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# THE JOURNAL OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS

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SPRING 1999 VOLUME 4, NUMBER 2

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## ▶ *SPECIAL FOCUS: THE ESPERANZAN EXPERIENCE*

- ▶ Recent History, Culture, and Politics
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With the death of long-time President Fire in 1990 Esperanza began the transition from an authoritarian single-party state to a multi-party parliamentary monarchy. What are the results so far and what are the implications for other states making the transition to democracy?

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## ► SPECIAL FOCUS: THE ESPERANZAN EXPERIENCE

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**Editorial****Applying the Esperanza Experience to other Democratic Transitions**

No serious observer questions the scope of change that Esperanza has experienced over this very dramatic decade. Few of us predicted the rapid collapse of the authoritarian structures that seemed so well entrenched upon the death of President Fire in 1990. Anyone predicting that a hereditary monarch with no real experience in governing would become the essential midwife of democratic emergence would have invited widespread derision. While the transition is certainly incomplete, it appears the peoples of Esperanza will conclude a century of national upheaval with a political class committed to democracy, a centrist reform government, and a social culture that seems to have been transformed from barely post-medieval to post-modern in a single decade.

It is, however, the very rapidity and reach of positive change that leads some scholars and policy-makers to assert that the lessons of Esperanza cannot be applied elsewhere. According to this thinking, Esperanza "exceptionalism," once used to explain the persistence of Fire's Fascist state, is now the explanation for the extraordinary progress being made. Just as the castle towers and walls of the Coronado plateau were once used as a metaphor for a closed, paranoid, and controlling culture, the open skies and high mountains surrounding the same plateau are now used to symbolize the freedom that is allegedly fundamental to the national soul.

It is undoubtedly true that any meaningful encounter with Esperanza encourages a certain romanticism. But in this special edition dedicated to the people, institutions, and recent history of Esperanza, we will argue that its success in making the transition to democracy is not due to any romantic notion of a good king or transcendent national soul. Rather, we perceive the story of the last decade is clearly one of rational decision-makers operating pragmatically, creatively and, at times, courageously to manage institutional relationships toward a long-term but clearly understood goal. This is, we believe, the lesson of the Esperanza experience for other nations making the transition. *Yo Esperanza!* But let us also celebrate the rational management of national institutions.

Michael Overther  
*For the editors*

## ► *Recent History, Culture, and Politics of Esperanza*

**Esperanza**, officially the Kingdom of Esperanza. The shape of the country approximates a very uneven rectangle extending about 400 miles from northwest to southeast and for about 600 miles from northeast to southwest. It is bordered on the northeast by Franconia, by Latia in the east, in the southeast by the Illyrian Sea, on the southwest by Brasa and Ocean, and in the northwest by the Bay of Altaire. The Celtan Islands, straddling the Bay of Altair are also part of Esperanza. The capital of Esperanza is Neuvilla. Area 504,000 square kilometers. Pop. (1992 estimate including Celtan islands) 36,336,754.

### *The Land*

A great plateau stretching across the center of the country dominates Esperanza's topography. The Pindus Mountains in the east including the highest point in Esperanza, Mount Alta (4006 meters), and the Hieronomite Mountains in the west bracket this plateau. Four natural regions can be identified around the central plateau: (1) the Tannus and Valdez River Valleys, (2) the Iilki River valley bordering Latia, (3) the coastal plains bordering the Ilyrian Sea, and (4) the mountainous region bordering Brasa and stretching to the Ocean. The principle rivers are the Tannus, Valdez, Praxis, Akheron, and Iliki.

Four climatic zones predominate in mainland Esperanza. The northwestern and southwestern coasts have a maritime climate with average temperatures of 50 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter and 65 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and annual rainfall of 45 inches. The central plateau of Esperanza has a continental climate with average temperatures of 40 degrees Fahrenheit in winter and 75 degrees Fahrenheit in summer and annual rainfall of less than 16 inches. Areas having an elevation of more than 9,000 feet have a mountain climate with average temperatures below 32 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter and 60 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and annual rainfall of more than 50 inches. The southeastern coastal region is typically Ilyrian with average winter temperatures of 65 degrees Fahrenheit and 75 degrees in summer and annual rainfall of 30 inches. Deciduous forests (maple, oak, and beech) cover the northern humid parts of the country with pine forests predominating in mountainous regions. The drier south is forested by a variety of drought resistant plants. Wild life includes the rare Brasan mountain lion, wolves, deer, sheep, and bears.

Rich deposits of nickel, cobalt and copper are found in the Pindus Mountains. Large amounts of coal are found in the Hieronomite mountain chain bordering Brasa.



RUGGED PEAKS OF THE PINDUS MOUNTAINS

### *The People*

Esperanza has four major ethnic groups. The largest and politically dominant group is the Esperanzans. They make up over 65 percent of the population and Esperanzan is the national language. The next largest group is the Altairians. The Altairian language has been largely replaced by Esperanzan, but the recent economic success of the northeastern region of Esperanza has contributed to a rebirth of Altairian identity and culture. Approximately 20 percent of Esperanzans claim Altairian identity. After the Altairians, the Brasans, with 15 percent of the population, are the ethnic group of greatest numerical weight. The Brasans speak Arabic and inhabit the southwestern part of the country. The smallest minority group is the Latians inhabiting the Iliki River Valley. Though Esperanzan by citizenship, the majority of Latians maintain their ethnic identity through preserving their links to Latia linguistically and culturally.

Ethnicity and religious faith are closely related in Esperanza. Roughly seventy percent of the population is Roman Catholic. Most Esperanzans and Altairians are Roman Catholic. Adherents of Islam make up fifteen percent of the population. Most Brasans living in the regions bordering Brasa are Muslims. Five percent of the population is Latian Orthodox. In Esperanza, Latian nationality and Orthodox faith are virtually identical. Finally, ten percent of the population is identified as Other. This category is a very broad category and includes atheists, evangelical Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, and any other religious group not covered in one of the larger categories. The ethnic identity of this category roughly correlates with the ethnic identity of Esperanza's population mix.

Three-fifths of the population is urban. Birth and death rates are typical for an industrialized country.

## ► *Recent History, Culture, and Politics of Esperanza*

### **The Economy**

The Esperanzan economy has been in transition to a modern market economy since the last two terms of President Fire's reign and has made significant progress toward that goal under the rule of King John. Nevertheless, the corporatist tendencies of Fire's administration have left large segments of the economy in the hands of the state. The government controls a majority of the transportation, communications, and electricity industries through direct administration, and approximately sixty percent of the durable goods manufacturing sector through the Bank of Esperanza. Another peculiarity of Esperanza's corporatist heritage is that seven percent of GDP is constitutionally mandated to be spent on military expenditures. Recent budget deficits have prevented the government from fulfilling this constitutional mandate. Prime Minister Andrew Aranda and his Centrist Convergence party have been attempting to implement privatization, as well as reconcile the constitution's military mandate with budgetary realities, in order to cure the problem of budget deficits.

Besides budget deficits, Esperanza has consistently run a trade deficit largely due to its dependence on the importation of crude oil. These twin deficits have contributed to a negative real growth rate in the last two years. Also, Esperanza has a nine percent unemployment rate. Despite these problems, a reasonably well developed infrastructure provides a solid base for the transition to a market economy.

**Resources.** Esperanza has a large coal mining industry. Pits are situated in the Hironomite Mountains. Also the Pindus Mountain region has well-developed cobalt, copper, and nickel mining. President Fire's initial foray into market oriented reforms resulted in the privatization of the mining industry. The mining sector employs twenty percent of the Esperanzan workforce. These industries are highly profitable and their products have traditionally accounted for a considerable portion of Esperanzan exports.

The prospects of finding oil deposits in the Illyrian Sea provide Esperanza with hopes of developing a more self-sufficient economy, but before exploration for these resources can begin in full it will be necessary to resolve territorial disputes regarding the maritime border with Aleria.

**Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing.** Despite a relatively dry climate, Esperanzan agriculture is highly productive. Approximately 25% of the Esperanzan labor force is employed in agriculture, and the agricultural sector accounts for 24% of GDP. The plateau region is a significant source of grains including corn, wheat, and pulses. The plateau also supports a healthy beef industry. In the south, a well-developed wine grape industry thrives as well as an innovative citrus industry. Esperanzan beef and wine are significant sources of export revenue. Other significant agricultural products include garden vegetables, olives, sugar beets, pork, poultry, and dairy products.

The Esperanzan timber industry has been a strong source of export revenue in the past, but poor harvesting habits have threatened this resource. In 1995, new regulations were imposed to stem the problem of deforestation, and new forest management techniques promise to bring the industry to a sustainable production cycle by the first part of the next century.

The northwestern waters bordering Esperanza are filled with a variety of fishes including anchovies, sardines, hake, sea bass, cod, tunny, and salmon. The Esperanzan fishing fleet, thirteenth largest in the world, takes advantage of this wealth. "The Sardine War" in 1976 with Franconia briefly brought into question whether the produce of these seas could be considered an Esperanzan resource, but careful mediation of that conflict has enabled both Esperanza and Franconia to benefit from this resource.



ESPERANZA HAS ONE OF THE WORLD'S PRINCIPAL FISHING FLEETS.

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**Industry.** Fifty five percent of the population is employed in manufacturing, mining, and construction, and these sectors account for 52% of GDP. The manufacturing industry is concentrated in a crescent running from Altair in the west to Neuvilla in the east and extending along the Tannus and Valdez Rivers. The economic divide between the industrial northeast and the less developed south has played a major role in political tensions between Altair and the rest of Esperanza. Under the Fire administration, Esperanza had a rapid industrial growth rate and developed a wide range of industries under the blanket of protectionism including an automotive industry, steel industry, and a shipbuilding industry. Recently, industrial growth has been modest at less than 1% per annum. As mentioned previously, the government controls a large portion of the durable goods industry and has significant stakes in the metals and metal manufacturing industries, and machine tool industries. The government dominates the weapons industry. The textiles and apparels industries and the food and beverage industries are largely under private ownership, but nonetheless benefit from favorable tariffs. A nascent high tech industry is developing around the U.S. Air Force base thirty miles north of Piraeus. Also, a vital tourist industry has developed around Pireus and its white sandy beaches. Tourism is the backbone of the Esperanzan service sector. The service sector employs 20% of the population and accounts for 24% of the GDP.

Movements toward privatization and liberalization of trade policy by Prime Minister Andrew Aranda could result in some significant changes in the structure of Esperanzan industry as it attempts to adjust to the conditions of a world market.

**Financial Services.** The central bank is the Bank of Esperanza. Its governing board consists of twelve members who are appointed by the King and serve at his discretion. The Bank of Esperanza governs an active commercial banking and savings industry through the use of several tools. These tools include: (1) the ability to set the interest rate at which banks may borrow money from the central bank, (2) the ability to set the percent of deposits lending institutions are required to have on hand, (3) the ability to lend directly at discounted rates to preferred borrowers, and (3) the use of moral suasion to persuade banks to adopt policies favored by the Bank of Esperanza. The Bank of Esperanza has used its influence to benefit a variety of infant industries as well as some strategic industries including the automobile, shipbuilding, various metal, and weapons industries. The Bank has otherwise pursued a tight money policy that has kept inflation at a manageable 2.1 percent per year.

