve affluence and professional success. Since the founding of Jamestown, the first permanent European settlement in North America, in 1607, the United States has accepted two-thirds of the world's immigrants - a total of 50 million people.

OVERSEAS EXPANSION

With the exception of the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867, American territorial expansion had come to a virtual standstill in 1848. However, in about 1890, as many European nations were expanding their colonial empires, a new spirit entered American foreign policy, largely following northern European patterns. Politicians, newspapers, editors and Protestant missionaries proclaimed that the "Anglo Saxon race" had a duty to bring the benefits of Western civilization to the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

At the height of this period (1895), revolt against Spanish colonialism erupted in Cuba. The United States had by now built modern navy. American troops landed in Cuba, and the United States Navy destroyed two Spanish fleets. The Spanish government asked for peace terms. The United States acquired much of Spain's empire - Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Guam. The United States also annexed the Hawaiian islands.

In comparison to the empire building of the European powers, America's acquisitive period was limited in scope and of short duration. After the Spanish-American War, Americans justified their actions to themselves on the grounds that they were preparing underdeveloped nations for democracy. But could Americans be imperialists? After all, they had once been a colonial people and had rebelled against foreign rule. The principle of national self-determination was written into the Declaration of Independence. In the Philippines, insurgents who had fought against Spanish colonialism were soon fighting American occupation troops. Many intellectuals, such as the philosopher William James and Harvard University president Charles Eliot, denounced these actions as a betrayal of American values.

Despite the criticisms of the anti-imperialists, most Americans believed that the Spanish conflict had been appropriate and they were eager to assert American power. President Theodore Roosevelt proposed to build a canal in Central America, and in 1903 he offered to buy a strip of land in what is now Panama from the Colombian government. When Colombia refused Roosevelt's offer, a rebellion broke out in the area designated as the canal site. Roosevelt supported the revolt and quickly recognized the independence from Colombia of Panama, which sold the

canal zone to the United States a few days later. In 1914, the Panama Canal was opened to traffic.

American troops left Cuba in 1902, but the new republic was required to grant naval bases to the United States. Also, until 1934, Cuba was barred from making treaties that might bring the island into the orbit of another foreign power. The Philippines were granted limited self-government in 1907 and complete independence in 1946. In 1953, Puerto Rico became a self-governing commonwealth within the United States, and in 1959 Hawaii was admitted as the 50th state of the Union.

PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

While Americans were venturing abroad, they were also taking a fresh look at social problems at home. Although the economy was booming and prosperity was spreading, up to half of all industrial workers still lived in poverty - and many of those workers were women and children. New York, Boston, Chicago and San Francisco could now boast impressive museums, universities, public libraries - and crowded slums. Before 1900, the prevailing economic dogma had been laissez-faire - the idea that government should interfere with business as little as possible. After 1900, the fashionable ideology was "Progressivism" - a movement to reform society and individuals through government action.

Social workers now went into the slums to set up settlement houses, which provided health services and recreational facilities for the poor. Prohibitionists demanded an end to the sale of liquor - partly to prevent the suffering that alcoholic workers could inflict on their spouses and children. In the cities, reform politicians fought corruption, regulated public transportation, built municipally owned utilities and reduced taxes through more efficient government. Many states passed laws restricting child labor, protecting women workers, limiting work hours and providing workmen's compensation. Women agitated for the right to vote, and by 1914 several states had granted that right.

President Theodore Roosevelt strengthened federal regulation of the railroads and enforced the Antitrust Act against several large corporations, including the Standard Oil Company. In 1902, Roosevelt ended a coal strike by threatening to send in troops - not against the workers, but against uncooperative mine owners. This was a turning point in American industrial policy: no longer would the government automatically side with management in labor disputes. The Roosevelt administration also promoted conservation. Vast reserves of forest land, coal, oil, minerals and water were saved for future generations. The Progressive Movement was primarily a movement of economists, sociologists, technicians and civil servants-social engineers who believed

that scientific and cost-efficient solutions could be found to all political problems.

Some Americans favored more radical ideologies. The Socialist party, under Eugene V. Debs, advocated a peaceful, gradual, democratic transition to a state-run economy. Socialism has never had much appeal in the United States, where economic debates have generally concentrated on the question of whether and to what extent, the government should regulate private enterprise.

WAR AND PEACE

When the First World War erupted in Europe in August 1914, Wilson urged a foreign policy of strict neutrality. But many Americans were outraged by Germany's invasion of Belgium, and the press published reports (often exaggerated) of German atrocities against Belgian civilians. Americans were also incensed when, in May 1915, a German submarine sank the British liner Lusitania, killing 128 American passengers.

In April 1917, Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war - not just to defeat Germany or to end submarine warfare, but to secure "the rights and liberties...of free people everywhere." For Wilson, the war would be a great crusade for world peace and national self-determination. "The world must be made safe for democracy," Wilson proclaimed as America entered "the war to end all wars."

When war was declared, the American army was a small force of 200,000 soldiers. Millions of men had to be drafted, trained, equipped and shipped across a submarine-infested ocean to Europe. A full year passed before the United States Army was ready to make a major contribution to the Allied war effort.

In the spring of 1918, the Germans launched a last desperate offensive, in the hope of reaching Paris before the American army was prepared to fight. But a few American divisions were available to assist the French and the British in repelling this attack. By fall, Germany's position was hopeless: Its armies were retreating in the face of a relentless American buildup.

In October, the German government asked for peace, and an armistice was declared on November 11.

In 1919, Wilson went to Europe to draft the peace treaty. He was greeted by cheering crowds in the Allied capitals, but the welcome turned sour when negotiations began at Versailles. Despite Wilson's protests, the Allies imposed crushing reparations on Germany and divided its colonies among themselves. Wilson did succeed in establishing the League of Nations, but many Americans feared that such a world organization might drag the United States into another foreign war. A group of Republican

senators attached reservations to the Versailles Treaty: They would accept the League of Nations only on the understanding that Congress, not the League, retained control over American armed forces. Britain and France did not object to that reservation, but Wilson stubbornly refused to modify the treaty. The president and the Congress deadlocked over this issue. The United States never ratified the Versailles Treaty and never joined the League of Nations.

ISOLATION AND PROSPERITY

The majority of Americans did not mourn the defeated treaty, for they had grown disillusioned with the results of the war. After 1920, the United States turned inward and withdrew from European affairs.

At the same time, Americans were growing increasingly suspicious of and hostile toward foreigners in their midst. In 1919, a series of terrorist bombings produced what became known as the "Red Scare." Under the authority of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer, raids of political meetings were conducted, arrests were made and several hundred foreign-born political radicals - anarchists, socialists and communists - were deported, although most of them were innocent of any crime. In 1921, two Italian anarchists, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, were convicted of murder on the basis of very dubious evidence. Intellectuals protested that Sacco and Vanzetti had been condemned for their political beliefs, but the two men were denied a retrial and, after exhausting all legal procedures, were electrocuted in 1927.

In 1921, Congress had enacted immigration limits, which were tightened in 1924 and again in 1929. These restrictions favored immigrants from Britain, Ireland, Scandinavia and Germany - "Anglo-Saxon" and "Nordic" stock. Small quotas were reserved for eastern and southern Europeans; none at all for Asians.

But the 1920s were anything but normal. It was an extraordinary and contradictory decade, when hedonism and bohemianism coexisted with a puritanical conservatism. It was the age of Prohibition. In 1920, alcoholic beverages were outlawed by a Constitutional Amendment. But drinkers cheerfully evaded the law in thousands of "speakeasies" (illegal bars), and gangsters made fortunes supplying illegal liquor. The Ku Klux Klan, revived in 1915, attracted millions of followers and terrorized blacks, Catholics, Jews and immigrants. At the same time, there was a flowering of black literature - the "Harlem Renaissance" - and jazz caught the imagination of many white Americans, including composer George Gershwin. Also, in 1928 Democrat Alfred E. Smith became the first Roman Catholic to run for president. In 1927, Charles Lindbergh excited the nation when he completed the first nonstop airflight from New York

to Paris. In an age of materialism and disenchantment, this modest young aviator reaffirmed for Americans the importance of individual heroism.

For business, the 1920s were golden years of prosperity. The United States was now a consumer society, with a booming market for radios, home appliances, synthetic textiles and plastics. The businessman became a popular hero; the creation of wealth a noble calling. One of the most admired men of the decade was Henry Ford, who had introduced the assembly line into automobile production. Ford was able to pay high wages and still earn enormous profits by manufacturing the Model T - a simple, basic car that millions of buyers could afford. For a moment, it seemed that America had solved the eternal problem of producing and distributing wealth.

There were, however, fatal flaws in the prosperity of the 1920s. With profits soaring and interest rates low, plenty of money was available for investment, but much of that capital went into reckless speculation. Thousands of millions of dollars poured into the stock market, and frantic bidding boosted the prices of shares far above their real value. Many investors bought stocks "on margin," borrowing money from their brokers to cover up to 90 percent of the purchase price. As long as the market prospered, speculators could make fortunes overnight, but they could be ruined just as quickly if stock prices fell. The bubble of this fragile prosperity finally burst in 1929 in a worldwide depression, and by 1932 Americans were confronting the worst economic crisis of modern times. That collapse, in turn, led to the most profound revolution in the history of American social thought and economic policy.

GREAT DEPRESSION

On October 24, 1929 - "Black Thursday" - a wave of panic selling of stocks swept the New York Stock Exchange. Once started, the collapse of share and other security prices could not be halted. By 1932, thousands of banks and over 100,000 businesses had failed. Industrial production was cut in half, farm income had fallen by more than half, wages had decreased 60 percent, new investment was down 90 percent and one out of every four workers was unemployed.

The Republican president, Herbert Hoover asked employers not to cut wages, and he tried to reduce interest rates and support farm prices. In 1932, he approved the creation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which lent money to troubled banks.

But these measures were inadequate. To masses of unemployed workers, Hoover seemed uncaring and unable to help them. In the 1932 election, he was resoundingly defeated by Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt, who promised "a New Deal for the American people."

Within three months - the historic "Hundred Days" - Roosevelt had rushed through Congress a great number of laws to aid the recovery of the economy. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) put young men to work in reforestation and flood control projects. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) aided state and local relief funds, which had been exhausted by the Depression. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) paid farmers to reduce production thus raising crop prices. The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) built a network of dams in the Tennessee River area, in the southeastern region of the United States, to generate electricity, control floods and manufacture fertilizer. And the National Recovery Administration (NRA) regulated "fair competition" among businesses and ensured bargaining rights and minimum wages for workers.

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was one of the most effective of the New Deal measures, probably because it was based on the belief, originating with the Puritans and almost universally accepted among later Americans that working for one's livelihood is honorable and dignified, but receiving help which one doesn't earn - "charity" - is demeaning and robs people of their independence and their sense of self worth. Financed by taxes collected by the federal government, the WPA created millions of jobs by undertaking the construction of roads, bridges, airports, hospitals, parks and public buildings. Roosevelt's New Deal programs did not end the Depression. Although the economy improved as a result of this program of government intervention, full recovery was finally brought about by the defense buildup prior to America's entering the Second World War.

