WASHINGTON (D.C.)

At present the Union, comprises 50 states administratively united by the Federal Government in Washington (D.C.). Now the District of Columbia is a Federal district, not a state in itself and does not belong to any state. The district is named after Columbus. It was established in 1790 on the territory, which was ceded from the State of Maryland by the Act of Congress to become the permanent seat of the Federal Government.

W.D.C. is, indeed, like no other city of the USA. It is unique among the bustling cities of the US; its population has topped the mark of 1 ml. Its the only industry is a government. As the nation's capital and seat of the Federal Government, it is the heart of the country. It abounds in national monuments and historic buildings. Conceived by the French-born Piere Charles L'Enfant in 1791, the Federal City remains today much as it was originally designed. Washington is rich in fine, freestanding outdoor sculptures.

The Capitol is the center of city. It is situated on Capitol Hill, which is the highest place in the city. Topping the dome is the 19-feet bronze statue of Freedom. There is a law that forbids to build houses higher than the Capitol. The Capitol is the seat of Congress. It is made of stone and marble and contains 540 rooms. From the Capitol the streets are "lettered" E or W and "numbered". Broad avenues bear the names of states and run diagonally.

From the Capitol to the White House runs Pennsylvania Av. which is rich in history as the scene of eveiy inaugural parade since Thomas Jefferson.

The White House has been the home of every President since 1800 when the capital was moved to Washington from Philadelphia. The site was chosen by G. Washington; the house was designed by James Hoban; the corner-stone was laid in 1792. It has 132 rooms. In the Blue Room the President and the First Lady receive guests and hold diplomatic functions. The Oval Office is the President's office.

The Lincoln Memorial, situated at the west end of the Mall, was designed by Herny Bacon and dedicated to Memorial Day - May 30\*, in 1922 and to the.Great Emancipator 16th President of the US A (1861 -1865). Within the broad framework of classical design, the structure has a motif that symbolizes the Union of the States. The 36 columns surrounding the walls of the memorial building represent the 36 States in the Union at the time of Lincoln's death. The Marble Statue of Lincoln occupies the place of honor centrally located near the back of the chamber and facing the Washington Monument and the Capitol.

The Washington Monument is one of the city's most impressive sights. It is situated in Potomac Park. The W. Monument in the center of the Mall is a 555-feet marble and granite obelisk commemorating G. Washington. It was erected on February 21, 1885 and opened to the public in 1888. It is called “The Pencil”, because it is one of the tallest stone constructions in the world and the tallest stone structure in the US. A National Independence Day Celebration featuring a specta­cular display of fire-works is staged on the W.M. grounds each year on July 4.

There are many libraries, museums and art galleries in the city. The National Gallery of Art was completed in 1947 and was accepted by President Fr.D.Roose- velt on behalf of the people of the USA. The paintings and sculptures given by Andrew Mellon, comprising works by the greatest masters from the 14л to the I9Ul century, have formed a nucleus of high quality from which the collection has grown. It is one of the finest picture galleries in America. The NASA Museum is devoted to the US achievements in the exploration of space.

The Library of Congress, the biggest existing libraiy in the world, was opened on the 24th April 1800. It contains more than 13 ml books in various languages. The law of 1870 makes it obligatory to send to the library 2 copies of every American book. There is the Pentagon in Washington DC. which was built between 1941-43. The Pentagon is the large 5-sided building near Washington DC., which contains the main offices of the US Department of Defence.

John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts opened its doors to three perfect theatres in 1971. It is also famous for its Grand Foyer, Hall of States and Hall of Nations. Grand Foyer is one of the largest rooms in the world, which provides a central lobby for opera, ballet and music performances. It is the setting for the bronze head of President Kennedy.

There are many beautiful parks and gardens in the capital. One can see the famous cherry trees there which are the gift from Japan. They were brought there in 1912 as the symbol of friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

NEW YORK

N.Y. has always been the gateway to the USA. But it is more than just a door; it is also a window through which the life of the whole nation may be observed. N.Y. is the financial center of the country where "money-making" is the main law of life. It's the symbol of capitalism and its Wall Street on Manhattan Island - the ma­in financial centre of the US - has become a nickname for big monopolies all over the world.

N.Y. 's five boroughs: Manhattan, Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn and Richmond Island are a diverse city in every respect. Many people think of N.Y. as the Big Apple where excitement, glitter and glamour are dominant but when there you can also see dirt and poverty, prostitution and gangsterism. If you approach the city by sea, you pass Liberty Island with the bronze Statue of Liberty presented to the United States by France in 1886 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of American Independence. The statue is 152 ft (about 50 meters high) and stands on a pedestal of almost the same height. If you arrive by air you pass through the passport control at John Kennedy airport and you start first trip across the city to Manhattan, a rocky island 13 miles long and 2 miles wide.