A considerable amount of investment in Esperanza comes from outside of the country. The most important sources of this investment are the United States, United Kingdom, Franconia, and Latia. The industry most benefiting from outside investment has been the mining industry.

**Trade.** Esperanza has run a trade deficit over the last several years. This deficit has been due largely to Esperanza's need to import the majority of its petroleum needs from abroad. The major providers of fuel to Esperanza have been Saudi Arabia and Libya. Other areas adding to the trade deficit have been precision machine tools needed by the metal and mining industries, planes and spare parts needed by the national airline, and a variety of consumer goods and food stuffs that appeal to the tastes of the average Esperanzan. The United States has held a predominant position as a source of these goods. The Esperanzans have been extremely successful in marketing their ores, wine, and beef to other countries. The United States, France, Belgium, United Kingdom, Latia, Aleria, and Franconia have been the main markets for these goods. The government is attempting to increase the flow of tourists and to find overseas markets for unemployed Esperanzans to improve its trade balance.

**Transportation.** The mountainous terrain of Esperanza made the development of an adequate transportation system an arduous task, but since the ascent of the Fire administration, roads, railroads, and airports have played a central role in the economic development of the country. The transportation policy of the Fire administration was universally popular and all of his successors to date have worked on maintaining an adequate and efficient transportation system.

**Roads.** One of the first undertakings of the Fire administration was to build an efficient highway system connecting all the major population centers of Esperanza. Many would argue that this system was the greatest achievement of Fire's regime. The highway system consists of over 144,847 km of road including 7,747 km of expressway. The majority of these roads are paved with only 3,448 km of unpaved roads. One of the successful liberalization since 1990 was to make the provinces responsible for maintaining the roads within their jurisdiction. Appropriate taxing authority has been given to the provinces for this purpose.

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*Railroads.* Because of its mountainous terrain, Esperanza was late to build a railroad system. President Fire lauded the same attention on the railroads as he did on the highways. The Railroad Revitalization Act of 1978 effectively modernized the Esperanzan railroad service. Those nostalgic for the Fire administration will often state, "he made the railroads run on time." The Esperanzan Railroad Authority has service to all major metropolitan areas, but in recent years questions regarding the quality of service and cost effectiveness have plagued the industry.

*Airports.* Esperanza has three international airports: Fire International Airport in Neuvilla, Pireus International Airport, and Altair International Airport. Besides these three major airports, there are numerous smaller military air fields located throughout the country including the U.S. Air Force base north of Pireus. These airports are strategically placed to provide easy access to any part of the country. *Air Esperanza* is the major provider of transportation within the country and is heavily subsidized by the state.

*Ports and Maritime Transportation.* The two major ports of Esperanza are Altair and Pireus. The majority of international trade is carried through these ports. Until the 1970s the Altair Shipyards were a major employer, but have declined as a result of low-cost Asian marine construction. The Esperanzan fishing industry is centered in Altair. The Esperanzan fishing fleet is the 13<sup>th</sup> largest fishing fleet in the world.

**Administration of the Economy.** *Private enterprise and the role of government.* The government plays a very strong role in the economy. The Fire administration had built a national security state in which a wide range of industries were considered to be vital to the national interest. As Fire's successor, King John has inherited a role of substantial influence in the economy. The King has the power to appoint and dismiss the governing members of the Bank of Esperanza. He also appoints members of the Council of State, which plays a vital role in the national budgetary process. Close cooperation between the Council of State and the Bank of Esperanza has resulted in a well-coordinated state-centered economic strategy. Recent trade deficits, budget deficits, and high unemployment have led the Esperanzan government to consider privatization and liberalization as an economically viable course for his country's future. The mining industry and the wine industry serve as basic models of successfully run private enterprises. The government hopes this path will be a way not only to solve budgetary difficulties but also a way to strengthen his people's resolve for

*Taxation and Public Spending.* As incomes began to rise in the early Fire administration, revenues from taxes remained flat. This problem was addressed by the tax reform decree of 1980, and revenues subsequently began to keep pace with incomes. The major problem facing Esperanzan government is a litany of subsidies that were designed to maintain the security of the state. These expenses have now placed the Esperanzan government in the unenviable position of either having to cut expenditures or increase taxes. The constitutionally mandated expenditure of seven percent of the GDP for military expenditures makes budget cuts particularly difficult since cuts can only be made in relatively popular programs such as education, health care, social security pensions, or environmental quality.

*Trade unions and employer's associations.* One of the first acts of King John Patroclus IV upon ascending the throne was to use an executive order to eliminate the state's monopoly of trade union representation and employer's associations. The Fire administration had created a syndicate of trade unions and employer associations that spoke with "one voice in the interest of the fatherland". Little diversity of opinion was tolerated in this arrangement, and this representative body acted generally as a rubber stamp for policies advocated by President Fire. Legislation protecting freedom of association resulted in the birth of a modern trade union movement within Esperanza including the right wing Esperanzan Workers Union, the left wing National Trade Union Federation, and the radical Altairian Workers Federation. The employers organized themselves into the Esperanzan Chamber of Commerce as well as into a variety of special interest trade associations including the influential Esperanzan Mining Association.

*Contemporary Economic Policies.* As previously mentioned, the King appears to have set his country on the course toward economic liberalization, and with the election of Andrew Aranda and his Centrist Convergence party, the people seem to be following their Monarch. This new direction has emerged after a four year experience with a Socialist government that did little to change a majority of the corporatist policies of the Fire administration and added considerable expenditures on social welfare programs. The King and his Prime Minister are proceeding cautiously to eliminate various subsidies to the private sector without touching off civil unrest from the military or from Altairian separatists.

self-government.

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### *Government and Social Institutions*

**Historical Background.** The modern political history of Esperanza begins with the Revolution of 1875 when liberal forces forced the monarchy to abandon an absolutist position and become a constitutional monarchy. This constitutional monarchy remained the legitimate government of Esperanza until the declaration of the Republic of Esperanza in 1943. The Republic of Esperanza failed to provide a stable order and collapsed under the pressure of conservative forces led by General Eric Fire during the Esperanzan Civil War. Fire established an authoritarian state that effectively ruled Esperanza until his death in 1990.



PRESIDENT ERIC FIRE

The National Movement, the political party centered around the cult of General Fire, played the central governing role throughout the years of the Fire administration. Fire was elected to seven six-year terms as President. In the constitution of 1976, Fire took substantial steps to restore many parliamentary features to the governance of Esperanza though this constitution was by no means democratic. Half of the members of parliament were appointed by Fire while the other half were elected according to the principle functional representation for significant parts of society such as the Roman Catholic Church, the National Worker and Employer Syndicate, the Royal Academy of Sciences, and other socially prominent institutions and groups. The cabinet of the executive branch was also selected by Fire and not the parliament. All political parties except for the Agrarian, the National Movement, and the Christian Democratic parties were prohibited. The 1976 constitution also provided for the restoration of the monarchy. King John Patroclus IV ascended the throne in 1992 and began reforms oriented toward democratization, which gave birth to the constitution of 1993.

The elections that emerged from the constitution of 1993 propelled a left wing coalition led by the Socialist Party into power. The present constitution still gives the monarch considerable powers. King John hopes to further reform his country's political system and leave his people a fully functioning parliamentary democracy.

**The Constitution of 1993.** Upon ascending the throne in 1992, King John initiated a constitutional convention to reform the 1976 constitution. The new constitution provides for freedom of political speech and opens the way for a political process rooted in party politics. Along with political liberty, the constitution of 1993 recognizes the rights of equality before the law, freedom of worship, privacy, freedom of residence and movement, and freedom of expression and education. These rights may be suspended for a period of up to 60 days in the event of a national emergency. The new constitution also provides for the direct election by the people of the Senate. As a concession to conservative forces, the King maintains control of appointments to the Council of State. Another important concession to Esperanzan conservatives is the seven percent of GDP military expenditure clause written into the constitution, which obliges the legislature to set aside seven percent of the GDP for expenditures on the armed forces.

The new constitution maintained Esperanza's status as a constitutional monarchy. The Esperanzan Crown has considerable powers when compared to other constitutional monarchies. The Monarch is head of state and the nation's highest representative in international affairs. He is also commander in chief of the armed forces, although King John has been scrupulous in deferring to the civilian leadership of the Defense Ministry. The monarch's most important functions include the duty to formally summon and dissolve the legislature, appoint and accept the resignation of the Prime Minister, cabinet members, members of the supreme court, the governing board of the Bank of Esperanza, and members of the Council of State, ratify and veto laws, declare wars, and sign treaties decided upon by the government

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The legislative branch consists of elected Senate and the appointed Council of State. Currently 220 Senators are elected from voting districts of approximately equal population. The term of office of a senator is three years though it can be less if the Monarch dissolves the Senate. The Senate is responsible for budgetary appropriations and the creation of national law. The legal system of Esperanza is based upon the Napoleonic Code.

The Council of State consists of approximately 25 members appointed by the Monarch. The Council of State has the right to return legislation to the Lower House with recommendations for improvement up to three times. After the Council of State has affirmed the Senate's legislation it becomes law with or without action by the Monarch. The constitution gives the Monarch the power of veto, though the current King has not used this power. A veto may be overturned by a vote of three-quarters of the Senate.

The executive branch consists of the Prime Minister and members of the cabinet. Since the executive is responsible to the legislature and must be approved by a majority vote, the Prime Minister is usually the leader of the majority party. The Prime Minister appoints cabinet members through a process involving consultation with the Monarch. The Senate can dismiss the Prime Minister through a vote of no confidence.

The judicial branch of government is separate from the executive and legislative branches. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land and its five members are appointed by the Monarch. These members are charged with interpreting whether any law passed by municipal, provincial, or national legislative bodies is in accordance with the 1993 Constitution. The Bar of each province elects the provincial judgeships. The people of the municipality elect municipal magistrates. The law is administered as a civil law system based on the Napoleonic Code.

**The political process.** Democratic plurality and universal suffrage are guaranteed by the constitution. All citizens of 18 years of age or older are entitled to vote in national, provincial, and municipal elections.

Political parties are described in the constitution as expressing political pluralism, contributing to the formation and manifestation of the will of the people, and serving as the fundamental instrument of political participation.

There are seven major political parties in Esperanza. The present governing coalition is led by the Centrist Convergence. Prime Minister Andrew Aranda founded this party in 1993.

The party has embraced a liberal political agenda and has formed a coalition government including Republica Esperanza and Agrarian Party. The main difference between the Centrist Convergence and the Republica Esperanza is political pragmatism. Both parties embrace liberal principles, but Aranda's party is more willing to accommodate the political realities of an Esperanzan system founded in corporatism. The bulk of support for the Centrist Convergence comes from a broad base of businessmen favorable to free market reforms and an Esperanzan public that is fascinated with the economic success of the United States.

The Republica Esperanza, founded in 1938, is the historical torchbearer of liberalism in Esperanza. It is a party that is popular among Esperanzan intellectuals and some sectors of the business community, but its purity of principle makes it an unattractive party for most Esperanzans. The present leader of the party, Gustav Molk, is an eloquent defender of libertarian philosophy.

The Christian Democratic Party, founded during the Republican period, is inclined to liberal social and conservative economic policies. The party's guiding principles are faith, peace, and justice, and it finds its support mainly among liberal Catholics. Ricardo Matisse, the present leader of the Christian Democrats, hopes that his party can solve the economic and political problems of the country by acting as a moderating, independent force.