WORLD WAR II

In September 1939, war erupted in Europe. Roosevelt announced that the United States would be neutral, but not indifferent. In September 1940, when Britain was threatened by a German invasion, the United States gave the British 50 overage destroyers in return for naval bases in the western Atlantic. Two weeks later Congress approved the first peacetime military conscription in American history. By early 1941 Britain could no longer afford to purchase American goods, so Roosevelt persuaded Congress to enact a "lend-lease" bill. Through this program the United States eventually supplied $13.5 thousand million in war supplies to Britain and another $9 thousand million to the Soviet Union.

In the Far East, Japanese forces had invaded Manchuria (1931), China (1937) and French Indochina (July 1941). Roosevelt responded to this aggression by banning American exports of scrap iron, steel and oil to Japan and by freezing Japanese credits in the United States.

On December 7, 1941, carrier-based Japanese bombers struck at Pearl Harbor naval base in Hawaii. The surprise attack sank or damaged eight battleships and destroyed almost 200 aircraft. The United States declared war on Japan. Four days later, Japan's allies Germany and Italy, declared war on the United States.

In 1941, Japan possessed a large navy and a greater number of aircraft than could be mobilized by the United States. Prospects for a Japanese military victory depended on Japan's being able to defeat the Americans before the United States could retool its mighty industrial complex to produce military equipment. At this Japan failed, and the United States was soon producing huge numbers of ships, aircraft and weaponry.

Spurred by the fear that Germany might develop a nuclear weapon, the government spent $2 thousand million on the top-secret Manhattan Project, which produced and tested an atomic bomb in 1945.

American, British and Soviet war planners agreed to concentrate on defeating Germany first. British and American forces landed in North Africa in November 1942, then proceeded to Sicily and the Italian mainland in 1943, liberating Rome on June 4,1944, after months of bitter fighting. Two days later, June 6, "D-Day," Allied troops landed in Normandy in the largest amphibious operation in military history. Paris was liberated on August 24, and by September, American units were across the German border. In December 1944, however, the Germans launched a ferocious assault in the Ardennes region of Belgium. It took a week for the Allies to regroup and a month to counterattack and to force a German withdrawal in what became known as the "Battle of the Bulge." This proved to be the last German offensive of World War II. Finally, on April 25,1945, the western Allied forces met advancing Soviet troops at the town of Torgau, Germany. The Germans surrendered May 5, 1945.

In the Pacific, Japanese armed forces achieved a series of early victories. By May 1942, they had overrun the Philippines and forced the surrender of 11,500 Americans and Filipinos, who were treated brutally by their captors. In an atmosphere of war hysteria, 110,000 Japanese-Americans living in America's western states were forced into relocation camps. Government officials justified this action as a precaution against sabotage and espionage, but no Japanese-Americans were convicted of any act of disloyalty during the war, and many of them fought bravely in the armed forces.

By May 8,1942, the Japanese threat to Australia was checked at the Battle of the Coral Sea. In June, the main Japanese fleet, steaming toward Hawaii, was repulsed at the Battle of Midway, with the loss of four aircraft carriers.

Over the next three years, American forces advanced toward Japan by "island-hopping"-capturing some strategic islands in the Pacific and bypassing others.

American forces now prepared to invade the Japanese home islands. In the hope of bringing the war to a swift end, President Harry Truman ordered the use of the atomic bomb against Hiroshima (August 6) and Nagasaki (August 9). Japan agreed to surrender on August 14. Nearly 200,000 civilians died in the nuclear attacks, but military experts agree that the casualties, Japanese and American, would have been far greater if the Allies had been forced to invade Japan.

COLD WAR

After the war, tensions quickly developed between the United States and the Soviet Union. At the Yalta Conference of February 1945, Roosevelt, Churchill and Soviet leader Josef Stalin promised free elections for all the liberated nations of Europe. The western Allies restored democracy in Western Europe and Japan, but Soviet forces imposed Communist dictatorships in Eastern Europe.

In 1947, Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed a massive aid program to help rebuild destroyed Europe. The U.S.S.R. and the Eastern European nations were invited to participate in the Marshall Plan, but the Soviets rejected the offer. Americans realized that an impoverished Europe in which deprivation and despair was widespread, would be susceptible to social and political movements hostile to western traditions of individual freedom and democratic government. The Marshall Plan was a generous and thoroughly successful program. Over four years it paid out $12.5 thousand million in aid and restored the economies of Westem Europe.

In May 1947, the United States began sending military aid to the Greek government, which was fighting Communist guerrillas, and to Turkey, which was being pressured by the Soviets for territorial concessions. In April 1949 the United States had allied with Canada, Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Portugal to form the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

On June 25,1950, armed with Soviet weapons and acting with Stalin's approval, North Korea's army invaded South Korea. President Truman immediately secured a commitment from the United Nations to defend South Korea, and American troops were sent into battle, later joined by contingents from Britain, Turkey, Australia, France and the Philippines. By September 1950, the North Koreans had conquered most of South Korea. In November, however, Chinese troops counterattacked and forced the U.N. army to retreat. President Truman believed that such

a strategy would lead to a wider conflict. Peace talks began three months later, but the fighting continued until June 1953, and the final settlement left Korea still divided.

Frustrated by the Korean stalemate and angered by the Communist takeovers in Eastern Europe and China, many Americans looked for "those responsible" and came to believe that their government too, might have been infiltrated by Communist conspirators. Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy asserted that the State Department and the army were riddled with Communists. McCarthy's sensational investigations uncovered no subversives, but his accusations and slanders destroyed the careers of some diplomats. In 1954, in the course of the broadcasts on national television, McCarthy was exposed a fraud, and he later was censured by the Senate. Toleration of political dissent is one of the most fundamental and essential of American traditions. The McCarthy era - like the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 and the excesses of the Red Scare of 1919-1920 - was a serious lapse from this tradition.

PROSPERITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS

From 1945 until 1970, the United States enjoyed a long period of economic growth, interrupted only by brief and fairly mild recessions. For the first time, the great majority of Americans could enjoy a comfortable standard of living. By 1960, 55 percent of all households owned washing machines, 77 percent owned cars, 90 percent had television sets and nearly all had refrigerators.

At the same time, the United States was moving slowly in the direction of racial justice. In 1941, the threat of black protests persuaded President Roosevelt to ban discrimination in war industries. In 1948, President Truman ended racial segregation in the armed forces and in all federal agencies. In 1954, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that segregation in the public schools was unconstitutional; nevertheless, southern states continued to resist integration. In 1955, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a boycott of segregated public transportation that eventually ended segregation on city buses in Montgomery, Alabama. In 1957, the governor of Arkansas tried to prevent black students from enrolling an all-white high school in the state capital of Little Rock. To enforce obedience to the law requiring integration, President Dwight D. Eisenhower sent in federal troops.

That same year, Americans were jolted to learn that the Soviet Union had launched Sputnik, the Earth's first man-made satellite. This was a shock for the United States, a nation that had always taken pride in its technologic expertise. In response, the American federal government increased efforts already underway to produce a satellite and spent more money on education, especially in the sciences.

NEW FRONTIER AND GREAT SOCIETY

In 1960, Democrat John F. Kennedy was elected president. Young, energetic and handsome, Kennedy promised to "get the country moving again", to forge ahead toward a "New Frontier." But one of Kennedy's first foreign policy ventures was a disaster. In an effort to overthrow the Communist dictatorship of Fidel Castro in Cuba, Kennedy supported an invasion of the island nation by a group of Cuban exiles who had been trained by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). In April 1961 the exiles landed at the Bay of Pigs and were almost immediately captured.

In October 1962, observation planes discovered that the Soviet Union was installing nuclear missiles in Cuba, close enough to strike American cities in a matter of minutes. Kennedy imposed a blockade on Cuba. Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev finally agreed to remove the missiles, in return for an American promise not to invade Cuba.

In April 1961, the Soviets scored another triumph in space: Yuri Gagarin became the first man to orbit the Earth. President Kennedy responded with a pledge that the United States would land a man on the moon before the end of the decade. In February 1962, John Glenn made the first American orbital flight, and he was welcomed home as a hero-much as Charles Lindbergh had been celebrated 35 years earlier after he made the first nonstop solo flight across the Atlantic. It took $24 thousand million and years of research but Kennedy's pledge was fulfilled in July 1969, when Neil Armstrong stepped out of the Apollo 11 spacecraft onto the surface of the moon.

In the 1960s, Martin Luther King, Jr. led a nonviolent campaign to desegregate southern restaurants, interstate buses theaters and hotels. His followers were met by hostile police, violent mobs, tear gas, fire hoses and electric cattle prods. The Kennedy administration tried to protect civil rights workers and secure voting rights for southern blacks.

In 1963 Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. Kennedy was not a universally popular president, but his death was a terrible shock to the American people.

The new president was Lyndon Johnson, who had been vice president under Kennedy and succeeded to the office on the death of the president. He persuaded Congress to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed racial discrimination in public accommodations and in any business or institution receiving federal money. Johnson was elected to a new term with widespread popular support in 1964. Encouraged by a great election victory, Johnson pushed through Congress many social programs: federal aid to education, the arts and the humanities; health insurance for the elderly (Medicare) and for the poor (Medicaid); low-cost housing and urban renewal. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 finally

enabled all black Americans to vote. Discrimination in immigration was also ended: national origins quotas were abolished allowing a great increase in entry visas for Asians.

Although most Americans had by now achieved affluence, Michael Harrington's book The Other America (1962) identified persistent pockets of poverty - in urban slums, in most black neighborhoods and among the poor whites of the eastern Appalachian mountains. President Johnson responded with his "War on Poverty," which included special preschool education for poor children, vocational training for school dropouts and community service jobs for slum youths.

VIETNAM WAR

American involvement in Vietnam did not begin with President Johnson. When Communist and nationalist rebels fought French colonialism in Indochina after World War II, President Truman sent military aid to France. After the French withdrew from Southeast Asia in 1954, President Eisenhower dispatched American advisers and aid to help set up a democratic, pro-Western government in South Vietnam. Under President Kennedy, thousands of military officers trained South Vietnamese soldiers and sometimes flew Vietnamese warplanes into combat.

In August 1964, two American destroyers sailing in the Gulf of Tonkin reported attacks by North Vietnamese torpedo boats. President Johnson launched air strikes against North Vietnamese naval bases in retaliation. The first American combat soldiers were sent to Vietnam in March 1965. By 1968, 500,000 American troops had arrived. Meanwhile, the Air Force gradually stepped up B-52 raids against North Vietnam, first bombing military bases and routes, later hitting factories and power stations near Hanoi.

Demonstrations protesting American involvement in this undeclared and, many felt, unjustified war broke out on college campuses in the United States. There were some violent clashes between students and police. In October 1967, 200,000 demonstrators demanding peace marched on the Pentagon in Washington.

At the same time, unrest in the cities also erupted, as younger and more militant black leaders were denouncing as ineffectual the nonviolent tactics of Martin Luther King. King's assassination in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1968, triggered race riots in over 100 cities. Business districts in black neighborhoods were burned and 43 people were killed - most of them black.

Ever increasing numbers of Americans from all walks of life opposed the involvement of the United States in the war in Indochina, and in the 1968 election, President Johnson faced strong challenges. On May

31, facing a humiliating defeat at the polls and a seemingly endless conflict in Vietnam, Johnson withdrew from the presidential race and offered to negotiate an end to the Vietnam War. The voters narrowly elected Republican Richard Nixon. As president, Nixon appealed to "Middle America" - the "great silent majority" who were unhappy with violence and protest at home.