N.Y. is the chief market for luxuries, the show-window of the nation. It has an ocean of theatres, restaurants, movies, houses, night-clubs; it has a very flourishing hotel industry. Printing and publishing are still N.Y. 's second largest industry. The architecture of N.Y. with its skyscrapers, bridges, broad highways is a perfect exhibit of the American ability to apply imagination to the solution of an engineering problem. Yet, there is much in N.Y. that is ugly. A good deal of the city was built of brown stone in the latter half of the 19th century.

Wall Street, so named because a wall was built around it, goes from river to river (the Hudson and the East River) to protect the small colony living south of this Wall street from attacks by Indians. In time the wall was destroyed but the name has remained. The US Stock Exchage is on Wall Street.

Not far from Wall Street is the Bowery. The street and the district around it have become a symbol of extreme poverty and alcoholism.

Washington Square is the place, where modem N.Y. begins, with its parallel rows of buildings, enclosed into blocks by avenues and streets. The avenues and streets are numbered, there are eleven avenues and about 300 streets. The only exception is Broadway. It is not at all straight; it bends and curves all along the length of Manhattan. The most fashionable is Fifth Avenue. It divides Manhattan into two equal parts; all streets to the east or west of it have the word "East" or "West" before the number.

At Washington Square there are the buildings of N.Y. University, the second largest educational establishment in the city. The downtown area around Washington Square is called Greenwich Village, the picturesque quarters of the literary and artistic world.

City transport for N.Y. is a big problem. Privately owned cars are not always used by their owners for reasons other than the energy crisis problem, and the people, more often than not, use city transport which includes subway, bus service and taxi cabs. In the rush hours many prefer the subway.

On the East River bank one can see the United Nations Headquarters and grounds which contain sculpture and other works of art. A visitor may see here the General Assembly and other UN organs.

The Rockefeller Center is the largest privately owned business and entertain­ment complex. It is famous for its Flower and Garden Show and the Radio City Music Hall.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has rich collections, which reflect the history of world art from ancient civilizations to the present day and include hundreds of world-famous masterpieces.

N.Y. famous Empire State Building, is 448 meters. Visibility on clear days is more than 80 miles, 73 elevators operate in speeds ranging from 200 meters to 400 meters a minute.

The twin 110 story towers of New York's World Trade Center were ruined by terrorists' attack on the 11th of September in 2001.

There is not one Harlem, but three crowded into the area above Central Park and this is the roosting place of violence. People are congregated together in neigh­bourhoods that are old, in houses that symbolize the deprivation.

Many Italians wedged their way into East Harlem, located just east of Black Harlem. The area's name was derived from the Dutch town of Harlem. Many of the boys here say: "Other kids are brought up nice and sent to Yale and Harvard. We are brought up like a mushroom". They learn their lessons the hard way. From the streets they learn a great deal, absorbing and assimilating like a sponge. Pride and anger swirl inside them, sometimes erupting, but mostly simmering, boiling and festering. They soon learn anewword.lt is called Mafia. There are many legends aboutMafia.

The Mafia, they believe, began in the middle of the 19ai century as an underground political resistance movement. Bourbon rulers then dominated the land and the people of Sicily were taxed, tortured, imprisoned and executed. In defence and defiance, the Sicilian landowners organized into a Society. The society they formed had to be strong and its rules binding. The code of the first Mafiosi was forged.

The Lower East Side of Manhattan was and is a breeding ground for crime. The criminals grow and flourish there springing from the seeds of these slums, the slums born in the heart of the Monopoly Empire. And many young people here strip the freight yards. Burglary, robbery and murder are the subjects they study during their formative years, earning their diplomas in reformatories. The place that attracts the attention of all in Manhattan is Central Park, recreation grounds with a lot of greenery and beautiful ponds.

Some people recommend: "If you should happen after dark to find yourself in Central Park, ignore the paths, hurry to the zoo and creep into the tiger's cage. Frankly, you'll be safer there".

LONDON

London is the capital of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and it is the largest city in the British Commonwealth. The name "London" is Celtic in origin. London was originally established by the Romans, as Londinium in the 1 st century BC, and became the capital of England in the 11th century. It is "A City" which arose from a number of towns and villages.lt survived the Plaque which killed nearly 100,000 people and the Great Fire which followed. Little damage occurred during World War I, but World War II brought tremendous destructions. Many buildings of great historic value were laid in ruins and to-day the face of London is changed.

Actually there are several Londons: the City, the West End, Westminster and the East End. Each of them is architecturally different from the others, each has its own main street and square, its own shopping center. Many monuments of London's history can be found in the city.