The Socialist Party is at present a vigorous loyal opposition to the Centrist Convergence coalition. Gregor Mendoza's Socialists came to power in 1994 and introduced a wide variety of social legislation that increased spending in the areas of education, the environment, and health and contributed to the present budget deficit. His party also introduced legislation supporting Altairian autonomy. This move was highly unpopular among the conservatives and violence threatened to erupt. King John called for elections on this issue. The result was a resounding defeat for the Socialists and an upswing of support for the parties that offered a vision for a peaceful and unified Esperanza. The Socialists have tremendous support among the trade unions and among Altairian nationalists as well as Esperanzan's who view the state as having the potential to play a benevolent social role.

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The leading voice of conservative Esperanzans is the National Restoration Party, which was created from a 1992 split in the National Movement Party. Fire's death and the general lack of popularity for an authoritarian state dealt a severe blow to the political power of the National Movement Party. The youth wing of National Movement formed National Restoration in the run-up to the 1994 elections as a more modern face for the traditional message. The red scare of the Mendoza regime, the failure to meet the seven percent military GDP provision in the constitution, and the crisis over Altair improved the fortunes of the party. Theodore Reich, the leader of the National Restorationists, hopes that the impending economic and political will serve to return his party to power. The army, civil guard, conservative Catholics and small business people form the core support for the National Restorationists.

The Agrarian Party is a bit of a misnomer. Founded by 19<sup>th</sup> Century liberals, it has become the principal voice of 20<sup>th</sup> Century urban industrialists and economic conservatives, as well as the export oriented agricultural sector. Over the last decade the Agrarians have sought to amplify their minority party status by acting as a "swing vote" between liberal and conservative political agendas. Since 1998 the party has participated in the current coalition government. While internationalist in many of its perspectives, the party fears the liberalization of trade's potential adverse affects on the agricultural sector. Alois Delano, the leader of the Agrarians, hopes to protect agriculture's privileged position through his alliance with Central Convergence.

The smallest party in the current Senate is The National Movement. Fire's former power base has become a radical right wing party that speaks of a greater Esperanza. Its showings in elections have been minuscule, but it is extremely vocal about opposing Altairian autonomy. Some within its ranks even talk about annexing Brasa to Esperanza. Joseph Mange has tied his party to the National Restorationist Party and hopes to bargain his few senatorial votes into influence on internal and foreign affairs.

Not all politically active groups are organized as political parties. Land and Freedom, the outlawed Altairian independence movement, has the goal of establishing an independent, socialistic, Altairian republic. The movement has engaged in many random acts of violence and is a major destabilizing factor in the region's politics.

The rugged mountains of the northeast and sympathy from an Altairian public appreciative of its freedom fighters make this movement an intractable problem facing the Esperanzan government. The leader of the movement, Commandant Ruiz, promises to fight until Altair is free from the specter of fascism.

Religious movements have come to play an important role in Esperanzan politics. The Roman Catholic Church is divided in its political attitudes. The *Reconciliation of the People* is a movement largely aligned with the Christian Democratic Party's platform of faith, peace, and justice. The movement gained substantial momentum during the debate over Altair's role in Esperanza. Many of the younger clergy, centered around the Bishop of Altair, actively embrace "socialism with a Christian face" as the best means of securing political stability for Esperanza.

The conservative church has expressed concerns about politically active clergy. The Archbishop of Coronado has gone so far as to make a public statement about how "the salvation of souls and not the winning of elections" should be the primary focus of the clergy. In recent years, the conservative *Faith and Freedom* movement has launched an attempt to reform the country's centers of religious education and to weed out what they perceive to be the religious heresy of political activism. Ironically, many leaders of *Faith and Freedom* held positions of substantial influence during the Fire regime.

A discussion of the Esperanzan political process would not be complete without an examination of the role played by the military in Esperanzan politics. There are four branches of the military in Esperanza. They are the Air Force, Army, Civil Guard, and Navy. Officially, the armed services are isolated from the political process. However as of this date, the Chief of Staff of each branch has served in the Prime Minister's Cabinet in an advisory role. Unofficially, the military and the threat of a military coup play a conservative role in Esperanzan politics. This informal influence is so substantial that not even the Socialists considered repealing the seven percent GDP clause regarding military expenditures in the 1993 constitution. Many commentators believe that the election results of 1998 were influenced by the presence of a powerful military and the potential of a coup associated with that power.

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Trade unions and trade associations also contribute to the political life of Esperanza. The trade unions, with the notable exception of the Esperanzan Workers Union, are generally sympathetic to left wing causes. The Esperanzan Chamber of Commerce and the Esperanzan Mining Association are generally sympathetic to the policies of the liberal governing coalition. Many of the trade associations for industries that are not competitive on the world market flirt with either the National Restoration Party or the Socialist Party.

### **Cultural Life**

**The Cultural Milieu.** Esperanzan cultural life is rich. The meeting of four distinct cultures, Muslim, Esperanzan Roman Catholic, Altairian Roman Catholic, and Latian Orthodox, has made Esperanza a crucible of creativity. Esperanza has produced two Nobel Prize winners in literature and has made significant contributions in architecture, sculpture, painting, music, science, and more recently in film. Trends toward the internationalization of culture have made the eclectic style of Esperanzan culture a model for the meeting of cultures.

**The Universities and Related Bodies.** Esperanzan cultural life is supported by an infrastructure of formal institutions. The most important of these social institutions are the universities. There are three major universities in Esperanza. The oldest one of these universities is the University of Coronado. The University of Coronado was founded by the Benedictine order in the later part of the Middle Ages and has been an active center of learning since that time. The University of Altair is the second oldest university in the country and was founded by Augustinian Monks not much later than the University of Coronado. It has been the center of Altairian culture, and is home to the Institute of the Altairian Language. The country's third major university, Neuvilla University, was founded by Count Avadorres and is a noted center of scientific and engineering research. The University of Altair is generally considered to be sympathetic to left wing causes, whereas the University of Coronado is the most conservative institution in the country. The center of liberal thought in the country is Neuvilla University.

A vast array of coordinating bodies mediate interaction between the universities including the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, the internationally known Royal Academy of History, and the Royal Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences. Most of these institutions date back to the Esperanzan Enlightenment.



THE CODAC MUSEUM (CORONADO)

Esperanza has numerous museums and libraries throughout the country. Some of the most notable museums are the Cadaz, the national art museum, located in Coronado, and the Museum of Oceanography and Nautical History of Altair. The most impressive library in the country is the Delacrossa Library and Gardens in Coronado. The Library contains over 500,000 volumes ranging from the original manuscripts of Ovid to the first Brasan Koran. Its Medieval and Enlightenment collections are especially good.

**Other Cultural Institutions.** Esperanza has a world renowned National Orchestra and Opera. Even during the low point of Esperanza's international reputation, these bodies acted as ambassadors of goodwill throughout the world.

The most significant private foundation in Esperanza is the Amagi Fund. Amagi is an ancient Sanskrit word standing for liberty. The Amagi Fund was founded by Esperanzan mining mogul, Andrew Dericco. The fund's purpose is "to support and develop institutional discussion conducive to the development of a free society". This fund is rumored to have in excess of 350 million dollars to promote its cultural programs.

**The Press.** Since the 1993 constitution established freedom of the press, the newspaper business has met with a great level of success in Esperanza. Major newspapers include the Coronado Guardian, the Altair Chronicle, and the Neuvilla Times. An Esperanzan law that makes the press responsible for damages caused by false accusations has kept the press reasonably responsible in its coverage of public figures.

## ► *Recent History, Culture, and Politics of Esperanza*

**Radio and Television Broadcasting.** Historically the state has controlled both radio and television broadcasting industries. The Voice of Esperanza is the major radio station in the country. Recent laws opening up the airwaves have led to fierce competition for listeners leading to what some have argued to be a lowering of cultural standards. Similarly, the Esperanzan National Television Corporation has encountered strong competition through the introduction of satellite technology. Discussion of privatizing these entities has been at the top of the present governing coalition's agenda.

### **Modern History**

The modern history of Esperanza began in 1875 with a disastrous effort by the military-dominated Esperanzan government to repress a rebellion in the largely Muslim-populated province of Brasa. The defeat of a large Esperanzan army led to the practical independence of the province, which was confirmed by the 1902 International Covenant on Brasa. In reaction to what was widely perceived as a national humiliation, King Charles IX abdicated in favor of his eleven-year-old daughter, Isabel, who became Queen under the regency of the liberal Prime Minister, the Count of Avadorres. Under Avadorres a constitutional monarchy with a strong parliament was established. Symbolic of this change was the transfer of the national capital from the ancient city of Coronado to the industrial city of Neuvilla.

Between 1876 and 1894 the Avadorres "Regency" fostered significant industrial development, the emergence of free trade unions, the secularization of the state, universal education, and significant regional autonomy, especially for the northern province of Altair, which has a cultural identity distinct from that of Esperanza. In 1895, however, Queen Isabel dismissed Avadorres, who was replaced by a series of conservative and largely ineffective premiers. A 1901 effort to reclaim Brasa was headed off before hostilities began when combined Anglo-Franconian naval task forces sailed into the ports of Altair and Pireus, and Franconia began to mass troops across the River Tannus. Continued international pressure resulted in Esperanza agreeing to the 1902 International Covenant. Domestically, this international failure served to undermine the credibility of conservative civilian leadership. Following 1902 the cabinet was often dominated by recently retired military officers in civilian dress. In 1914 a general strike in Altair spread nationwide. Viewed as a threat to national unity, the government broke up the strike with the use of military force and hundreds of deaths.

Following the 1914 strike, which was led by non-religious Socialists and Syndicalists, the Catholic Church began to play an increasingly active role in the state, including priests serving as Ministers of Education, Social Welfare, and in one case as Minister of Finance.

Queen Isabel died of cancer in 1928 and was succeeded by her son, King Paul (born 1901). During the Depression of the 1930s socialist, communist, and other reform elements increasingly emerged calling for social and political change. The government and conservative social elements regularly used the military to suppress the reform efforts. A robust Altairian independence movement began to emerge. King Paul's and the government's sympathy for the Axis powers in World War II caused a significant rupture in conservative solidarity, with the Navy and Church opposed to joining the Axis. The naming of a new and comparatively liberal Archbishop also resulted in the Church withdrawing from active involvement in the state. Concern over the intentions of the Esperanzan government also prompted covert Allied support for civilian and military reform elements. Discontent was increasingly vocal. Protests were increasingly frequent. The rank-and-file of the military and Civil Guard were increasingly unreliable in suppressing riots that included their mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters.

In 1943 regular municipal elections, held nationwide, produced a surprising result. Across the country, in all but four jurisdictions, conservative and monarchical parties lost badly. Republica Esperanza, a liberal democratic coalition of moderate trade unions, intellectuals, and the professional middle class won a large number of local elections, followed by the Socialists, followed by the very recently formed Christian Democrats, made up largely of liberal Catholics. The King's brother-in-law, the head of Navy, advised the King that he should depart the country for his own safety. The King did depart, though without abdicating. A republic was declared with the former rector of the University of Altair as its President and a Neuvilla physician as its first Prime Minister.