In Indochina, Nixon pursued a policy of "Vietnamization," gradually replacing American soldiers with Vietnamese. But heavy bombing of Communist bases continued, and in the spring of 1970 Nixon sent American soldiers into Cambodia. That action caused the most massive and violent campus protests in the nation's history. During a demonstration at Kent State University in Ohio National Guardsmen killed four students.

Then, as the American people perceived that the war was being ended, the situation quite suddenly changed: quiet returned to the nation's colleges and cities. By 1973, Nixon had signed a peace treaty with North Vietnam, brought American soldiers home, and ended conscription. Students began rejecting radical politics and generally became more oriented toward individual careers. Many blacks were still living in poverty, but many others were finally moving into well-paid professions. The fact that many big cities - Cleveland, Newark, Los Angeles, Washington, Detroit, Atlanta had elected black mayors contributed to the easing of urban tensions.

DECADES 0F CHANGE

Political activism however, did not disappear in the 1970s - it was rechanneled into other causes. Some young people worked for the enforcement of antipollution laws or joined consumer-protection groups or campaigned against the nuclear power industry. Following the example of blacks, other minorities - Hispanics, Asians, American Indians, homosexuals - demanded a broadening of their rights.

Women had been gradually moving into the labor force since World War II, and in the 1970s a women's liberation movement pressed for legal abortion, day-care centers, equal pay and jobs for women. In 1973, the Supreme Court banned most restrictions on abortion, but that ruling only made more difficult a furious national debate: feminists defended abortion as a Constitutional right; others denounced it as the destruction of innocent life.

President Nixon achieved two major diplomatic goals: re-establishing formal relations with the People's Republic of China and negotiating the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I) with the Soviet Union.

During the election campaign, however, five men were arrested for breaking into the Democratic party headquarters at the Watergate building in Washington, D.C. Journalists investigating the incident discovered that the burglars were employed by President Nixon's reelection committee. The White House made the scandal worse by trying to cover up its connection with the break-in. In July 1973, it was revealed that President Nixon had recorded his office conversations concerning the Watergate affair. Congressional committees, special prosecutors, federal judges and the Supreme Court all demanded that the President surrender the recordings, and after prolonged resistance he finally made them public. The tapes revealed that President Nixon was directly involved in the cover up. By the summer of 1974, it was clear that Congress was likely to impeach and to convict the president. On August 9, Richard Nixon became the only American president to resign his office.

Republican Gerald Ford, who succeeded to the presidency on the resignation of Richard Nixon, was likable and conciliatory. Ford did much to restore the trust of the citizens, though some voters never forgave him for pardoning his former boss, Richard Nixon.

The 1976 election was won by Democrat Jimmy Carter, former governor of Georgia. Carter had limited political experience but many voters now preferred an "outsider" - someone who was not part of the Washington establishment. Precisely because he was an outsider, President Carter had difficulty working with Congress. He also could not control the chief economic problem of the 1970s - inflation. By 1980, inflation had soared to an annual rate of 13.5 percent, and the nation was experiencing a period of economic difficulty. Carter signed a second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) with the Soviet Union, but it was never ratified by the Senate after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. He also seemed ineffectual in the face of another crisis. In 1979, Iranian radicals stormed the United States embassy in Teheran and held 53 Americans hostage. Carter's greatest success was the negotiating of the Camp David Accord between Israel and Egypt, which led to an historic peace treaty between the two nations.

In the presidential race of 1980, American voters rejected Carter's bid for a second term, and elected Ronald Reagan, a conservative Republican and former governor of California. As a result of the election, the Republican party gained a majority in the Senate for the first time in 26 years. By giving Ronald Reagan an overwhelming election victory, the American public expressed a desire for change in the style and substance of the nation's leadership. Throughout his presidency, Reagan demonstrated the ability to instill in Americans pride in their country, and a sense of optimism about the future.

Reagan's domestic program was rooted in the belief that the nation would grow and prosper if the power of the private economic sector were unleashed. The administration also sought and won significant increases in defense spending.

Despite a growing federal budget deficit, by 1983 the economy as a whole had rebounded, and the United States entered into one of the longest periods of sustained economic growth since World War II.

In foreign policy, President Reagan sought a more assertive role for the nation. The United States confronted an insurgency in El Salvador, and the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. In 1983 U.S. forces landed in Grenada to safeguard American lives and to oust a regime which took power after the assassination of the country's elected Prime Minister. The U.S. also sent peace-keeping troops to Lebanon, in an effort to bolster a moderate, pro-Western government. The mission ended tragically when 241 American Marines were killed in a terrorist bombing. In 1986, U.S. military forces struck targets in Libya, in retaliation for Libyan-instigated attacks on American personnel in Europe. Additionally, the United States and other Western European nations kept the vital Persian Gulf oil-shipping lanes open during the Iran-Iraq conflict, by escorting tankers though the war zone.

U.S. relations with the Soviet Union during the Reagan years fluctuated between political confrontation and far-reaching arms control agreements. In December 1987, the U.S. and the Soviet Union signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty which provided for the elimination of a whole category of ballistic missiles. However, efforts to make major cuts in other strategic weapons systems were not concluded, in large part due to the Reagan Administration's strong desire to develop the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), commonly known as the "star wars" ballistic missile defense system.

On January 28, 1986, after 24 successful flights, the space shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds after liftoff, killing all on board. The Challenger tragedy was a reminder of the limits of technology at a time when another technological revolution, in computers, was rapidly transforming the way in which millions of Americans worked and lived. It was estimated that by mid-decade Americans possessed more than 30 million computers. By late 1988, however, the U.S. successfully launched a redesigned space shuttle Discovery, which deployed a satellite in the first shuttle flight since the Challenger disaster.

The Reagan Administration suffered a defeat in the November 1986 congressional elections when the Democrats regained majority control of the U.S. Senate. However, the most serious issue confronting the administration at that time was the revelation that the U.S. had secretly sold arms to Iran in an attempt to win freedom for American

hostages held in Lebanon, and to finance the Nicaraguan contras during a period when Congress had prohibited such aid. During the Congressional hearings which followed, the country addressed fundamental questions about the public's right to know, and the proper balance between the executive and legislative branches of government. Despite these problems, President Reagan enjoyed unusually strong popularity at the end of his second term of office.

Reagan's successor, George Bush, benefited greatly from the popularity of the former president.

The U.S.-Soviet dialogue continued to broaden and deepen during the first year of the Bush Administration, at a time of ferment and remarkable political change in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe - symbolized most eloquently by the opening of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. In the two years following that event, the world witnessed the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of its dominating influence in Eastern Europe. The Bush Administration promoted the concept of a "new world order," based on a new set of international realities, priorities, and moral principles.

The idea of a ‘new world order’ faced its first test when Iraq invaded oil-rich Kuwait in August 1990. In January 1991, when Iraq did not comply with United Nations resolutions designed to force its withdrawal from Kuwait U.S. military forces, as part of a multinational coalition, liberated Kuwait in a swift and decisive victory. And when the Gulf War was won, in large part because of George Bush's efforts, he reaped an extraordinary political benefit. ‘I think Desert Storm lifted the morale of our country and healed some of the wounds of Vietnam’.

Bush's politics left him with the highest approval ratings of any President in the history of the Gallup polls. By most accounts, that should have given him a second term. But it didn't. And it didn't because the economy had weakened and the voters took their frustrations to the ballot box. Bush received the lowest percentage of votes of any sitting President in eighty years.

President Clinton focused on the country’s internal problems, especially the economy and health care, rather than on foreign affairs. Clinton promised in his inaugural speech “an end to the era of deadlock and drift.” He immediately signed orders overturning restrictions on abortions that had been put in place during the 12 years the Republicans occupied the White House. In little more than two weeks, he signed his first major piece of legislation, a family leave law that required companies with more than 50 workers to allow workers up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave a year to cope with family issues such as childbirth and illness.

Although the United States was no longer confronted by the Cold War, during his first term Clinton faced difficult decisions regarding bloody conflicts in Rwanda, Somalia, and Haiti, all places where the interests of the United States were not clear.

In November 1995 the Clinton administration hosted peace talks between the warring parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A peace agreement was reached that left the country as a single state made up of two separate areas with a central government. As part of the agreement, Clinton pledged to send American soldiers to Bosnia and Herzegovina to help NATO troops in providing humanitarian aid and policing a zone between the two factions.

In 1999 America made several bomb attacks on Serbia.

Much of Clinton's presidency was overshadowed by numerous scandals, including thre accusation of lying under oath about sexual encounters with Monica Lewinsky. Clinton was impeached on December 19, 1998 by the House of Representatives on grounds of perjury and obstruction of justice, becoming the first elected U.S. President to be impeached (and the second ever, the previous one being Andrew Johnson). The Senate, however, voted not to convict Clinton allowing Clinton to stay in office for the remainder of his second term.

Clinton presided over the period of longest steady growth of the economy in modern American history. However, his active role in this development is debatable.

Bush narrowly won the 2000 election against Democrat Al Gore, who captured a slim majority of the popular vote but lost to Bush on the state-by-state electoral race when the Supreme Court stopped Gore's bid for a recount in Florida.

After a slow start, Bush's approval ratings soared in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001,terrorist attacks and spiked again after the U.S.-led war against Iraq.

His approval ratings dropped in mid-2003, as Democrats accused his administration of stretching the truth about Iraq's attempts to build nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Bush's main justification for war was the assertion that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, but none has been found.

Indeed, Bush's approval ratings rebounded by the end of 2003 after the capture of Saddam Hussein. But even Republicans strategists say there will be trouble for Bush if postwar Iraq continues to claim the lives of American troops.

The Bush Administration has been criticized for holding several hundred individuals, the great majority captured in the combat zone in Afghanistan and accused of connections to Al-Qaeda or the Taliban at

Guantanamo Bay, Cuba without trial. Critics have stated that they must be treated as prisoners of war under theGeneva Convention.

Democrats also blamed Bush for a sagging economy, high unemployment rate and loss of manufacturing jobs in the United States.

But Bush has advantages, notably personal qualities that make him likable and a fight against terrorism that has the public secure with his stewardship.

In 2009 Barack Hussein Obama became the first black president of the United States.

POLITICAL SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES

The United States is a democracy. But what do Americans mean when they use that word? Abraham Lincoln, one of the best-loved and most respected of America's presidents, said that the United States had a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people." He called the United States "a nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." No one has formulated a better way of describing the principles of the American political system as Americans understand it. The Constitution, laws and traditions of the United States give the people the right to determine who will be the leader of their nation, who will make the laws and what the laws will be. The people have the power to change the system. The Constitution guarantees individual freedom to all.

CONSTITUTION

On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress issued a Declaration of Independence, primarily written by Thomas Jefferson, a farmer and lawyer from the colony of Virginia. This document listed many grievances against the king and declared that from that time the "United Colonies" were no longer colonies of England. The Declaration described them as "free and independent states" and officially named them the United States of America.

