

**AFRICA: The People
and Politics of
an Emerging Continent**

by Sanford J. Ungar
Simon & Schuster, 1985
527 pp. \$19.95

Nearly 500 million people live in the 52 nations of Africa. It is a continent of "rich, varied cultures, and enduring civilization," writes Ungar, a Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Yet today most Africans share the same problems: inadequate nutrition and health care. According to the World Bank, 60 percent of all Africans currently consume fewer calories each day than are deemed necessary for survival. Little wonder, then, that five million Africans die each year from malnutrition and from other diseases, or that, in 31 nations, life expectancy is less than 50 years. Ungar makes clear that corrupt, inept, often repressive African governments deserve much of the blame. The 20 states that formed the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1963 pledged "to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa." But the OAU's history, says Ungar, "is a tale of empty rhetoric." Ungar's even-handed survey focuses on Liberia, Nigeria, Kenya, and the "white nightmare" of South Africa. He also reflects upon Americans' "childlike innocence about the second largest land mass in the world." That long-standing ignorance, Ungar believes, has produced inconsistent, crisis-oriented policies in Washington, most strikingly evident in U.S. dealings with Pretoria. American efforts to bring about change in South Africa will not be credible, the author warns, until they are "matched by a parallel concern for civil liberties and freedom of political participation everywhere else on the continent."

Arts & Letters

THE SHORTER PEPYS

selected and edited
by Robert Latham
Univ. of Calif., 1985
1,096 pp. \$28.50

Samuel Pepys's career as diarist spanned nine brief years, from 1660 to 1669. But what years those were for England! They encompassed not only the restoration of monarchy and war with Holland but also the Great Plague (which claimed as many as 10,000 Londoners a week during the cruel summer months of 1665) and London's Great Fire of September 1666. Of the former calamity, Pepys sadly observed: "But now, how few people I see, and those walking