## ► *Recent History, Culture, and Politics of Esperanza*

Five years of enthusiastic but largely ineffectual republican government resulted in a conservative backlash and civil war in 1948. Contributing causes included efforts to deprive the Church of its property, other land reforms designed to break-up large land holdings in the high plains of Esperanza, a significant reduction in the size and budget of the military, the prospects for giving Altair internal autonomy, and an increasing communist involvement in the government. In 1948 a Colonel Eric Fire, commander of the Coronado military region, announced a revolution for "national restoration and the defeat of communism". The Civil War ended in 1953 with General Fire and conservative elements in command. General Fire began the first of what would become seven six-year presidential terms. Fire ruled until his death in 1990, which precipitated the nation's transition to democracy. Fire rebuilt the Esperanzan economy and social fabric along conservative nationalist lines. He allowed the United States to maintain air and naval bases in Esperanza, and developed the manufacturing, tourist, and export agriculture industries.

In 1976 President Fire sponsored a new constitution which restored many parliamentary features to Esperanza but was by no means a democratic constitution. Half the members of the Parliament were directly appointed by Fire, and the other half were elected through a mechanism of institutional representation. While the cabinet was mostly civilian, it was a creature of the President not the Parliament. The constitution also called for the restoration of the monarchy. Legislation was passed during Fire's last two terms that called for Prince John, son of the deposed King Paul, to become Monarch upon the death of the President. Fire groomed Prince John for his future role as King, brought him back from exile, and sent him to the Military Academy and then to law school at Oxford.

The 1976 constitution established a supposedly secure position for the National Movement Party, and enabled Fire to pursue a series of policies that strengthened strategic industries and developed the infrastructure of the country. The Railroad Revitalization Act 1978 and a variety of expenditures on highways and airports characterized this time. Fire's special relationship with the United States enabled him to pursue a more aggressive foreign policy, including actions that led to the 1978 "Sardine War" with Franconia and several naval skirmishes with Alerian gunboats over disputed maritime borders. Esperanzan nationalism under Fire did much to hide some basic problems that would come to the surface after Fire's death.

During the 80s members of the National Movement Party began to take advantage of their privileged positions and corruption ran rampant underneath the nose of an aging Fire. Focus on strategic industries led to blindness regarding basic social welfare issues that were hidden under the boot of an authoritarian state. The détente between the United States and the Soviet Union also made the military bases offered by Esperanza to be a less important asset to the United States than they had been during the Cold War. American Presidents began to focus on the authoritarian nature of the Esperanzan government as opposed to their previous praise for Esperanza's staunch anti-Communist policies.

When Fire died in 1990, the stable transition he envisioned was disrupted by the hierarchy of the National Movement Party. Fearing the Prince's purported liberal tendencies, the party leaders attempted to postpone his coronation indefinitely through the mechanism of a Party-organized regency. This move by a party widely reviled as corrupt and bloated led to popular demonstrations across the country in support of the Prince. The Spring of 1991, as this outpouring of support for Prince John came to be called, resulted in a confrontation between the armed services and the National Movement when the Civil Guard and Army refused to fire upon protesters. Rather than be deposed by an irate military, the National Movement regency made arrangements for the coronation of Prince John in January of 1992.

King John Patroclus IV began his reign approving legislation that legalized independent trade unions, political parties, and political expression. He then dismissed the Parliament and reconvened it with a diverse cadre of influential and powerful Esperanzans. The 1993 constitution emerged from this gathering, and Esperanza was set on the path of becoming a constitutional monarchy.

The first election under this constitution had a not unsurprising result. After years under political conservatives, the people voted in masses for left wing candidates. The Socialists, under Gregor Mendoza formed a governing coalition and went about attending to issues of social welfare, education and environmental protection, which had been neglected for so long under the National Movement.

## ► *Recent History, Culture, and Politics of Esperanza*



CORONATION OF KING JOHN PATROCLUS IV

During Mendoza's regime, the Esperanzans signed various international agreements regarding the environment including the Biodiversity and the Endangered Species Agreements. Mendoza's regime failed to attend to issues of fiscal responsibility and three years of negative economic growth promised to make this a nagging problem for the Socialists. The innovative solution they proposed to remedy this problem, autonomy for the various provinces of Esperanza, was the undoing of the Mendoza government.

Mendoza proposed experimenting with autonomy for Altair. Mendoza argued that smaller economies could be more efficiently organized under socialist principles. Conservative forces and the average Esperanzan heard the death knell of a greater Esperanza in this proposal. King John called for a referendum on this vital issue and the result was a resounding defeat for Mendoza's Socialists, though not for Esperanzan democracy. Andrew Aranda's Centrist Convergence Party was able to sweep the field on the basis of an argument for the liberalization of the Esperanzan economy and a localization of governance without the divisions conjured up by the vision of autonomous provinces. The Agrarians and the Republica Esperanza joined Aranda's party to form today's governing "national unity" coalition.

Aranda's coalition faces many problems. They must find a way to balance the budget, lower unemployment, improve the balance of trade, maintain the support of the military, and prevent divisive forces from pulling Altair away from a greater Esperanza. The rejection of Altairian autonomy has inspired Land and Liberty, a radical Altairian separatist movement to launch a campaign of terror. This radicalism has in turn strengthened the conservatives including the reactionary League of Honor. The diverse nature of Esperanza's population makes the successful handling of the issue of provincial minorities central to the success of any government seeking to preserve Esperanzan democracy.

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*This overview of Esperanza was compiled by Dr. Todd Myers and Dr. Thomas Bruneau with assistance from Mr. Eric Masters and Ms. Joanna Fabre.*

## ► Facts and Figures: The Kingdom of Esperanza

### Area:

*total:* 504,000 sq. km

### Area-comparative:

Slightly more than twice the size of Oregon

### Maritime claims:

*Long-term dispute with Latia regarding shared maritime border; fishing rights disputes with Franconia related to waters north of the Celtan Islands; ongoing tension with Aleria regarding potential off-shore oil deposits .*

### Climate:

mild temperate; cool, cloudy, wet winters; hot, clear, dry summers; interior is cooler and dryer.

### Terrain:

Esperanza constitutes most of a continental peninsula. The peninsula is defined by the ocean and Hieronmite Mountains to the West, the Bay of Altair and Tannus River in the North, the Pindus Mountains to the east, and the Illurian Sea to the South. Between the Hieronomite and Pindus Mountains the terrain is divided between the high Coronado Plateau and the gently descending alluvial hills of the Valdez and Tannus River watersheds.

### Elevation extremes:

*lowest point:* Sea Level 0m

*highest point:* Mount Alta 4006m

### Natural resources:

coal, nickel, cobalt, copper, and timber

### Land use:

*arable land:* 31%

*permanent crops:* 9%

*permanent pastures:* 21%

*forests and woodland:* 37%

*other:* 7%

### Natural hazards:

destructive earthquakes; tornadoes

### Environment-current issues:

deforestation; soil erosion; water pollution from industrial and domestic effluents

### Environment-international agreements:

Air Pollution, Air Pollution-Nitrogen Oxides, Air Pollution-Sulphur 94, Air Pollution-Volatile Organic Compounds, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Nuclear Test Ban, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands

### People

#### Population:

36,336,754

#### Age structure:

*0-14 years:* 15%

*15-64 years:* 69%

*65 years and over:* 16%

#### Population growth rate:

0.18%

#### Birth rate:

9.73 births/1,000 population

#### Death rate:

9.62 deaths/1,000 population

#### Net migration rate:

0.66 migrant(s)/1,000 population

#### Sex ratio:

*at birth:* 1.07 male(s)/female

*under 15 years:* 1.06 male(s)/female

*15-64 years:* 1 male(s)/female

*65 years and over:* 0.71 male(s)/female (1998 est.)

#### Infant mortality rate:

6.51 deaths/1,000 live births (1998 est.)

#### Life expectancy at birth:

*total population:* 77.56 years

*male:* 73.78 years

*female:* 81.59 years (1998 est.)

#### Total fertility rate:

1.21 children born/woman (1998 est.)

#### Nationality:

*noun:* Esperanzan

*adjective:* Esperanzan

#### Ethnic groups:

Esperanzan 65%, Altarian 20%, Brasan 10%, Latian 5%,

#### Religions:

Roman Catholic 70%, Muslim 15%, Orthodox 5%, Other 10%

#### Languages:

Esperanzan; Latian, Arabic

#### Literacy:

*definition:* age 15 and over can read and write

*total population:* 95%

*male:* 95%

*female:* 95%

## ► Facts and Figures: The Kingdom of Esperanza

### Government

#### Country name:

*conventional long form:* The Kingdom of Esperanza

#### Data code:

KE

#### Government type:

Parliamentary Monarchy (in transition from authoritarian corporatist state)

#### National capital:

Neuvilla

#### Administrative divisions:

7 provinces

#### National holidays:

Monarch's Birthday (currently May 12)

#### Constitution:

November 1976

#### Legal system:

Based on Napoleonic Code

#### Suffrage:

18 years of age universal and compulsory

#### Executive branch:

*Head of state:* King John Patroclus IV (since 1992)  
*Head of government:* Prime Minister Andrew Aranda (since 1998)

*Council of Ministers:* Named by monarch in consultation with the Prime Minister

#### Legislative branch:

Senate, consisting of 220 members elected to serve three year terms (last election 1998). All legislation originates in the Senate; and Council of State, consisting of approximately 25 members who serve at pleasure of the Monarch, must affirm Senate legislation or may return legislation to Senate with recommendations for improvement. Legislation may be returned to Senate by Council of State up to three times over a period of two years.

**Judicial branch:** Five-member Supreme Court, judges are appointed by the Monarch

#### Political parties:

Socialist (35 Senators), Christian Democrats (18 Senators), Republica Esperanza (32 Senators), Centrist Convergence (84 Senators), Agrarian (21 Senators), National Restoration (15 Senators), The National Movement (5 Senators)

### Economy

A nascent high technology industry appears to be developing around the U.S. Air Force base thirty miles northwest of Pireus, but per capita income in Southern Esperanza remains about 60 percent of that in the industrial North. Yet Southern Esperanza's economy is sufficiently more robust than that of neighboring Brasas that the migration of "temporary workers" from that nation has served to keep wage increases modest. In recent years, military spending has become an issue with pensioners and the military itself beginning to drain government coffers. Esperanza ran a deficit in 1996 and has done so for the past 3 years.

#### GDP:

purchasing power parity-\$482.4 billion (1997 est.)

#### GDP-real growth rate:

-1.8%

#### GDP-per capita:

purchasing power parity-\$14,400

#### GDP-composition by sector:

*agriculture:* 24%

*industry:* 52%

*services:* 24%

#### Inflation rate-consumer price index:

2.1%

#### Labor force:

*total:* 13.2 million

*by occupation:* services 20%, manufacturing, mining, and construction 55%, agriculture 25% (1997 est.)

#### Unemployment rate:

9% (1997 est.)