Besides declaring the colonies to be a new nation, the Declaration of Independence set forth some of the principles of American democracy. The document says that all people are created equal, that all have the right to "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness," and that governments obtain their powers from "the consent of the governed." The Declaration, and the Constitution after it, combined America's colonial experience with reflection upon the thought of political philosophers such as John Locke to produce the new concept of a democracy governed by the

people's representatives for the purpose of protecting the rights of individuals.

In May 1787, a meeting, later known as the Constitutional Convention, began in Philadelphia. George Washington, the military hero of the War of Independence, was the presiding officer.

In the course of the Convention, the delegates designed a new form of government for the United States. The plan for the government was written in very simple language in a document called the Constitution of the United States. The Constitution set up a federal system with a strong central government. A federal system is one in which power is shared between a central authority and its constituent parts, with some rights reserved to each. The Constitution also called for the election of a national leader, or president. It provided that federal laws would be made only by a Congress made up of representatives elected by the people. It also provided for a national court system headed by a Supreme Court.

In writing the Constitution, the delegates had to deal with two main fears shared by most Americans.

One fear was that one person or group, including the majority, might become too powerful or be able to seize control of the country and create a tyranny. To guard against this possibility, the delegates set up a government consisting of three parts, or branches the executive, the legislative and the judicial. Each branch has powers that the others do not have and each branch has a way of counteracting and limiting any wrongful action by another branch.

Another fear was that the new central government might weaken or take away the power of the state governments to run their own affairs. To deal with this the Constitution specified exactly what power the central government had and which power was reserved for the states. The states were allowed to run their own governments as they wished, provided that their governments were democratic.

To emphasize its intent, the Constitution opens with a statement, called a Preamble, which makes it clear that the government is set up by "We, the People" and purpose is to "promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity" (descendants).

Representatives of various states noted that the Constitution did not have any words guaranteeing the freedoms or the basic rights and privileges of citizens. So, a "Bill of Rights" was added to the Constitution.

BILL OF RIGHTS

To all Americans, another basic foundation of their representative democracy is the Bill of Rights, adopted in 1791. This consists of 10 very

short paragraphs which guarantee freedom and individual rights and forbid interference with the lives of individuals by the government. Each paragraph is an Amendment to the original Constitution.

In the Bill of Rights, Americans are guaranteed freedom of religion, of speech and of the press. They have the right to assemble in public places, to protest government actions and to demand change. They have the right to own weapons if they wish. Because of the Bill of Rights, neither police nor soldiers can stop and search a person without good reason. They also cannot search a person's home without legal permission from a court to do so.

The Bill of Rights guarantees Americans the right to a speedy trial if accused of a crime. The trial must be by a jury and the accused person must be allowed representation by a lawyer and must be able to call in witnesses to speak for him or her. Cruel and unusual punishment is forbidden.

There were 17 other amendments to the Constitution as of 1991. That is not many changes considering that the Constitution was written in 1787. Only a few need to be mentioned here. One forbids slavery and three others guarantee citizenship and full rights of citizenship to all people regardless of race. Another gives women the right to vote and another lowered the national voting age to 18 years.

Although the world has changed greatly in the past 200 years, it has proved possible for the Constitution to be viewed as a living document, one that could be interpreted by scholars and judges who have been called upon to apply its provisions to circumstances unforeseen at the time it was written.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The legislative branch is made up of elected representatives from all of the states and is the only branch that can make federal laws, levy federal taxes, declare war or put foreign treaties into effect. It consists of a Congress that is divided into two groups, called houses:

The House of Representatives comprises lawmakers who serve two-year terms. Each House member represents a district in his or her home state. The number of districts in a state is determined by a count of the population taken every 10 years. The most heavily populated have more districts and, therefore, more representatives than the smaller states, some of which have only one. In the 1980s, there are 435 representatives in the United States House of Representatives.

A representative must be at least 25 years of age, a U.S. citizen for at least 7 years, and a resident of the state in which he or she is elected, but not necessarily a resident of the congressional district that he or she represents. Each representative has one vote.

The presiding officer of the House of Representatives is the Speaker of the House, who is first, after the vice president, in order of succession to the presidency. The Speaker is elected by the House. The Speaker appoints all select committees and may vote, but generally does so only to break a tie.

The Senate comprises lawmakers who serve six-year terms. Each state, regardless of population, has two senators. That assures that small states have an equal voice in one of the houses of Congress. The terms of the senators are staggered so that only one-third the Senate is elected every two years. That assures that there are some experienced senators in Congress after each election.

A senator must be at least 30 years of age, a U.S. citizen for at least 9 years, and a resident of the state in which he or she is elected. Each senator has one vote. The presiding officer of the Senate is the U.S. vice president, whose official senatorial title is president of the Senate, and who is addressed in the Senate as “Mr. President.” The vice president may vote only when the Senate is deadlocked by a tie.

The main duty of the Congress is to make laws, including those which levy taxes that pay the work of the federal government. A law begins as a proposal called a "bill." It is read, studied in committees, commented on and amended in the Senate or House chamber in which it was introduced. It is then voted upon.

If it passes, it is sent to the other house where a similar procedure occurs. Members of both houses work together in "conference committees" if the chambers have passed different versions of the same bill. Groups who try to persuade congressmen to vote for or against a bill are known as "lobbies." When both houses of Congress pass a bill on which they agree, it is sent to the president for his signature. Only after it is signed does the bill become a law.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

The chief executive of the United States is the president, who, together with the vice president, is elected to a four-year term. Under a Constitutional Amendment passed in 1951, a president can be elected to only two terms. Except for the right of succession to the presidency, the vice president's only Constitutional duties are to serve as the presiding officer of the Senate; the vice president may vote in the Senate only in the event of a tie.

The powers of the presidency are formidable, but not without limitations. The president, as the chief formulator of public policy, often proposes legislation to Congress. The president can also veto (forbid) any bill passed by Congress. The veto can be overridden by a two-thirds vote in both the Senate and House of Representatives. As head of his political

party, with ready access to the news media, the president can easily influence public opinion regarding issues and legislation that he deems vital.

The president has the authority to appoint federal judges as vacancies occur, including members of the Supreme Court. All such court appointments are subject to confirmation by the Senate. He also is commander in chief of the armed forces.

The president appoints the heads and senior officials of the executive branch agencies; the large majority of federal workers, however, are selected through a non-political civil service system. The major departments of the government are headed by appointed secretaries who collectively make up the president's cabinet. Today these 13 departments are: State, Treasury, Defense, Justice, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, Energy and Education.

Under the Constitution, the president is primarily responsible for foreign relations with other nations. The president appoints ambassadors and other officials, subject to Senate approval, and, with the secretary of state, formulates and manages the nation's foreign policy. The president often represents the United States abroad in consultations with other heads of state, and, through his officials, he negotiates treaties with other countries. Such treaties must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Senate. Presidents also negotiate with other nations less formal "executive agreements" that are not subject to Senate approval.

The following qualifications for the presidency are established by the Constitution: The president must be a natural-born citizen of the U.S., 35 years of age or older, and “fourteen years a resident within the United States.” The official residence of the president is the White House in Washington, D.C.

THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

The judicial branch is headed by the Supreme Court, which is the only court specifically created by the Constitution. In addition, the Congress has established 11 federal courts of appeal and, below them, 91 federal district courts. Federal judges are appointed for life or voluntary retirement, and can only be removed from office through the process of impeachment and trial in the Congress.

CHECKS AND BALANCES

When Americans talk about their three-part national government, they often refer to what they call its system of "checks and balances." This system works in many ways to keep serious mistakes from being

made by one branch or another. Here are a few examples of checks and balances:

If Congress proposes a law that the president thinks is unwise, the president can veto it. This means the proposal does not become law. Congress, can enact the law despite the president's views only if two-thirds of the members of both houses vote in favor of it.

If Congress passes a law which is then challenged in the courts as unconstitutional, the Supreme Court has the power to declare the law unconstitutional and therefore no longer in effect.

The president has the power to make treaties with other nations and to make all appointments to federal positions, including the position of Supreme Court justice. The Senate, however, must approve all treaties and confirm all appointments before they become official. In this way the Congress can prevent the president from making unwise appointments.

THE AMERICAN SYSTEM Of GOVERNMENT

The governmental systems in the United States - federal, state, county, and local - are quite easy to understand, that is, if you grew up with them and studied them in school. One foreign expert complained, for example, that the complexity of just the cities' political and governmental structure is "almost unbelievable."

Americans are much more interested in local politics than in those at the federal level. Many of the most important decisions, such as those concerning education, housing, taxes, and so on, are made close to home, in the state or county.

But all must respect the federal laws and not make laws that interfere with those of the other states (e.g., someone who is divorced under the laws of one state is legally divorced in all).

Sheriffs are usually elected, but state police officials are not.

There are many other areas which are also the concern of cities, towns, and villages. Among these are the opening and closing hours for stores, street and road repair, or architectural laws and other regulations. Also, one local community might decide that a certain magazine is pornographic and forbid its sale, or a local school board might determine that a certain novel should not be in their school library. (A court, however, may later tell the community or school board that they have unfairly attempted to exercise censorship.) But another village, a few miles down the road, might accept both. The same is true of films.

Most states and some cities have their own income taxes. Many cities and counties also have their own laws saying who may and may not own a gun. Many airports, some of them international, are owned and controlled by cities or counties and have their own airport police. Finally, a great many of the most hotly debated questions, which in other

countries are decided at the national level, are in America settled by the individual states and communities. Among these are, for example, laws about drug use, capital punishment, abortion, and homosexuality.

POLITICAL PARTIES

There is one more very important part of the American political scene which is not part of any formal written document: the political party system.

The Constitution says nothing about political parties, but over time the U.S. has in fact developed a two-party system.

The writers of the Constitution feared that parties representing narrow interests rather than the general interest of all the people could take over the government. They hoped the government would be run by qualified people who did not have a second loyalty - a loyalty to a party. They believed their government would work well without parties. Despite this, parties began to form shortly after the Constitution went into effect; parties proved to be an effective way within a system of checks and balances for people with similar views to band together to achieve national goals.

Today, the United States has two major political parties. One is the Democratic party, the other is the Republican party. Most Americans today consider the Democratic party the more liberal party. By that they mean that Democrats believe the federal government and the state governments should be active in providing social and economic programs for those who need them, such as the poor, the unemployed or students who need money to go to college. The Democrats earned that reputation in the 1930s when there was a worldwide economic depression. Under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" plan, Democrats set up government programs that provided paid employment for people building dams and roads and public buildings. The government under the Democratic party established many other programs including Social Security which ensures that those who are retired or disabled receive monthly payments from the government. Labor unions also received active government, and Democratic party, support in the New Deal era.

Republicans are not necessarily opposed to such programs. They believe, however, that many social programs are too costly to the taxpayers and that when taxes are raised to pay for such programs everyone is hurt. They place more emphasis on private enterprise and often accuse the Democrats of making the government too expensive and of creating too many laws that harm individual initiative. For that reason, Americans tend to think of the Republican party as more conservative.

There are other, smaller parties in the United States besides the two major parties. None of these smaller parties has enough popular support

to win a presidential election, but some are very strong in certain cities and states and can have their own state or city candidates elected or can determine which major party wins by supporting one or the other.