The oldest part of the metropolis is the "City of London”. The City extends over an area of about 2.5 sguare kilometres in the heart of London. It is about two thousand years old. Nowadays the City is the financial center of Britain's banks, insurance companies, trading companies. It is full of life in daytime, but at night it is almost completely empty (5,000 people live here). St Pauls Cathedral has always dominated its centre. The masterpiece of Sir Christopher Wren, St Paul’s Cathedral was built between 1675 and 1710 to replace the old Cathedral that was largely destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. This Cathedral can boast also of some superb carving by Grinling Gibbons. Wren himself is buried here, his tomb carrying the fitting injunction, "Lector, si momentum requires" (Reader, if you see his monument, look around you). It is an architectural masterpiece and one of the greatest English churches. Admiral Nelson is buried here.

The West End is the region for the rich. It is a very beautiful region with a lot of nice, cosy, old houses and a lot of expensive shops, cinemas, restaurants. All the historical places and famous parks are in the West End. The West End, spreading from the political centre at Westminster includes Piccadilly Circus and the fashionable Covent Garden. For generations Piccadilly has been the heart of London West End. London's busiest spot was named by a long - forgotten tailor Higgins, whose fortune had been made largely by the sale of collars known as "piccadillies". When he retired Higgins built himself a grand house, which he called Piccadilly Hall. Every day over 50,000 cars, coaches and buses, carrying 200,000 people, pass the famous central fountain on the top of which stands a statue of Eros, the Greek God of love. Piccadilly is a fine street stretching from the circus to Hyde Park Comer. It has seen much history over the centuries, and it has changed considerably. Many Londoners resort to Hyde Park on Sundays. Speakers from various political parties often hold public meetings here.

Trafalgar Sguare is the natural centre of London. It hosts museums and galaries among them: the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery and the British Meseum. The main feature of the Square is Nelson's Column with the figure of the great seaman on the top. Trafalgar Square is one of the busiest places in London.

Just behind the Trafalgar Sguare is the National Gallery where there is one of the finest collections of pictures in the world. The Natinal Gallery contains mostly European art, from all periods between 1200 and the end of the 19th century.

The British Museum is one of the greatest and best-known museums in the world, both in the diversity of its collection and in their wide range and high quality. Of the all major departments into which the museum is divided, the most outstanding are: the Assyrian, the Egyptian and the Greek and Roman Antiquities. There are also extremely important ethnological collections.

The library, which is contemporary with the museum, consisted initially of the collection of books from the King's Library. The British Museum Library is a reading-room and a reference library but not a lending library. It contains a collection of unique manuscripts and rare books.

The Houses of Parliament is the seat of British Parliament. The official name of the Houses of the Parliament is the Palace of Westminster. It is a remarkable example of Gothic architecture. The Houses of Parliament were completed a century ago. The Clock Tower, which contains the hour-bell called "Big Ben" is known the world over.

Buckingham Palace is the official home of the British royal family in London containing 600 rooms. Today the Queen lives at the Palace for only part of the year and when she is in her residence the Royal Standard is flown.

The Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey face each other across Parliament Sguare. Wesminster Abbey is not a Cathedral. It is a “Royal Peculiar”, royal property. In this lovely building we can learn much. Most of the kings and queens of England since William the Conqueror have been crowned here, and one may see the ancient Coronation chair. Many great men have been honoured by burial in Westminster Abbey. And the church is full of memorials to kings, queens, statesmen, writers, and scientists, all of whom have played a part in shaping Britain's history.

NolO Downing Street, the Prime Minister’s residence, is over 200 years old. It has all modem conveniences. It has light, central heating, and several bathrooms. The Cabinet meets there. As "NolO" two hundred years ago served rich men, so does the Executive of British Government, and its main administra­tive organs, they tend to serve the rich men above all.

The Tower of London was first built in the 11th century by William the Conqueror for the purpose of protecting and controlling the city. The Tower has been a fortress, a palace, and a prison, and an arsenal of small arms and now it is a museum. The Tower of London is quarded by Beefeaters, who are dressed in old- fashioned traditional uniforms

The East End is the region for the poor. The East End is as different from the West End as can be. This is a vast area running eastwards from the City. It includes all the main dock areas and is heavily industrialized. Despite many houses built by the council there are still miles of little dwellings and slums. The Port of London is also in the East End.

One can say that the CITY is the money of London, the WEST END is the goods of London, the EAST END is the hands of London.

There are many parks and gardens in London. The best known are Hyde Park, Regent's Park and St James's Park. They are all within easy reach of the centre of London. Hyde Park is a royal park since 1536.lt is famous for its Speaker's Comer, where people go when they want to tell other people about their political opinions. Regent's Park is in the north-west of London. It is the home of the London Zoo. St James's Park is the oldest and the smallest of the royal parks. It is near the Buckingham Palace.

London is known by its system of public transport which includes red buses, black taxis, and an underground railway called “the Tube”.

London is one of the world's most enjoyable capitals of Europe.