#### Budget:

*revenues:* \$113 billion

*expenditures:* \$139 billion, including capital expenditures of \$15 billion (1995)

#### Industries:

textiles and apparel (including footwear), food and beverages, metals and metal manufactures, mining, chemicals, weapons, durable goods, machine tools,

#### Industrial production growth rate:

0.8% (1996)

#### Electricity-capacity:

39.583 million kW (1995)

#### Electricity-production:

154.144 billion kWh (1995)

#### Electricity-consumption per capita:

4,026 kWh (1995)

**Economy-overview:**

Esperanza has a mixed capitalist economic system with some unique peculiarities, the most notable a constitutionally mandated 7% GDP expenditure on the military. Estimates for military income range between 3-5% of GDP, still short of their 7% mandate. The government controls the majority of transportation, communications, electricity and about 60% of a well-developed durable goods manufacturing system. The manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in a crescent running from Altair in the North to Neuvilla in the South and extending along the River Tannus (border with Franconia). The mining industry, concentrated in the northeastern mountains, has been able to remain out of the hands of the government and employs nearly 20% of the population. Rich deposits of coal, nickel, cobalt, copper, and timber have helped place Esperanza in a highly competitive position in the mining industry. Beef from the high plateau of Central Esperanza and wine from the coastal region of Pireus are also sources of export revenue and national pride. Over the last 15 years there has been significant attention to building the tourist industry along the beaches of Pireus Province and the Pindus Mountains of Southeastern Esperanza.

**Agriculture-products:**

grain, vegetables, olives, wine grapes, sugar beets, citrus; beef, pork, poultry, dairy products

**Exports:**

*total value:* \$94.5 billion

*commodities:* semifinished manufactured goods, foodstuffs, machinery, ores,

**Imports:**

*total value:* \$98.3 billion

*commodities:* machinery, transport equipment, fuels, semifinished goods, foodstuffs, consumer goods, chemicals

**Debt-external:**

\$37 billion

**Currency:**

1 Drachma = 100 centimes

**Fiscal year:**

calendar year

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## ► Facts and Figures: The Kingdom of Esperanza

### Communications

#### Telephones:

15.6 million (1990 est.)

#### Telephone system:

generally adequate, modern facilities

*domestic:* NA

*international:* 22 coaxial submarine cables; satellite earth stations-2 Intelsat (1 Atlantic Ocean and 1 Indian Ocean), NA Eutelsat, NA Inmarsat, and NA Marecs; tropospheric scatter to adjacent countries

#### Radio broadcast stations:

AM 190, FM 406 (repeaters 134), shortwave 0

#### Radios:

5 million (1992 est.)

#### Television broadcast stations:

100 (repeaters 1,297)

#### Televisions:

8.7 million (1992 est.)

### Transportation

#### Railways:

*total:* 5,172 km

#### Highways:

*total:* 144,847 km

*paved:* 141,399 km (including 7,747 km of expressways)

*unpaved:* 3,448 km (1996 est.)

#### Waterways:

545 km but of minor economic importance

#### Pipelines:

crude oil 265 km; petroleum products 1,794 km; natural gas 1,666 km

#### Airports:

48 (1997 est.)

#### Airports-with paved runways:

*total:* 45

*over 3,047 m:* 15

*2,438 to 3,047 m:* 7

*1,524 to 2,437 m:* 6

*914 to 1,523 m:* 8

*under 914 m:* 9 (1997 est.)

**Heliports:** 8 (1997 est.)

### Military

#### Military branches:

Army, Navy Air Force, Civil Guard, National Police.

#### Military manpower-military age:

18 years of age

#### Military manpower-availability:

*males age 15-49:* 8,987,539 (1998 est.)

#### Military manpower-fit for military service:

*males:* 8,369,756 (1998 est.)

#### Military manpower-reaching military age annually:

*males:* 323,552 (1998 est.)

#### Military expenditures-dollar figure:

\$9.4 billion (1995)

#### Military expenditures-percent of GDP:

7% (1995)

### Transnational Issues

#### Disputes-international:

Latia has never recognized the legitimacy of the Asturian occupation of the Iliki River Valley (1879), but there has been no active effort by Latia to reclaim this territory since a failed mediation effort in 1905. Esperanzan and Alerian gunboats have exchanged occasional fire, but sustained no damage, in an ongoing dispute regarding their maritime border. This issue has, however, been complicated recently by the identification of undersea oil reserves in the boundary zone. In 1976 a so-called "Sardine War" briefly flared in the Bay of Altair as Esperanzan and Franconian naval forces sought to enforce disputed fishing zones. The issue is currently before the International Court of Justice, but joint fishing has proceeded without incident since 1978. The 1902 International Covenant recognizing the independence of Brasa was ambiguous regarding the status of the region southwest of the Praxis River, but this region has been consistently occupied by Esperanza and Brasa has undertaken no formal diplomatic measures to clarify the ambiguity, though it remains an occasional cause for friction in bilateral relations. Right-wing parties in Asturias continue to call for reintegration with Brasa, but since 1902 no Esperanzan government has articulated this as official policy.

► **Maps**

**Geo-Political Map of Esperanza**

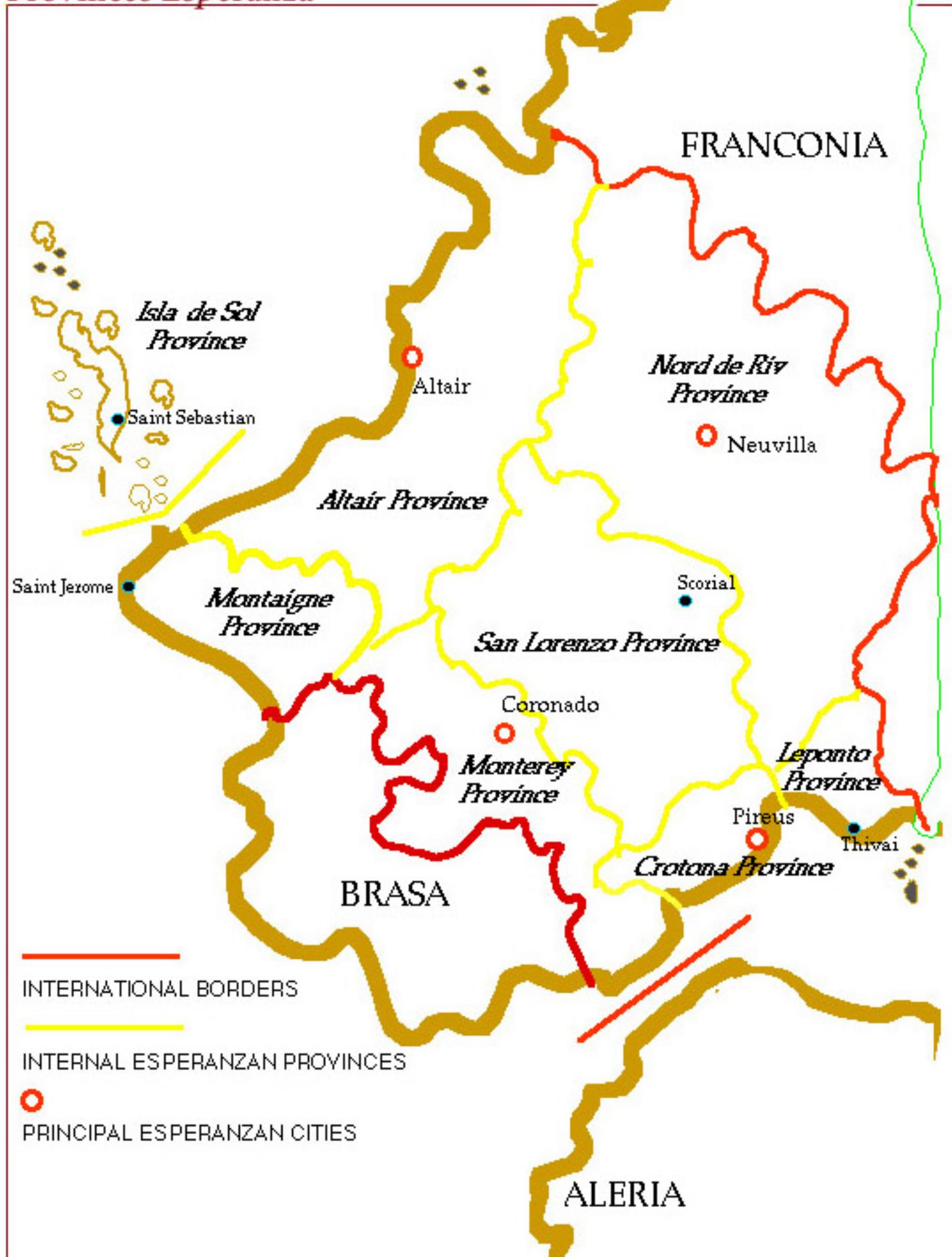




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► Maps

*Provinces Esperanza*

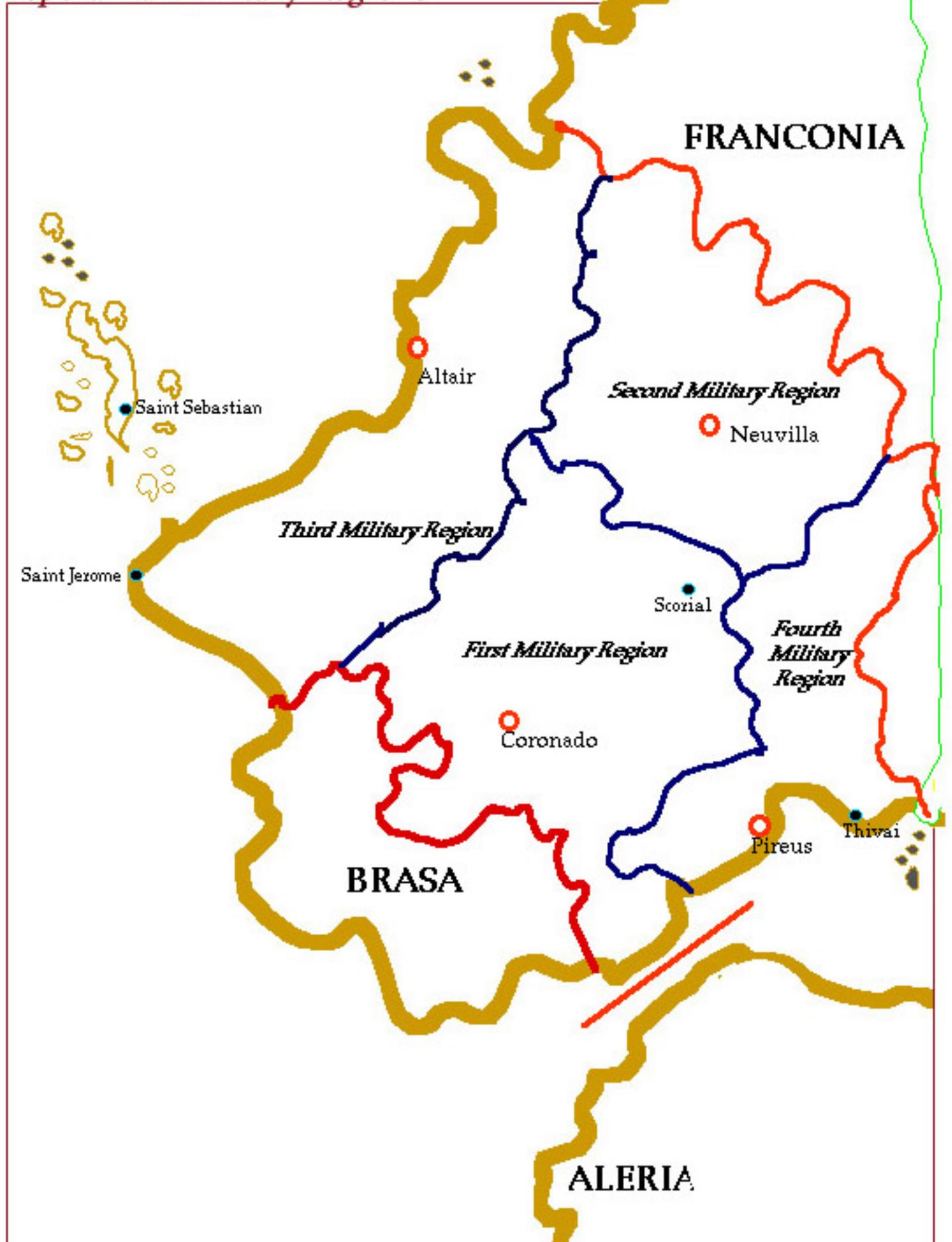




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► **Maps**

**Esperanza Military Regions**





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## ▶ Maps

*Roman Catholic Diocese of Esperanza*

The Latian Orthodox **Archdiocese of Thivai** is coincident with the Catholic diocese of St. Thomas Didymus, St. Philip, St. John the Baptist, and Saint James.