ELECTIONS

The United States has many election days because there are so many levels of government. Each state has its own elected officials such as a governor - the chief administrative official - and state legislators who make the state's laws. In addition, there are elections of mayors and other officials for all cities and smaller communities, and still other elections for county officials. (Counties are subdivisions of each state.)

Presidential Election Day is held every four years - in all years divisible by four. That is the day Americans make their choice for president of the United States. On the same day, voters in all states name their choices for the lower house of Congress, the House of Representatives, and voters in one-third of the states vote for one of two Senators - members of the upper house - that represent each state. Government offices and businesses may give voters several hours off to vote, but Election Day is not a national holiday.

That day is the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November: That rule may seem complicated, but there was a reason for it. Most Americans at that time lived in small towns and in rural areas. Elections had to be held at a time when the weather was still good in northern states and when the harvest was over so farmers wouldn't have to worry too much about their work. It also had to be on a day of the week that was not a religious Sabbath (Saturday or Sunday). The November Tuesday rule was the result.

AMERICAN ECONOMY

FREE ENTERPRISE

Most Americans think that the rise of their nation as a leading producer of manufactured goods, food and services could not have occurred under any economic system except capitalism. They believe that the economic freedom of capitalism - which many prefer to call free enterprise - is what made the United States a major economic power. Though they are not blind to the problems of capitalism, they would argue that the American economic system has created - or has the potential to create - a better life for nearly everyone in the country.

Every year hundreds of thousands of Americans start their own businesses. A government agency, the Small Business Administration, helps with information, advice, and, sometimes, loans and grants.

The Coca-Cola company, the huge Eastman Kodak Company paved the way for the many other companies that exist today.

Blue jeans, the popular denim trousers known to teenagers around the world, were invented by a poor cloth peddler who sold his first pairs to gold miners in California in the 1850s. His company, Levi Strauss, remains one of the largest clothing manufacturers in the United States.

In 1977 two young men started a company called Apple Computer Corporation. By 1991, that corporation was one of the larger computer manufacturers in the United States, with annual sales of $5.5 billion.

Stories like this create an image of America as a place in which a person can go "from rags to riches," and many people have. There have been others who failed, however, and many others who have not wanted to take a chance at becoming a business owner.

DISTRIBUTION OF INDUSTRIES

The U.S. economy consists of three main sectors - primary, secondary, and tertiary. Primary economic activities are those directly extracting goods from the natural environment, including agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining. The primary sector usually contributes about 3 percent of annual GDP. Secondary economic activities involve processing or combining materials into new products, and include manufacturing and construction. Each year the secondary sector accounts for approximately 21 percent of GDP. Tertiary economic activities involve the output of services rather than goods. Examples of tertiary activities include wholesale and retail trade, banking, government, and transportation. The tertiary is the most important sector by far and accounts for almost 76 percent of annual GDP.

AGRICULTURE

Farming accounts for less than 2 percent of annual GDP and employs fewer than 3 percent of U.S. workers. Yet the nation leads the world in many aspects of agricultural production. Farmers not only produce enough to meet domestic needs, they also produce enough to enable the United States to export more farm products per year than any other nation in the world.

Beef cattle rank as the most valuable product of the nation’s farms, accounting for one-fifth of total annual farm receipts. Many of the cattle are raised on large ranches in southwestern states. Texas produces more beef cattle than any other state, and states such as Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Iowa also raise many cattle. Dairy products

represent about 11 percent of the yearly value of farm marketings and are the second most valuable item coming from American farms. California, Wisconsin, New York, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota are leading dairy states. Hogs and broiler chickens are other major livestock raised on U.S. farms. In terms of market value, 68 percent of the hogs are produced in Iowa, North Carolina, Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Indiana. The states of Arkansas, Georgia, Alabama, and North Carolina account for more than one-half of U.S. broiler chicken output. Other major livestock and livestock products include chicken eggs, turkeys, and sheep and lambs.

Leading agricultural crops are corn, soybeans, vegetables, fruits and nuts, greenhouse and nursery products, wheat, cotton, and tobacco. Soybeans are grown primarily in the Midwest, especially in Iowa and Illinois; during the 1970s the cultivation of soybeans expanded rapidly into the lower Mississippi Valley and other parts of the South. Corn is a major crop in many parts of the United States, but most is produced in the Midwest, where it is the main feed for the cattle and hogs raised there. Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Indiana together produce about two-thirds of the annual U.S. corn crop.

Wheat is another important U.S. crop. Kansas usually leads all states in yearly wheat production. North Dakota, Montana, Oklahoma, Washington, Idaho, South Dakota, Colorado, Texas, Minnesota, and Nebraska also are major wheat producers. For more than a century and a half, cotton was the predominant cash crop in the South. Today, however, it is no longer important in some of the traditional cotton-growing areas east of the Mississippi River. Cotton growing is now concentrated in relatively flat areas amenable to large-scale mechanization, such as the lower Mississippi Valley, the plains of Texas, and the valleys of California and Arizona. Texas usually produces about one-quarter and California about one-sixth of the nation's annual cotton harvest. Tobacco remains an important cash crop. The leading tobacco-producing states are North Carolina, which accounts for more than one-third of the national output, and Kentucky, which annually produces more than one-fourth.

Other leading crops include peanuts, peaches, tomatoes, and apples. More than three-quarters of the oranges are produced in Florida; California grows nearly one-half of the nation's fresh vegetables; roughly one-third of the potatoes are grown in Idaho and one-fifth in Washington; some five-sixths of the grapes are raised in California; and about half of the commercial apples come from orchards in Washington. Additional major crops grown on U.S. farms are sugarcane, rice, sorghum grain, dry beans, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, celery, cucumbers, lettuce, onions, green peppers, mushrooms, cantaloupes, and watermelon. Other valuable

fruit crops include cherries, pears, plums and prunes, and strawberries. Major nut crops include almonds, pecans, and walnuts.

FORESTRY

Forests cover a little less than a third of the United States, or about 298 million hectares.

About half of the nation's lumber and all the fir plywood come from the forests of the Pacific states, an area dominated by softwoods. In addition to the Douglas fir forests in Washington and Oregon, this area includes the famous California redwoods and the Sitka spruce along the coast of Alaska. Commercially valuable hardwood trees, such as gum, ash, pecan, and oak, grow in the lowlands along the rivers of the South. The Appalachian Highland and parts of the Great Lakes area have excellent hardwood forests. Hickory, maple, oak, and other hardwoods removed from these forests provide fine woods for the manufacture of furniture and other products.

FISHING

The United States is usually sixth among the nations of the world in weight of total catch, ranking behind China, Japan, Peru, Chile, and Russia. In addition to commercial fishing, sport fishing is popular in many states.

The most valuable species caught are crabs, salmon, and shrimp, each representing about one-sixth of the total value. Other important species include lobsters, clams, flounders, scallops, Pacific cod, and oysters.

Alaska leads all states in both the volume and value of the catch; important species caught at Alaska ports include pollock and salmon. Important species caught in the New England region include lobsters, scallops, clams, oysters, and cod.

Much of the annual U.S. tonnage of commercial freshwater fish comes from farms. The most important species raised on farms are catfish, trout, salmon, oysters, and crawfish.

MINING

The United States ranks among world leaders in value of annual mineral production. Mining contributes 1.4 percent of annual GDP and employs 0.5 percent of the workers. Although mining accounts for a small share of the nation's economic output, it has been essential to its industrial development. Coal and iron ore are the basis for the steel industry. Steel is fabricated into automobiles, appliances, machinery, and other basic products. Petroleum is refined into gasoline, heating oil, and

petrochemicals used to make plastics, paint, pharmaceuticals, and synthetic fibers.

The nation's three chief mineral products are fuels. In order of value, they are natural gas, petroleum, and coal. In the early 1990s the United States produced 25 percent of the world's natural gas, 19 percent of its coal, and 11 percent of its crude oil. Three-fifths of the nation's most valuable mineral, natural gas, is produced in Texas and Louisiana. Other important natural-gas-producing states are Oklahoma, New Mexico, Wyoming, Kansas, Alabama, California, and Alaska. Petroleum accounted for nearly one-third of U.S. fuel production and about one-quarter of the annual value of all minerals produced in the United States. Texas, Alaska, and California, the three leading oil producers, together yield more than one-half of the nation's petroleum. Other leading oil-producing states are Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Wyoming.

Coal, the third leading mineral, accounts for approximately one-sixth of the yearly value of all U.S. mining output. Much of the nation's coal is produced in mines in the Appalachians. Wyoming, West Virginia, and Kentucky, which together produce more than one-half of the annual U.S. output, are the leading coal-mining states, followed by Pennsylvania, Illinois, Montana, Virginia, Indiana, and Ohio.

Important metals mined in the United States include gold, copper, iron ore, zinc, magnesium, lead, and silver. Leading industrial minerals are materials used in construction, clays, lime, salt, phosphate rock, boron, and potassium salts.

MANUFACTURING

The United States leads all nations in the value of its yearly manufacturing output. Some 18 percent of annual gross domestic product is accounted for by manufacturing, which employs about one-sixth of the nation's workers.

Ranked by value added by manufacturing, the leading categories of U.S. manufactured goods are chemicals, transportation equipment, processed foods, industrial machinery, and electronic equipment.

All varieties of industrial machinery accounted for 10 percent of the yearly value added by manufacture in the mid-1990s. Industrial machinery includes engines, farm equipment, various kinds of construction machinery, computers, and refrigeration equipment. California led all states in the annual value added by industrial machinery, followed by Illinois, Ohio, and Michigan. Transportation equipment includes passenger cars, trucks, airplanes, space vehicles, ships and boats, and railroad equipment. Michigan, with its huge automobile industry, is a leading producer of transportation equipment. California is a leader in the aerospace industry.

Texas and Louisiana are leaders in chemical manufacturing. The petroleum and natural gas produced and refined in both states are basic raw materials used in manufacturing many chemical products.

Food processing is an important industry in several states noted for the production of food crops and livestock, or both. California has a large fruit- and vegetable-processing industry. Meat packing in Illinois and dairy processing in Wisconsin make both states leaders in food manufacturing.

The electronic equipment industry includes the manufacture of electric industrial apparatus, household appliances, radio and television equipment, electronic components, and communications devices. California, Illinois, Indiana, and Massachusetts are all leaders in the production of electronic equipment, which is one of the fastest growing sectors of U.S. industry.

The manufacture of fabricated metal and primary metal is concentrated in the nation's industrial core region. Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan are leading states in the value of primary metal output.

Printing and publishing is a widespread industry, with newspapers published throughout the country. New York, with its book-publishing industry, is the leading state, but California, Illinois, and Pennsylvania are also important.

Other major U.S. manufactures include textiles, clothing, precision instruments, lumber, furniture, tobacco products, leather goods, and stone, clay, and glass items.

ENERGY

The energy to power the U.S. economy is derived from various sources. Measured in terms of heat-producing capacity, petroleum provides 39 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States. It supplies nearly all of the energy used to power the nation's transportation system, and it is used to heat millions of houses and factories.

Natural gas is the source of 24 percent of the energy consumed. Many industrial plants use natural gas for heat and power, and several million households burn it for heating and cooking. Coal provides 22 percent of the energy consumed. Its major uses are in the generation of electricity, which uses more than three-fourths of all the coal consumed, and in the manufacture of steel.

Water power generates 4 percent and nuclear power about 7 percent of the nation's energy. Both are employed mainly to produce electricity for residential and industrial use. Nuclear energy has been viewed as an important alternative to expensive petroleum and natural gas, but its development has proceeded somewhat more slowly than

originally anticipated. People are reluctant to live near nuclear plants for fear of a possible radiation-releasing accident. Another obstacle to the expansion of nuclear power use is that satisfactory ways of disposing of radioactive wastes have not been devised.

Some 33 percent of the energy consumed in the United States is used in the generation of electricity.

SERVICE INDUSTRIES

One of the most significant changes in recent decades has been a shift away from the production of goods to the delivery of services as the dominant feature of the American economy. Where once most workers in the United States produced actual goods - from toothpaste to tires - most Americans today work in the sector of the economy that is broadly defined as providing services. Service industries include retail businesses, hotels and restaurants, communications and education, entertainment and recreation, federal and local government, office administration, banking and finance, and many other types of work.

As a result of the creativity, initiative and hard work which free enterprise has encouraged, the United States has become one of most affluent nations in the world. Business freedom, combined with controls enacted for the protection of both workers and consumers, has made life in the United States more secure and comfortable for more people than has ever before been the case.

TRANSPORTATION

Airlines service 817 cities throughout the country. A flight from New York to San Francisco takes five-and-a-half hours. Train service is also available: The most frequent service is between Washington, D.C., New York and Boston in the East; St. Louis, Chicago and Milwaukee in the Midwest; and San Diego, Los Angeles and San Francisco in the West. A coast-to-coast trip by train takes three days. The major means of intercity transportation is by automobile. Motorists can travel over an interstate highway system of 88,641 kilometers, which feeds into another 6,365,590 kilometers of roads and highways connecting virtually every city and town in the United States. A trip by automobile from coast to coast takes five to six days.

The development of transportation facilities was of crucial importance in the growth of the United States. The first routes of travel were natural waterways; the earliest overland routes were rough trails suitable for travel on foot or horseback. No surfaced roads existed until the 1790s. Many canals were constructed between the late 18th century and 1850 to link navigable rivers and lakes in the eastern United States and in the Great Lakes region. Steam railroads began to appear in the East

in the 1820s. The first transcontinental railroad was constructed between 1862 and 1869 by the Union Pacific and Central Pacific companies, both of which received large subsidies from the federal government. Transcontinental railroads were the chief means of transportation used by European settlers who populated the West in the latter part of the 19th century and were also of utmost importance for moving goods from one part of the country to another. The railroads continued to expand until 1917, when the length of operated track reached a peak of about 407,000 km (about 253,000 mi). Thereafter, motor transport became a serious competitor of the railroads both for passengers and freight.

Air transport began to compete with other modes of transport in the United States after World War I. The first commercial flights in the United States were made in 1918 and carried mail. Passenger service began to gain importance in the late 1920s, but not until the advent of commercial jet craft after World War II did air transport become a leading mode of travel.

In terms of weight of goods multiplied by the distance transported, railroads in the 1990s carried the greatest share of the nation's freight - 38 percent. Trucks carried 28 percent of goods, and oil pipelines conveyed 18 percent. Some 15 percent was shipped on inland waterways. Although the freight handled by airlines amounted to only 0.4 percent of the total, much of the cargo consisted of high-priority or high-value items.

In terms of the number of passengers multiplied by distance traveled, private automobiles accounted for about 81 percent of the total passenger traffic carried by the various modes of transportation. Airlines were the second leading mover of people, carrying 17 percent of the passenger traffic. Buses were responsible for 1 percent, and railroads carried 0.7 percent of passenger traffic.

COMMUNICATIONS

The communications systems in the United States are among the most developed in the world. In 1997, 1285 television broadcasters were in operation.

There were 1497 daily newspapers published in the United States in 1997, 19 fewer than the year before. Daily newspapers had a circulation of approximately 58.2 million copies in 1996. The top daily newspapers in the United States according to circulation were the *Wall Street Journal* (published in New York City), *USA Today* (published in Arlington, Virginia), the *New York Times*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, each with a circulation in excess of 1 million. Other leading newspapers included the *Washington Post,* the *New York Daily News,* the *Chicago Tribune,* the *Detroit Free Press*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the

Chicago Sun Times, the *Dallas Morning News*, the *Boston Globe,* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer.*

Nearly 21,300 periodicals were published in 1997. These ranged from specialized journals reaching only a small number of professionals to major newsmagazines such as *Time,* with a circulation of 4.1 million a week, and *Newsweek,* with a circulation of 3.2 million a week, to mass publications with vast audiences, such as the weekly *TV Guide,* reaching 13.2 million readers, and the monthly *Reader's Digest,* with a circulation of 15.1 million copies. In 1994 2.1 million books were sold.

AMERICAN PEOPLE

THE NATIVE AMERICAN

The story of the Native American - American Indian - is one that is unique, tragic and ultimately inspiring. It is unique because the Indians were the original inhabitants of the American continent and experienced every phase of its European settlement, from the earliest l7th century colonies to the closing of the western frontier at the end of the l9th century. It is tragic because the conflict between the Indians and whites paralleled the experience of traditional peoples throughout the world who have come in contact with expanding, industrialized societies. It is an inspiring story because the Native Americans although dispossessed of much of their land in the l9th century, have survived, have asserted their political and economic rights, and have succeeded in retaining their identity and culture despite the onslaught of modem civilization.

Marks of Indian heritage can be found all over the United States. Many of the names on United States maps - Massachusetts, Ohio, Michigan, Kansas, Idaho and more - are Indian words. The Indians taught the Europeans how to cultivate crops such as corn, tomatoes, potatoes and tobacco. Canoes, snowshoes and moccasins are all Indian inventions. Indian handcrafted artifacts such as pottery, silver jewelry, paintings and woven rugs are highly prized.

About 62 percent of the Indians in the United States live in large cities and rural areas scattered throughout the country. The remainder live on about 300 federal reservations (land set aside for their use). Together, the reservations comprise 52.4 million acres (21 million hectares) of land, or about 2.5 percent of the land area in the United States. Most reservations are located west of the Mississippi River.

WHO WERE THE INDIANS?

In 1492, an Italian navigator named Christopher Columbus set sail from Spain in search of a sea route to Asia. Columbus hoped to obtain access to the wealth of spices, silks and gold for which the Asian continent was famous. Six weeks later, his men sighted land.

Thinking he had landed in the Indies a group of islands east of the coast of Asia he called the people on the first island on which he landed "los Indios," or, in English, "Indians." Of course, Columbus had not reached Asia at all. He had landed in the New World (the American continent). But the name "Indians" remains fixed in the English language.

Though Columbus had one name for them, the Indians comprised many groups of people. The Indians north of Mexico in what is now the United States and Canada spoke over 300 languages. (Some 50 to 100 of these languages are still spoken today.) And they lived scattered across the continent in small bands or groups of bands called tribes. To them, the continent was hardly new. Their ancestors had been living there for perhaps 30,000 years.

Over time, these people increased in number and adapted to different environments.

Some groups, such as the peaceful Pueblo of the American Southwest, lived in busy towns. They shared many-storied buildings made of adobe (mud and straw) bricks. They grew corn, squash and beans.

Their neighbors, the Apache, lived in small bands. They hunted wildlife and gathered plants nuts and roots.

In the eastern woods of the North American continent, the Iroquois hunted, fished and farmed. Their long houses, covered with elm bark held as many as 20 families. Each family had its own apartment, on either side of a central hall.

The Iroquois were fierce warriors. They surrounded their villages with wooden stockades to protect them from attack by their neighbors. They fought for the glory of their tribe and for the glory of individual warriors.

Many Indians were fine craftsworkers. They made pottery baskets, carvings and wove cotton and plant-fiber cloth. They traveled in small boats and on foot, never having developed the wheel.

Different as they were, all tribes were greatly affected by the coming of the white man, with his firearms, iron cooking pots, horses, wheeled vehicles and with his diseases, to which the Indians had no immunities. The European arrival changed the Indian way of life forever.

EARLY ENCOUNTERS

At first, the Indians were glad to share their land and their food with the Europeans. The American holiday of Thanksgiving celebrates

this Indian generosity. The first to celebrate it were the Pilgrims, a group of English settlers who arrived in America in 1620. They gave thanks for having survived their first year in the harsh American wilderness.

THE QUEST FOR LAND

To the Europeans, much of the Indians' land appeared vacant. The Indians didn't "improve the land" with fences, wells, buildings or permanent towns. Many settlers thought the Indians were savages and that their way of life had little value. They felt they had every right to farm the Indian lands.

On Manhattan Island, the present site of New York City, beaver, deer, fox, wild turkey and other game (wild animals) were plentiful. The Shinnecock Indians used the island for fishing and hunting, but they didn't live there. In 1626 the Dutch "bought" the island from them.

The Shinnecock did not understand that once the land was sold, the Dutch felt it was their right to keep the Indians off. Like most Indians, they had no concept of private property.

The Indians believed that the land was there to be shared by all men. They worshipped the earth that provided them with food, clothing and shelter. And they took from it only what they needed. They didn't understand when the settlers slaughtered animals to make the woods around their towns safer. They didn't like the roads and towns that to them, scarred the natural beauty of the earth.

To the Europeans, game existed to be killed and land to be owned and farmed. Many did not bother to discuss with the Indians whether or not they wanted to give up their land. To make room for the new settlers, hunting lands, fields, even Indian towns were seized through war, threats, treaties or some combination of the three.

UNIONS

Small Indian bands and tribes could do little against the well-armed and determined colonists, but united, they were often a more powerful force. King Philip, a Wampanoag chief, rallied neighboring tribes against the Pilgrims in 1675. For a year, they fought bloody battles. But even his 20,000 allies could do little against the numerous colonists and their guns. By 1700, few remnants were left of the tribes that had greeted the Pilgrims.

The Iroquois formed the League of Iroquois. They sided with the British against the French in a war for the dominance of America from 1754 to 1763. The British might not have won that war without the support of the League of the Iroquois. In that case, North America might have had a very different history.

The League stayed strong until the American Revolution. Then, for the first time, the council could not reach a unanimous decision on whom to support. Member tribes made their own decisions, some fighting with the British; some with the colonists, some remaining neutral. As a result, everyone fought against the Iroquois. Their losses were great and the League never recovered.

WESTERN FRONTIER

At the time of the American Revolution, the western boundary of the United States was the Appalachian Mountains. Land had become expensive in the colonies and many people were eager to settle the wilderness that lay beyond those mountains.

The Indians fought these invaders of their hunting grounds with a vengeance. They attacked frontier settlements. The white settlers struck back, sometimes massacring entire Indian villages. Indian warfare quickly became a part of frontier life.

At first, the new United States government tried to keep the peace by discouraging settlements beyond the mountains. "The utmost good faith shall always be observed toward the Indians, their lands and property shall never be taken from them without their consent; and in their property, rights, and liberty they never shall be invaded or disturbed..." read the Northwest Ordinance, designed to regulate the settling of the new frontier. But the frontier was far away and "good faith" was rarely demonstrated.

The United States tried different ways of dealing with their "Indian problem." Basically, they all boiled down to this: The Indian had to be either assimilated or removed farther west to make room for the European civilization the white Americans felt was destined to rule the continent.