► *Maps*

*Ethnic Minorities in Esperanza*





## ► *The Principal Institutions of Espernza*

The earliest recorded human institution in Esperanza was the Council of Pireus (circa 440 BC), the governing body of the Latian commercial colony located near the modern city of the same name. During the late Medieval period a dense fabric of institutional structures emerged, including municipal councils, commercial guilds, feudal fiefs, Catholic parishes and dioceses, Muslim administrative regions, and, over-time, the various instruments of centralized royal administration. Some of these institutions continue unto the present day. In the 1<sup>th</sup> Century traditional political and cultural institutions were supplemented by a new kind of economic institution focused less on specific trades than on major financial sectors.

The following provides brief summaries of the principal governmental, economic, and cultural institutions of modern Esperanza with a focus on the last half-century. Political parties, while clearly important, are not summarized. Since 1990 the political situation has been so fluid that it would be largely inaccurate to perceive any of the political parties as sufficiently stable to constitute an "institution." Even the Agrarian Party, established over 100 years ago, would today be unrecognizable to its founders.

### *Political Institutions*

**The Monarchy** - Claiming direct descent from Prince Alexander Patroclus, recognized by the Sultan of Aleria as King of Crotona in 982 AD, the royal family is actually of a highly cosmopolitan historical and ethnic background. The current dynasty is principally of Nordic heritage and was introduced to Esperanza in 1712. The monarchy as an institution has been significantly influenced by the pattern of the Avadorres Regency (1876-1894) regarding which the current King has been a serious student.

The Monarch is recognized as the "personalization" of the nation's sovereignty, and in his or her (the 1993 Constitution allows female succession) hands are concentrated all political authority. By law this political authority is delegated to other institutions of the state. By recent practice, this delegation of authority is substantive and not liable to review or revision by the monarch. But legal scholars argue that the Esperanzan monarch is, *de jure*, an absolute sovereign, even though practice and political reality has significantly limited the Monarch's *de facto* political decision-making. For example, to date the current King has not used the power of legislative veto explicitly granted in the Constitution.

The Monarchy maintains its own bureaucracy, separate from that of the government. The Royal Administrative Office is headed by a Lord Chamberlain, and consists of a Household Office, a Calendaring Office, a Logistics Office, a National Security Office, a Legal Office, and a Research Office that operates as a kind of in-house think-tank.

**The Council of State** - The 1993 Constitution created a Council of State of undetermined size. The current King has generally maintained a Council of approximately twenty-five members. The Council must affirm and register laws adopted by the Senate. It may return laws to the Senate with recommendations for improvement up to three times in a period of two years. This power of delay is seen as an important check on any government's excessive focus on the near-term. Laws which are registered by the Council of State without the signature of the King are termed "*legate in concilium*" and may be reviewed and overturned by the courts on constitutional grounds. The King's signature creates a "*legate ex cathedra*" (from the throne) and may not be reviewed by the courts. Since assuming the throne the King has signed only one piece of legislation, that one focusing on the rights of free association. Meetings are chaired by a Lord President of the Council or by the Monarch. The current King has appointed both of his Prime Ministers to the Council, as well as other selected members of the cabinet. Prime Minister Mendoa is likely to have established a precedent when he resigned from the Council of State when his party lost the 1998 election. Members of the Council serve at the pleasure of the Monarch. In the case of a succession where the monarch is under age 25 the Council of State serves as a Regency Council.

Meetings of the Council of State are held in private. The minutes of its proceedings are limited to motions and formal actions. There is no record of the discussions held. There is an opulent room in the SanLucar Palace reserved for meetings of the Council of State. The Council has also convened at other locations.

**The Senate** - The 220 Senators are elected from districts of approximately equal population. The Senate House was built during the Avadorres Regency specifically to host an assembly of the people. The structure features a debating chamber that can accommodate nearly 300 and large public galleries. In a fairly unusual feature of modern parliaments, the Senators are seated by provincial rather than political allegiances. A semi-circle of small desks and chairs are arranged from left to right for delegations from the Isla de Sol, Montaigne, Altair, Monterey, San Lorenzo, Nord



## ▶ *The Principal Institutions of Espernza*



THE SENATE CHAMBER

In addition to elected representatives, the Monarch, Heir Apparent, Lord Chamberlain, Lord President of the Council of State, provincial Chief Ministers, and members of the cabinet who are not Senators are also recognized as members of the body with full rights to the floor and participation in debates, but without voting privileges.

The Senate elects from its membership a Tribune who serves as Chair. The Tribune only votes in case of a tie, but has the power to name Senators to committees and appoint special committees. Senate Committees are typically the principal source of legislation. There are currently ten committees.

1. Committee on Agriculture, Commerce, Fisheries, Mining, and Industry
2. Committee on Banking, Finance, and Treasury Affairs
3. Committee on the Budget and Taxation
4. Committee on Defense and Military Affairs
5. Committee on Education, Culture, Health and Social Welfare
6. Committee on Foreign Affairs
7. Committee on Internal Security
8. Committee on Justice and the Judiciary
9. Committee on Transportation and Public Works
10. Committee on Senate Organization and Agenda

The Committee on Senate Organization and Agenda is, by practice, identical to the cabinet, and in this form has the authority to refer legislative proposals to committees and set the agenda for Senate action.

**The Government**-The monarch names the head of government, presumably from the Party capable of organizing a majority in the Senate. A majority of the Senate is required to vote to confirm the head of government selected by the monarch. The head of government is formally known as the Lord Chancellor, but more usually as the Prime Minister or Premier. Ministers of the government departments are also officially named by the Monarch, but since 1992 have been chosen by the Prime Minister from among various party leaders.

The Cabinet consists of Ministers, Secretaries of State, the Procurator-General, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Heir Apparent (when over age 18). The current members of the Cabinet, in order of precedence, are:

The Lord Chancellor (Prime Minister): Andrew Aranda, (Center Convergence)

The Lord Chamberlain, The Marquis of Sully, (non-partisan)

The Minister of Justice and Procurator-General: Oswaldo Jameson, (Center Convergence)

The Minister of Foreign Affairs: Count Monte'Oro, (Republica Esperanza)

The Minister of Defense, Philip Salvadore, (Center Convergence)

The Minister of Finance and Lord Treasurer: Joseph Monino, (Agrarian)

The Minister of the Interior: Edward Squillaci (independent)

The Minister of Education, Culture, and Science: Ferdinand River, (Republica Esperanza)

Secretary of State for Health and Social Welfare: Maria Fisher (Center Convergence)

Secretary of State for International Trade: Mark Grimaldi, (Agrarian)

Secretary of State for Public Works: Nicholas Kyriodas., (Center Convergence)

Secretary of State Economic Development: Adrian Santerre (independent)

## ► *The Principal Institutions of Esperanza*

The current coalition government allows the major ministries significant latitude in the formulation and execution of policies. The cabinet, as such, seldom meets as a whole. An informal "national security cabinet," consisting of the Prime Minister and Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Interior, and the so-called "Home Cabinet," consisting of the Prime Minister and Ministers of Finance, Education, and the Secretaries of State are much more likely to meet and actually develop policy as a group. Oswaldo Jameson is an important political ally of the current Prime Minister and is often seen as a kind of deputy premier.

**The Provinces and Localities** - Each of the eight provinces elect their own assemblies and Chief Ministers (called a Governor in Altair and a Governor-General in Monterey). In recent years the provincial governments have assumed increasing responsibility for construction of transportation, education, and health-related infrastructure and have been given the authority to raise taxes for these purposes. Policy continues to be coordinated, however, at the national level. The current government is on record in support of increased federalism, but this policy is complicated by right-wing concerns over Altarian autonomy.

Many Esperanzan municipalities hold charters dating back several centuries. These grants of local authority typically include the right of legislating local regulations, police power, and judicial review of property and some minor criminal cases. Most localities elect a Chief Magistrate and a three to five person Curatorial Council. A tax on local commercial transactions is the most common source of local revenue. The persistence of local self-governance is often referenced as an explanation of Esperanza's relatively successful transition to democracy since 1990.

**The Bank of Esperanza**- Many of the most significant Esperanzan economic enterprises are organized as limited companies with Boards of Directors, officers, shares of stock and other attributes of modern capitalism. But in most cases the majority shareholder and often the only shareholder is the Bank of Esperanza. The Bank was originally created in 1882 as a fairly typical Central Bank Authority and it performed this role until the ascendancy of President Fire and the National Movement. Under President Fire the Bank became the principal instrument of national economic power. The Bank owns 100 percent of the phone company, electrical company, natural gas company, and railways. It owns over 80 percent of the steel industry, the national airline, and national petroleum refining and distribution network.

It is a majority shareholder in a vast network of commercial and manufacturing enterprises. Even the mining industry, largely privately owned, estimates that the Bank of Esperanza or its subsidiaries own up to a quarter of the industry's equity. It is likely that over sixty percent of the nation's Gross Domestic Product is "owned" by the Bank.

The twelve trustees (widely known as the Apostles) are appointed by the Monarch. Attempts by the Mendoza government to replace all twelve were resisted by the King. Partly as a result, members of the National Movement, largely displaced in other government institutions, continue to exercise significant authority within the Bank. The current Chairman of the Board of Trustees, however, is a distinguished economist and former rector of the University of Neuvilla. Appointed in 1998 upon the death of the prior chairman, Dr. Victor Lopez has cooperated in plans to privatize major elements of the Bank's holdings.

The Bank of Esperanza is a critically important governmental institution and is likely to remain a major source of economic and commercial policy for many years to come. Currently, however, the King's authority over the Trustees is resulting in the Bank pursuing a comparatively passive role in economic management that responds to government initiatives, rather than pursues an independently determined course. But this passivity is more the result of the King's preference than a legal or even a political requirement. The tools of influence available to the bank are extensive and reasonably immune from public examination.

**The Armed Forces** - Throughout Esperanzan history the military has played a critical role in national political life. Since the emergence of a professional military in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, soldiers have regularly been courted by politicians of every ideological stripe. The officer corps, especially in the Army, has typically been conservative in its social and political worldview. When military discipline has been well maintained, the rank and file has generally followed its officers. Military embarrassments have often been the impetus for political reform.

## ► *The Principal Institutions of Esperanza*

It is somewhat paradoxical that the military bequeathed to Esperanza upon the death of President Fire may be the most professional and non-ideological in the history of the state. While President (formerly General) Fire was perceived outside Esperanza as the leader of a military coup in 1948, he came to view himself more as a social and spiritual leader rather than a military leader. As a result, since at least the late-1960s, military education has focused on the profession of arms and obedience to civilian authority. The most dramatic evidence of this was the refusal of military leaders to support the National Movement's effort to delay the coronation of King John.

But even so, the military as an institution, remains self-conscious of a "special" role it plays in preserving and advancing national unity. It is the only Esperanzan institution that truly transcends regional, religious, and socio-economic divisions. There is also a strong sense of institutional self-preservation on the part of the Military. Access to budget, opportunities for promotion, and engagement in prestigious assignments are the focus of significant intra-institutional energies.

While the three military services and the para-military Civil Guard share many institutional characteristics, they are also unique and competitive.

The Army is the largest of the military branches, with a roster outnumbering all other branches taken together. In 1998 the Army consisted of nearly 80,000 troops. The organizational structure consists of four regionally-based Divisions commanded by Captain-Generals. Each division is made up of four or more brigades of approximately 5000 troops. Regiments of approximately 1000 troops are typically made up of three or four battalions.

The most prestigious commands are the so-called "Old Guard" infantry regiment, closely associated with royal protection; the paratroop regiment; and four armored regiments.

Most Army officers, and all general officers, are graduates of one or more of three elite military educational institutions. The College of Arms is the undergraduate military school founded in 1748. The Royal Institute of Artillery, despite its name, is a school for senior staff officers. Both of the foregoing institutions give significant attention to the creation of a shared Army culture and close relations between members of the Army officer corps. The Joint Defense University was founded in 1972 to provide advanced study in strategy and technology for all military branches.



SEAL OF THE ARMY

The King is Commandant-General of the Army and has the rank of Marshal. He is a graduate of the Royal Institute of Artillery and has good personal relations with a cross-section of officers in his generation. The most senior Army officers promoted under the Fire regime are approaching retirement age. They are among the last with personal memories of direct military involvement in political affairs.

The navy is organized in four squadrons, the Celtic Islands Squadron based in Saint Sebastian, the Bay of Altair Squadron based in Altair, the Illyrian Sea Squadron based in Pireus, and the Coastal Defense Squadron, headquartered in Saint Jerome, but deployed widely along the coasts. Each squadron consists of 15 to 25 ships and submarines and 3000 to 4000 officers and sailors. Each squadron also hosts a 1000 troop regiment of Marines which are used for amphibious operations and base security.

Only about a quarter the size of the Army, the Royal Navy is even more diverse than its larger institutional partner. Less affluent Latians and Alatarians have traditionally found the Navy well-suited to upward mobility and small-town boys from the high plains of central Esperanza have seen the Navy as the path to adventure.

The command philosophy of the navy tends to focus on individual ships rather than integrated squadrons, which has produced a fairly non-hierarchical culture, at least in comparison with the Army. There are generally no more than six Admirals on active-duty. The list of naval captains was only 112 names long in 1998. The intimacy of the naval community is also reinforced by a requirement for all officers above Lieutenant-Commander to spend at least six months in residence at the Royal Naval Academy every seven years.

The King is an Admiral of the Fleet and has shown a preference for naval officers in selecting his

closest advisors.

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## ► *The Principal Institutions of Esperanza*



THE HEAVY CRUISER KING HENRY III

The smallest of the military branches is the Air Force. It is currently organized around eight squadrons of fighter jets, one squadron of patrol and reconnaissance craft, and one squadron of heavy transport craft. The total Air Force complement of personnel totals approximately 8000. There is usually one Lieutenant General and four brigadiers. Colonels in command of squadrons are, however, considered the jobs-of-choice for career air force officers. The Air Force became a separate branch only in 1964 and has prided itself in a technical and non-political character. The King is a fighter pilot and holds the rank of an Air Force Brigadier.

In 1976 President Fire reorganized the military structure to emphasize joint operations. The nation was carved into four military regions with a single commander for all military forces within that region. From 1976 until 1995 Military Regions 3 and 4 were commanded by Admirals, while Regions 1 and 2 were commanded by Army Generals. In 1995, however, an Army General was appointed commander of Region 3 as a result of an increased focus on the internal security threat of Land and Liberty.

A joint General Staff and High Command was established in 1985. After some resistance, the joint staff has come to be seen as a prestigious and desirable assignment. The current Chief of the General Staff is Captain-General Henry Everett of the Esperanzan Army. General Everett was named by the King to this role in late 1998, over the heads of several more senior Army officers. The King makes the appointment in his role as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. The King made it clear that he had consulted with the Prime Minister and Defense Minister in making the appointment.

Since 1976 training and military doctrine have emphasized joint operations, but many of the independent traditions of the three branches have continued. Since 1992 civilian leadership of the military has become more assertive. Civilian leadership of the military has also been advanced by the passing of the Cold War, which has tended to call into question the mission of the Esperanzan military. Participation in international peace-keeping and peace-making operations is popular among the officer corps, but has not been well-received by the general public. The incremental reduction of military forces, especially the Army, began under the Mendoza government and has continued.

The Civil Guard is technically a public safety agency and reports to the Ministry of the Interior rather than the Minister of Defense. But by tradition and organization the Civil Guard is closely related to the armed forces. All Civil Guard officers must be veterans of the Army, Navy, or Air Force. The majority of Civil Guard officers are former Army Officers who did not make promotion to Captain or beyond. At the regimental command level, Civil Guard officers have a high concentration of retired Army Majors and Colonels.

The Civil Guard consists of approximately 40,000 personnel organized around regiments of 1000. Regiments are assigned specific geographic regions. Within each regimental region members of the Civil Guard provide a range of services from customs administration, immigration control, tax investigation, drug enforcement, building inspections, highway patrol, rural law enforcement, emergency response, and much more. The Civil Guard touches nearly every aspect of public safety other than school crossing guards and fire control. On a national basis the Civil Guard has been given particular responsibility for internal security, which has included intelligence gathering and anti-terrorist operations.

During the late 1980s and 1990s, the Civil Guard responded to the threat posed by Land and Liberty by concentrating regiments in Altair, Montaigne, and Isle de Sol provinces. The ratio of Civil Guard personnel to general population in these provinces is nearly twice the national average. Since 1995 the Civil Guard has also been tightly integrated into the communications and intelligence gathering functions of the Third Military Region, which encompasses these same provinces. This concentration of resources, and integration with military functions, has been controversial among civil libertarians, but appears to have been effective in curtailing the tactical operations of Land and Liberty.



## ► *The Principal Institutions of Esperanza*

The Civil Guard is led by a national commandant, almost always a retired Army general officer, who reports directly to the Minister of the Interior. During the Fire years elements of the Civil Guard became associated with ongoing abuse of civil rights, and the institution continues to resist efforts at thoroughgoing reform. But characterizations of the Civil Guard as simply a rightist goon squad, ignores the extensive engagement of the institution in a vast arena of national administration. In some ways the Civil Guard's resistance to change is a reflection of its roots in day-in-day-out administrivia of life in a modern state.

### *Economic Institutions*

As noted above, the government-controlled Bank of Esperanza exercises significant influence in economic affairs. But unlike other authoritarian or centrally-planned systems, the Fire regime always retained many of the forms and flavors of market capitalism. Further, major sectors of the economy, such as mining and agriculture, have been authentically private. Over the last twenty years, the institutions of the private economy have clearly been growing in both formal and informal influence.

Perhaps the most widely recognized economic institution in Esperanza is the **National Chambers of Vocations**. The Chambers Movement was a late-19<sup>th</sup> Century phenomenon, encouraged by the Avadorres government, to facilitate private and voluntary coordination of the economy. During the 1920s the Chambers became a hot-house for reactionary politics and frantic anti-communism. As such, many leaders of the Chambers were also leaders in the National Movement. Some elements of the Chambers, such as the Chamber of Learned Professions, became recognized "syndicates" under the Fire philosophy of organizing the nation around functional groups. But most of the Chambers remained outside the formal political system.

In 1997 the Chambers announced that, in cooperation with the University of Neuvilla and the French business school INSEAD, that they would sponsor Esperanza's first Masters of Business Administration program.

For several of Esperanza's most progressive business organizations, however, the Chambers movement remains too conservative. In 1982 several of the largest private banks, manufacturers, and local offices of multinationals, founded the **Institute for Economic and Industrial Affairs**. With offices in Neuvilla, Altair, and Pireus the IEIA sponsors conferences, luncheon meetings, publications, and special studies, mostly focused on policy issues such as privatization, capital mobility, workers rights, accounting practices, and free trade. Speeches to IEIA functions have become a popular means for politicians and business leaders to ensure some level of media coverage for their proposals.

Both the **Esperanzan Mining Association** (Founded 1933) and the **National Society for the Promotion of Exports** (Founded 1964) were founded with eyes focused beyond Esperanza. While the Chamber of Mines and Minerals tends to deal with issues of domestic regulation and the internal market for coal and other mineral products, the Esperanzan Mining Association consists of nickel, copper, and other mining companies that depend on the world market. The Count of Monte'Oro, the current Foreign Minister, was for many years the Executive Secretary of the EMA and developed his diplomatic skills in the context of international mining and minerals conferences. Since the 1970s the NSPE has been dominated by the tourist industry and has sponsored several award-winning advertising campaigns to attract Northern Europeans and others to Esperanza's beaches and ski-resorts. The NSPE has become a significant patron of

Since the 1970s the National Chambers of Vocations has become principally an administrative functionality and publishing house for its more active subordinate Chambers which are focused on particular economic sectors. There are currently five active elements of the Chambers Movement:

1. The Chamber of Agriculture and Ranching
2. The Chamber of Mines and Minerals
3. The Chamber of Manufacturing
4. The Chamber of Commerce
5. The Chamber of Learned Professions

All maintain offices in an ornate Art Nouveau structure three blocks from the Senate House. In the last decade the Chambers have become very adept at lobbying and coordinated media relations.

Esperanza traditional culture. In 1997, for example, the NSPE underwrote over forty percent of the annual budget of the Royal Opera House. In 1998 the NSPE sponsored a year-long focus on cross-cultural communications and courtesy in the schools of Crotona and Leponto Provinces. Some unconfirmed reports have also accused the NSPE of making extortion payments to Land and Liberty to ensure that terrorism is kept "north of the Valdez."

Despite the existence of these nationwide organizations of employers and business entities, the Esperanza business sector is arguably most influential on a local level in how each enterprise deals with its employees, customers, and the local community.

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## ► *The Principal Institutions of Espernza*

The **National Trade Union Federation** is, perhaps, the most influential economic institution in Esperanza. Founded in 1992, the TUF represents approximately 40 percent of Esperanza's hourly workforce and represents close to seventy percent of workers in the industrial heartland between Altair and Neuvilla. The Trade Union Federation has focused on employment security, on-the-job safety, and health and education benefits. The lack of attention, across most industries, on higher wages, represents an informal agreement that wages will not significantly increase until productivity increases, which first requires investment in capital equipment. Neither business leaders or trade union leaders explicitly reference this "social contract," But, to date, what one scholar has called a "conspiracy of silence" has served to avoid the strikes and economic disruption that characterized the years before Fire's takeover.