In 1817, President James Monroe wrote that the Indians' only chance for survival was to be removed to an area, where they would not be disturbed by the settlers. Given time to learn civilized ways, or to practice their own way of life, they could survive.

And so, in 1830 the United States passed the Indian Removal Act. All Indians in the East would be removed to lands set aside for them west of the Mississippi River.

One of the tribes was the Cherokee. Ironically, the Cherokee had already adopted many of the white man's way; many owned large farms and brick homes in the state of Georgia. Their towns had stores, sawmills, blacksmith shops, spinning wheels and wagons.

In 1821, a Cherokee named Sequoyah developed a written language for his people. Using his 85-character alphabet, the Cherokee printed Bibles and a newspaper. They adopted a constitution modeled on that of the United States government.

Like Monroe, some whites thought removal was a way of saving the Indian peoples. Others saw it as a way to get more land from the Indians. When gold was discovered on Cherokee land, pressure for removal mounted.

A few Cherokees were willing to move to the new lands. Though they did not represent the Cherokee nation, they signed a treaty with the American government agreeing to the removal of the Cherokees.

The peaceful Cherokees were removed by force from their homes and forced to march overland to Indian Territory, in what is now the state of Oklahoma. The difficult journey took three to five months. In all, some 4,000 - one quarter of the Cherokee nation - lost their lives in the course of this removal. This shameful moment in American history has come to be called "The Trail of Tears."

BROKEN TREATIES

On the Plains, tribes such as the Sioux roamed on horseback hunting the buffalo that ranged there. The buffalo gave them everything they needed to live. They ate its meat. They used its skin and fur to make clothing. They stretched its hides over a frame of poles to make the tepees, or tents, they lived in. They carved buffalo bones into knives and tools. The clothing of the Plains Indians was decorated with bead work, and their hair with eagle feathers. These were the proud Indians depicted in television dramas and films about the American West.

When gold was discovered in the Black Hills of South Dakota, a land the Sioux considered sacred Crazy Horse, a great Sioux chief refused to sell the land: "One does not sell the Earth upon which the people walk."

At the same time, the buffalo that the Sioux depended on had begun to disappear. The land they roamed was being fenced by farmers and ranchers. And whites began to hunt the buffalo for sport and for its hide. In 1850, there were still 50 million buffalo on the Plains. By 1885, there were almost none. But the Indians could not live on the Plains without the buffalo to feed them. Half starved, they eventually surrendered and came to live on the reservations.

THE RESERVATION SYSTEM

By 1890, most Indians were confined to reservations. The government had promised to protect the remaining Indian lands. It had also promised supplies and food. But poor management, inadequate supplies and incompetent or dishonest government agents led to great suffering on the reservations. Diseases swept through the tribes and for a while it seemed as though the Indians really were a vanishing race.

To survive, many believed, the Indians would have to adopt white ways. On the reservations, Indians were forbidden to practice their religion. Children were sent to boarding schools away from their families.

By the General Allotment Act of 1887, each Indian was allotted 160 acres to farm. But there was no magic in owning private property. Many Indians had no desire to farm. Often, the land given them was infertile. After each Indian was given his plot, the government sold the remaining lands to white settlers.

A NEW DEAL FOR THE INDIANS

In 1924, Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act, which declared all Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States to be citizens. The origin of this act can be attributed to the increased respect of white legislators for the Indians which resulted from their exemplary contribution during World War I.

However, it wasn't until 1934 that the Indians got a "New Deal." The Indian Reorganization Act encouraged the Indians to set up their own governments and ended allotment on the reservations. It halted the policy of trying to persuade or coerce Indians to give up their traditional culture and religion.

The United States was becoming proud of its diverse population. And that included a desire to recognize its Native Americans and to try to compensate them for the unfair treatment hey had received.

INDIAN POWER & INDIAN RIGHTS

At a time when blacks were protesting violations of their civil rights, Indians, too, took their protests to the American public. In the mid-1960s, they called for an "Indian Power" movement to parallel the "Black Power" movement. In 1972, the American Indian Movement (AIM) and other Indian rights groups staged a protest march on Washington called the "Trail of Broken Treaties."

In 1973, national attention once again focused on Wounded Knee, South Dakota. AIM occupied the small village there for 71 days. They demanded the return of lands taken in violation of treaty agreements.

Indians today continue to fight for Indian rights, although less militantly than AIM did in the early 1970s.

Recently, many tribes have carried on the battle for Indian rights in court. They have sued for the return of lands taken from their ancestors. The tribes settled for $81.5 million dollars from the federal government in 1980 and invested the money, in the name of the tribes, in a variety of profitable business enterprises operated by members of the tribe.

AN UPHILL BATTLE

However, in spite of many gains made by the Indians, they still lag far behind most Americans in health, wealth and education. In 1988, the unemployment rate on Indian reservations averaged 64 percent - ten times the national rate. And 27 percent of Native Americans lived below the poverty line - that is, they earned less than the government considered necessary for a decent lifestyle. Diabetes, pneumonia, influenza and alcoholism claim twice as many Indian lives as other American lives.

Today, most reservations are governed by a tribal council. Many run their own police forces, schools and courts that.

The aim of most Indian tribes is to become self-supporting. They are trying to attract businesses to the reservations. Others hope that the natural resources on their reservations will provide much needed income.

Says college-educated Fred Kaydahzinne, great-grandson of a famous Apache warrior: "My generation spent all our time learning the white man's ways. We mastered them, but we lost a lot of Indian heritage. Now we are trying to regain what we have lost."

BLACK AMERICA

JAMESTOWN BEGINNING

The history of blacks in North America began in August 1619, when a small Dutch warship sailed up the James River to the young English colony of Jamestown, Virginia.

The Dutch ship had captured a Spanish ship in the Caribbean Sea carrying black men and women to Span ish colonies in South America. At that time, the Jamestown colonists needed workers to help clear and till the land and build houses. So the Jamestown settlers welcomed the blacks as a source of free labor.

In 1619, the English did not have the practice of slavery - the complete ownership of one person by another person. But they did have the practice of indentured service. That is the ownership of a person's labor for a period of time by another person or group of people. Many of the first English settlers in North America were indentured servants. They had pledged their labor to pay for their ship passage to the New World, to pay old debts, or to make up for some small crime. In some cases, they were tricked, cheated, or even kidnapped into indentured service.

The 20 blacks landed from the Dutch ship were viewed as indentured servants. Black and white indentured servants worked side by side at Jamestown, clearing fields, planting crops, making roads and building houses. The death rate at Jamestown was extremely high - for landowners and servants, black and white - and the need for labor was great. To meet this demand, ships' captains often bought, traded or captured blacks from the Spanish and Portuguese.

Though an increasing number of black servants arrived in the English colonies during the early 1600s, the vast majority of indentured servants were white. During the period, black and white indentured servants had the same status. When their period of service was over, they were considered to be free. They were then able to marry, own property and, in some colonies, exercise all the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

SLAVERY

Gradually however, the status of black servants changed. Between 1640 and 1680, Virginia and the other southern colonies drifted steadily toward the establishment of a system of slave labor.

Most white indentured servants had a set term of servitude, and they knew it. No matter how badly they were treated, they could look forward to eventual freedom. They usually had written contracts stating when they would be free.

Blacks had no such contracts. They were brought to America by ships' captains who sold them to the highest bidder. In the early 1600s, the buyers and sellers sometimes agreed on a period of servitude for black indentured servants. That helped support the feeling that the buyers and sellers were trading in labor not people. However, the black servants had no voice in these dealings. And since the buyers wanted to get the greatest value for the price they paid, it became commonplace that black servants were indentured for life. It also became customary that the children of black indentured servants were considered to be indentured from birth to death - in other words, they were held in slavery. Near the end of the l7th century, all pretense that such a system wasn't slavery faded away.

Because blacks could be owned for life, the demand for black slaves outstripped the demand for white indentured servants. The demand for black labor on the large plantations of Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas was great. To satisfy this demand, special ships were built to transport captive blacks directly from the west coast of Africa to the slave markets of North America. During the l8th century, the slave trade boomed. It brought death and untold suffering to millions of blacks. At the same time it made a number of people in Britain and in the British American colonies immensely wealthy.

Throughout the l8th century, an increasing number of people in Britain and North America spoke out against the slave trade. But the wealthy slave owners and slave traders had powerful friends in government and were able to defeat all attempts to end the slave trade.

CONFLICTS OF CONSCIENCE

During the late 1600s and early 1700s, slavery existed in practically all the North American colonies. While most black slaves were held on large farms and plantations, it wasn't unusual for small farmers and tradespeople to own one or two slaves.

By the mid-1700s, many small farmers and tradespeople had mixed feelings about slavery. They wanted cost-free labor, but they were uncomfortable with the idea of owning another person. This was in conflict with the growing revolutionary idea that all men are created equal.

At about the same time, many small farmers and tradespeople found that it was not always profitable to own slaves. Slaves and indentured servants had to be fed all year round, but the need for their labor might vary from season to season. Some farmers found that it was cheaper to hire day laborers when needed than to own slaves.

As small farmers started disposing of their slaves, some were freed, but most were sold to plantations in the West Indies, Virginia and the Carolinas. Unlike a small farm or tradesman's shop, a plantation provided an impersonal setting for slavery. Hundreds - even thousands - of slaves might live and work on a large plantation. The plantation owner, who hired professional overseers, did not usually have daily contact with most of the slaves. Food, housing and clothes for the slaves were seen as costs to be kept as low as possible.

The plantation economy was based on the large scale production of cash crops, such as tobacco and cotton, through the use of very cheap labor. The farmland of entire regions - much of Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia - became linked to that economy. It was felt that any change in the institution of slavery could cause the economic and social collapse of those regions. This fear caused a number of people to contradict their own ideals of freedom, equality and the rights of man.

During the 1770s and '80s, the American colonists fought for independence from Britain. They called for self-determination, democracy, equality and recognition of the natural rights of man. Yet many outspoken advocates of American freedom - including Patrick Henry, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson - lived within a system of slavery. They sometimes wrote against slavery, and Washington even wrote a provision in his will that led to the eventual freedom of his slaves. But the system of slavery was firmly entrenched. Some colonists said that while they personally deplored slavery, they had to accept it as an economic necessity. Others argued that blacks were secure and happy as slaves.

Over the years, several black men and women achieved fame and fortune in the arts, sciences, religion and commerce. Some had high standing in colonial society. Many names stand out. One was Benjamin

Banneker (1731-1806) who gained fame as an astronomer, mathematician, author and inventor. He also helped design the city of Washington, D.C.. Banneker, who had always been free, could have enjoyed his prestige and wealth without conflict.

Black and white abolitionists - people trying to end slavery - rallied people against slavery. They demanded full freedom and complete equality for all blacks.

Contending that slavery was morally wrong, Douglass and other abolitionists openly encouraged blacks to escape to freedom. Means of helping runaway slaves were set up in various places. This led to the creation of an escape route called "the underground railroad."

ESCAPE TO THE NORTH

From the first days of slavery in America, there were escape attempts. In colonial times, runaway slaves often took refuge in swamps, forests, mountains, and among Indian tribes. Then, starting with Pennsylvania in 1780, several northern states abolished slavery. So fugitive slaves frequently sought refuge in those "free" states. To stop that, the Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793. This law required the authorities of all states and territories to arrest and return fugitive slaves. It also led to "bounty hunting."

Slave owners offered bounties (rewards) for the return of runaways. Not only did this tempt people along the way to capture fugitive slaves, it also created a group of professional "bounty hunters." These hunters pursued fugitives across state borders in the hope of collecting rewards.

Starting in the 1830s, people opposed to slavery provided money, food and hiding places for fugitives. Escape routes were mapped out, and word of them spread through the slave quarters of plantations.

The system of escape routes became known as the "underground railroad."

The most famous of the underground conductors was a young woman named Harriet Tubman (1821-1913). In 1849, she escaped from slavery in Maryland and made her way to Philadelphia. Over the next 10 years, Harriet Tubman made 19 trips into slave states and led more than 300 men, women and children to freedom.

THE END OF SLAVERY

Emancipation, or the ending of slavery, didn't happen in a single day. The process began in April 1861 with the outbreak of the American Civil War between free states of the North and slave states of the South. During the war, wherever the Union or Northern Army gained control, slavery, for all practical purposes was ended. It's estimated that half a million slaves escaped to Union-controlled areas.

The next big step in the process took place on January 1, 1863. President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring that slaves in states, or portions of states, at war against the United States were free. Few slaves were freed, however, since most lived in the rebellious South. Nevertheless, the Proclamation was a critical turning point: it increased Northern support by making the end of slavery a principal objective of the war. Freedom for all slaves came later, in 1865 when the war ended and Congress passed the l3th Amendment to the Constitution, which completely abolished slavery. Another Amendment, the l4th, gave blacks full citizenship rights. For a time, many hoped that blacks and whites could live together in a state of equality and tolerance. But local laws and customs were used to deprive blacks of voting rights. In most former slave states a system of racial segregation arose, and blacks had to use separate schools, churches, hospitals, parks, swimming pools, lunchrooms, washrooms, bus sections and theater sections.

In the early years of the 20th century, lynchings - the illegal killing of people for real or imagined crimes - greatly increased. After the First World War, the promise of equality and opportunity in the South for blacks seemed further away than ever. As a result, many blacks moved from the rural South to the great cities of the North. Although northerners did not practice formal segregation, blacks encountered discrimination in jobs and housing.

RENAISSANCE AND WAR

Black talent in the arts and music flowered during the 1920s, '30s and '40s. This artistic awakening began in Harlem, a mostly black section of New York City, and was known as ‘the Harlem Renaissance.’ It echoed with the music of Duke Ellington (1899-1974), Louis Armstrong (1900-1971), and the glorious voice of Paul Robeson (1896-1976).

However, neither the glory of the Harlem Renaissance nor the achievements of individual artists did much to improve the daily lives of most blacks.

It was only after WW II thatthe struggle of all blacks for full equality put an end to segregation in the armed forces.

Another crack in the wall of segregation was the Supreme Court’s decision in 1954 banning segregation of the races in public schools.

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

At the same time, black leaders felt that the people themselves would have to take action to end discrimination and denial of civil rights. One opportunity for action was presented by the arrest of a woman named

Rosa Parks in Montgomery, Alabama, on December 1, I955, for refusing to give up her seat to a white person on a city bus.

The blacks decided to boycott the city's buses. Martin Luther King Jr. was asked to take charge of the boycott.

The boycott lasted over a year and cost the city more and more money each day. Finally, on November 13, 1956, the Supreme Court decided that segregation on buses was unconstitutional. The Montgomery bus boycott showed that nonviolent direct action could produce results. It brought blacks from all walks of life together in an almost religious fellowship. And it produced a black leader - Martin Luther King, Jr - who could move millions to action and touch the conscience of the nation.

King organized local blacks to march quietly and nonviolently through downtown areas of Birmingham. The police attacked the demonstrators with clubs, dogs and firehoses. Through it all, the demonstrators remained nonviolent. And the whole nation watched by means of television. This caused such a public outcry against the white authorities of Birmingham that they had to back down and desegregate their public facilities.

The focus of civil rights activity then shifted to Washington where, after lengthy debate, the Congress passed laws prohibiting discrimination in voting, education, employment, housing and public accommodations.

The Civil Rights Acts of 1964, 1965 and 1968 were landmarks in dismantling the legal basis for discrimination.

TODAY

Martin Luther King continued to conduct civil rights campaigns throughout the country, and in 1964 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his decade of leadership in nonviolent protest against discrimination. Tragically, he was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee on April 4, 1968.

How much of Dr. King's dream has come true? And what problems remain to be solved?

There are still poor, all-black areas in American cities. The average income of blacks is lower than that of whites. Unemployment of blacks - particularly of young men - is higher than that of whites.

On the other hand, the black middle class continues to grow. In 1989, 44 percent of employed blacks held ‘white color’ jobs - managerial, professional and administrative positions rather than service jobs or jobs requiring physical labor. And this trend is expected to continue, partly because more blacks are getting a university education.

Perhaps the greatest change in the past few decades has been in the attitudes of America's white community. A generation has come of age since Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech. Characteristic of this

new generation is a new tolerance between blacks and whites and an increasing acceptance by whites of blacks in all spheres. The biggest achievement of the blacks in fighting for their rights is the election of Barack Abama president of the USA – the first black president in the history of this country.

ETHNIC GROUPS AND MINORITIES

NATION OF DIVERSITY

The story of the American people is the story of immigrants. The United States has welcomed more immigrants than any other country in the world. More than 75 percent of all people who ever moved from their homeland settled in the United States. Since its early days, the United States has accepted more than 50 million newcomers.

According to the 1990 census, about one-quarter of Americans trace their dominant ancestry to Great Britain. Half are descended from people from other European nations. The remainder are descended from Native Americans, Africans, Hispanics and Asians.

For 300 years, the coming of different groups to the United States has involved their struggles to make a living and to be accepted as equal partners in American life. Many immigrant groups have moved from a position of disdained outsider to one of full participation in social and economic life; some other groups have yet to complete this journey.

The United States is a country of many ethnic groups. An ethnic group is made up of people who share one or more characteristics which make them different from other groups. They may share specific racial or physical traits, speak their own language or practice a distinctive religion. They are usually bound to one another by common traditions and values, and by their own folklore and music. Some of their activities may be determined by unique institutions, such as a complex family structure or the social practices within their communities. Members of an ethnic group tend to see themselves - and to be seen by outsiders - as separate from other people.

The Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups lists 106 major groups in the United States today, including Native Americans, Albanians, Afro-Americans, Arabs, Burmese, Chinese, Eskimos, Filipinos, Greeks, Irish, Italians, Jews, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Swiss. There are really more. For example, there are more than 170 different Native American tribes. For the sake of simplicity, the encyclopedia treats them as one. In the same way, Syrians, Jordanians, Egyptians and Palestinians are all counted as Arabs.

Most members of ethnic groups long established in the United States have lost much of the distinctiveness of their culture. Third generation Germans, for example, may only speak English and may think

of themselves as "plain" Americans. Third generation Chinese, however, often retain their language and many cultural and family traditions. They will usually define themselves as Chinese-Americans.

Members of most ethnic groups are full participants in the broad tapestry of American life, even if they keep alive many of their old traditions. The Irish, Danes, Germans Italians, Poles, Jews, Mormons and Catholics, for example, have moved into almost all social, economic and political sectors.

Some ethnic groups, however, suffer disadvantages which continue to keep them from freely participating in some areas of American professional and cultural life. Poverty and all the deprivation that goes with it often make it more difficult for black Americans and Puerto Ricans to acquire the social and educational skills needed to enter more desirable and more highly paid occupations. Racial prejudice and discrimination against blacks, Chinese and Native Americans has often meant that many members of those groups have been forced to live and work in narrow sectors of American life. Recent Hispanic immigrants, such as Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, also have encountered discrimination based on their ethnicity.

Those ethnic groups which suffer systematic economic or social disadvantages are called minority groups. About one of every five Americans is a member of such a group.

In the past, many minority groups overcame the barriers that confronted them. The Irish, the Italians and the Germans, the Catholics and the Jews all faced hostility and discrimination which severely restricted their opportunities for decades. In time they largely overcame these barriers and became fully integrated into national life. There are many signs that today's minorities are following the same path. For several decades, it has been an official aim of public policy to encourage such an outcome.

Millions of poor Mexicans and other Hispanics have entered the country in recent years, along with more than one million Spanish-speaking American citizens from Puerto Rico. Hispanics are now the fastest growing minority group in the United States. Many have found it difficult to move out of marginal positions, though one notable exception to this statement are immigrants from Cuba who have, in a relatively short time, established themselves in business and professions and gained both affluence and political power.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Not all immigrants enter the United States legally. In 1986 there were an estimated 3 to 5 million people living in the country without permission. Many Americans believe that illegal immigrants take jobs

from citizens of the United States, especially from minority people and young people. Moreover they can place a heavy burden on tax-supported social services. Some American employers have also exploited illegal workers, paying them less than the legal minimum wage and making them work under sub-standard conditions. The illegal immigrants cannot complain, for if they do, the employer can turn them to the government officials and have them sent out of the country.

In order to eliminate some of these problems with illegal immigration, the US Congress adopted a new law, under which many illegal immigrants who have been in the United States since 1982 can apply for legal residency.

THE FUTURE

In the past, Americans used to think of the United States as a "melting pot" of immigrants.

Today, Americans realize that the simple "melting pot" theory is less true. Instead, different groups of people keep many of their old customs. Often groups of Americans from the same culture band together. They live together in distinctive communities, such as "Chinatowns" or "Little Italys" - areas populated almost exclusively by Americans of a single ethnic group - which can be found in many large American cities. Living in ethnic neighborhoods gives new Americans the security of sharing a common language and common traditions with people who understand them.

In time, however, people from different backgrounds mix together. They also mix with native-born Americans. Old traditions give way to new customs. The children of immigrants are often eager to adopt new, American ways. They often want to dress in American fashions, to speak English and to follow American social customs. By one estimate, about 80 percent of European immigrants marry outside their own ethnic groups by the time they reach the third generation. Third generation means that their great-grandparents were immigrants. Yet as successive generations become more "Americanized," they often retain significant elements of their ethnic heritage.

Future success in raising the economic level of blacks and other minorities depends largely on the growth of the economy. When economic life falters, group conflict and prejudice increase. This is because people see themselves as competing for the same scarce resources, such as jobs.

The American economy is undergoing an historic transformation. Traditional industrial jobs are being lost to other countries. The recent enormous growth of jobs has been concentrated in service sectors. Many

of these jobs require skills beyond the level of many ethnic minority members.

Many people are also trapped by poverty in the central areas of large cities, where few new jobs are being created. The social demoralization of some ethnic minorities is also a barrier that keeps them from taking advantage of actual opportunities that are available to them.

The social drama of the struggle for equality and acceptance will continue as it has for over 300 years. As always, the leading roles in this drama will be played by ethnic groups, old and new.

Although there is sometimes friction and ill-feeling between new immigrants and people whose families have been Americans for generations, most Americans welcome newcomers. There is a popular feeling that immigrants have made America great and that each group has something to contribute. When President Bush signed the 1990 Immigration Act into law, he declared that its liberalized provisions would be "good for America."

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