The leadership of the Trade Union Federation is closely associated with the Socialist Party, with over half of the Federation's Central Committee also being members of the Party's Executive Council. Approximately sixty percent of the Socialist Party's budget originates with the Federation or its members. Despite these political allegiances, relations between the Federation and the current coalition government have generally been productive. The Trade Union Federation has been slow to organize in the growing service and high-technology sectors and has recently been giving more attention to efforts in Southern Esperanza where these sectors are concentrated.

Miners have mostly stayed outside the National Trade Union Federation and are now the only major group of workers who continue to be represented by the **Esperanzan Workers Union** (founded 1948). Under the National Movement the EPU was the only non-industry specific union organization, and was tightly controlled by the government. Traditionally among the highest-paid of Esperanzans, the miners are suspicious of the liberal political inclinations of the Trade Union Federation.

A group known as the **Altarian Worker's Federation** was founded in 1992. It is suspected of being a front-organization for Land and Liberty. Two government-owned textile plants and a glass factory have elected to be represented by the AWF. Despite its small membership, the union is a prolific publisher of tracts, magazines, and books. A major 1996 effort by the AWF to organize fishermen in the Bay of Altair was an embarrassing failure.

### *Cultural Institutions*

For centuries the principal institution of Esperanzan culture has been the Roman Catholic Church. Uncertain legend gives Saint Thomas "the twin" credit for evangelizing the Latian colonies and interior tribes of ancient Esperanza. A visit to Pireus by Saint James of Jerusalem is also discounted by historians, but the influence of the legend persists in James being named the patron saint of Esperanza. By the Fifth Century AD the Latian influence along the coast of the Illyrian Sea had pushed Catholics into the interior. The first written reference of there being a bishop at Coronado is in a surviving letter from Augustine to Jerome in the year 412.

The Diocese of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, with its Cathedral at Coronado, is seen by many historians as the origin of what has become modern Esperanza. It was the Church that negotiated the eleventh century unification of upland nobility with the Patroclus dynasty of the Latian coast. In the next century it was the Bishop of Coronado who converted Crotona and its royal family from Orthodoxy to Catholicism, and in the process rooted Esperanza in the West rather than the East. At the Cathedral in Coronado the crusades against the Brasans and the Alerians were proclaimed and promoted. From the Church, or at least with the patronage of the Church, have arisen most of Esperanza's greatest artists and architects. During periods of dynastic confusion and failure, it was often the Church that preserved a vision of national unity.



THE TOWERS OF THE CORONADO CATHEDRAL

## ► *The Principal Institutions of Espernza*

In the modern era the support of the Church was critical to whatever stability existed during the reigns of Queen Isabel and King Paul. Many have credited the fall of King Paul to a letter critical of the government which the Archbishop of Coronado had read from every pulpit on the Sunday prior to the 1943 municipal elections. In 1991, the current Archbishop, called General Escolin, Fire's last Prime Minister, to the Episcopal Palace and read aloud to him three paragraphs from Fire's last will and testament that entreated his followers to keep faith with the Constitution of 1976 and the succession of "my young prince." In his autobiography, Escolin has marked this meeting as a turning point in the effort to establish a Regency Council. The Church is the only significant cultural institution that links Alterians with the remainder of the nation. But the Church is also divided among itself on many social and political issues. In recent years a range of opinion has been expressed among the Catholic hierarchy on several key issues, and organizations of lay people have developed with directly opposing views.

Today the influence of the Church is less pronounced than at any previous period in the nation's history, but it remains a significant institution. Nearly 40 percent of Esperanzans attend mass at least once a month. The 1997 visit of Pope John Paul II to Coronado resulted in an extraordinary expression of religious devotion by the mass of the people. It is intriguing to note that the proportion of Esperanzans who live as cloistered monks or nuns is nearly twice as high as any other nation.

The Archbishop of Coronado is Primate of Esperanza. The current Archbishop is a member of the Council of State, but it is believed he has only attended one meeting since his appointment in 1992. The nation is organized into twelve dioceses, each headed by a Bishop. There are another eight suffragan or auxiliary bishops. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops regularly comments on government policy, especially related to health, social welfare, and policies effecting the family.

The Church supports seminaries and Colleges of Religion and Philosophy at the University of Coronado and the University of Altair. Another independent seminary is located near Pireus. Catholic elementary and secondary schools enroll approximately 12 percent of the school age population. In 1982 the Benedictine Order opened the nation's first private institution of higher learning in the modern era, the College of Saint James, in the provincial capital of Scorial.

The Jesuit Astronomical Observatory in rural Montaigne province receives government support, but is largely independent, and widely recognized as a world-class research facility. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the Archbishop of Coronado has also served as the Vice Chancellor of the Royal Conservatory of Music, a role the current Archbishop has performed with noticeable enthusiasm.

The Church owns three radio stations, a television station, and a publishing house. The church is the nation's chief publisher of materials written in Altarian and Arabic.

The **Latian Orthodox Church** is considerably smaller than the Catholic Church, but has similar or, perhaps, even greater influence in Leponto province where the Latian minority is concentrated. The Orthodox Archdiocese of Thivai encompasses all of Leponto, Crotona, and Nord de Riv provinces. Outside Leponto, however, there are a total of twelve other congregations. Orthodox religious services are conducted in Altair by a Latian Orthodox Naval Chaplain.

There are nine **universities**, eighteen polytechnics, and twenty-two "other" post-secondary institutions in Esperanza. Until the last twenty years higher education was viewed as largely restricted to those planning to go into law, medicine, education, or a few technical fields associated with engineering and mining. The economic reforms of the late Fire years and during the 1990s have, however, substantially increased demand beyond the ability of the higher education system to respond.

The universities of Coronado, Altair, and Neuvilla are recognized as the nation's leading educational institutions. The University of Coronado (founded 1318) is respected for its Colleges of Law, Medicine, and Esperanzan Literature. The University of Altair (founded 1392) has an established reputation in Asian and African Languages, International Affairs, and Cognitive Psychology. The University of Neuvilla (founded 1882) is ranked among the continent's best in Organic Chemistry, Theoretical Physics, and Civil Engineering. At Neuvilla and Altair students and faculty have occasionally had a very immediate influence on the life of the nation. In 1948 the Student Brigade at Neuvilla was among the last of the Republican Civil War strongholds. President Fire did not reopen the undergraduate colleges until 1956. In 1996 faculty and students at Altair essentially stared down a threat by Land and Liberty to close the University by holding classes in factories, playgrounds, and sports facilities.

## ► *The Principal Institutions of Esperanza*

Individual intellectuals have had considerable influence on the Esperanzan experience. Lectures by the early Twentieth Century philosopher and professor at the University of Neuvilla, Bertrand Robles-Arthur consistently attacked the moral corruption at the heart of the post-Avadorres Monarchy. Students of Robles-Arthur were prominent among the Republican leadership. Since the 1970s Jean-Philip Foster, an independent scholar loosely associated with the University of Coronado, has advocated a unique Esperanzan Aesthetic, which has had a noticeable influence on the nation's art, music, architecture, industrial design, and literature.

Scholarship outside the universities is fostered by the **Royal Academies and the Royal Society**, all of which were founded in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The Royal Academy of Arts and Letters sponsors several journals, conferences, and makes grants to independent scholars. The Royal Academy of Exact, Physical, and Natural Sciences has become an important source of independent analysis and advice to government and industry. The Royal Academies were chartered by King Peter Emmanuel in 1702, but are self-governing. The Royal Society consists of 100 individuals named by the King for their outstanding contributions to Esperanzan Culture. The Society was restored in a glittering 1993 ceremony held nearly 200 years after its last meeting.

Despite, or perhaps because of, a history of widespread illiteracy, Esperanzan culture has tended to show great respect to the *litterati*. Even during the most oppressive early years of the Fire regime, poets, essayists, novelists, and playwrights were seldom arrested and never imprisoned, even for the most savage attacks on the National Movement and Fire himself (this does not, however, suggest they were safe from unofficial sanctions). The rise of literacy, the de-mystification of learning, and the massification of culture has almost certainly diluted the influence of such cultural figures. But it is still possible for Esperanzan intellectuals to generate serious attention to their ideas with considerably less effort than is the case in most of Europe or North America.

**Information and entertainment media** have seen explosive growth in the last decade. The dull, gray, often purposefully misleading news media of the Fire era has been replaced by a lively, highly competitive, if sometimes vulgar mass media. Major papers in Altair, Neuvilla, and Pireus compete with a combination of sex, scandal, and sports, with an occasionally surprising piece of hard-hitting investigative journalism. An expose by the Neuvilla *Virtutus* on Premier Mendoza's use of



THE ROCK BAND, FUSION, IN PERFORMANCE

The media continues to give significant attention to Esperanzan institutions of high culture. The symphony, ballet, and opera all are given regular broadcasts on both radio and television. In fact the regular Sunday afternoon radio "Channel 3" broadcast of the Royal Opera remains one of the highest rated radio shows, though it is clearly losing audience to television's Sunday afternoon soccer specials.

Esperanzan radio stations, especially in Crotona province, have become famous for nurturing new musical fads that have swept far beyond Esperanza. "Pireus Funk" is now considered a broadly descriptive term for popular music that is a fusion of Alerian, Latian and Esperanzan jazz and rock idioms. A related recording industry has emerged that is beginning to promote its products even into the competitive Italian and British music markets.

In contrast to the highly ideological media of the pre-Fire years, or the ideologically consistent media of the National Movement period, today's media is largely non-ideological. Some see in the media's indifference to ideology something more profound. It is, they say, a symptom of a loss of authentic cultural identity.

The principal victim of Fire's intense nationalism, according to this school of thought, is the practical disappearance of any uniquely Esperanzan character. On some evenings, on some streets, Pireus might be mistaken for Marseilles or Montevideo; Neuvilla for Brussels or Montreal or Johannesburg. Even Coronado, the ancient heart of the culture, sometimes sounds and feels not so different from a hundred other medium sized cities with massive old buildings and too many cars. The young people wear the same clothes as in Paris, New York, or Tokyo. They listen to the same music as in Jakarta, Bogota, or Cairo. They drink the same

state funds to vacation in Crete did not help his reelection.

The *Voice of Esperanza*, the only national television news program, remains in government hands, but is protected by an independent Board and higher public expectations. Its reporting has become respected for accuracy, even while the late news is "congratulated" for Esperanza's getting an average of one hour more sleep per night than their Franconian and Latian neighbors. Most television entertainment consists of American and French re-runs. The notable exception is the success of the *Yo Esperanza!* gameshow that features scantily dressed young men and women competing in a variety of ersatz athletic events staged at well-known locations around the nation.

soft drink that has humbled the British Empire in scope, and perhaps, in wealth.

The people of Esperanza, like so many other peoples, are searching for a means to be part of the world, without losing aspects of their culture and tradition that provide a sense of place and the hope of meaning. It is not yet clear if the political, economic, and cultural institutions of this fascinating nation are capable of accommodating these two, sometimes competing, goals.

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# THE JOURNAL OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS

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## ▶ *SPECIAL FOCUS: THE ESPERANZA EXPERIENCE*

- ▶ Recent History, Culture, and Politics
- ▶ Country Overview and Maps
- ▶ Principal National Institutions

With the death of long-time President Fire in 1990 Esperanza began the transition from an authoritarian single-party state to a multi-party parliamentary monarchy. What are the results so far and what are the implications for other states making the transition to democracy?

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