



The French (and the Dutch) still have colonies in the Caribbean. Here, an Ariane rocket is readied for launching in Kourou, French Guiana.

The political health of all former British island colonies is not assured; Jamaica, Grenada, St. Lucia, and other democracies variously suffer from social inequality, joblessness, violence, and politicians' failure to satisfy popular expectations. And in the Spanish-speaking Dominican Republic (pop: 6.6 million) similar difficulties face President Joaquin Balaguer's moderate regime, despite recent economic growth.

All in all, says Segal, emigration (legal and illegal) to America and to Europe has become the safety valve for most Caribbean societies. Although sugar is no longer the only export, nowhere have governments done much for small farmers. The drug traffic, originating in South America, has become a growth industry—in Haiti, the Bahamas, Belize—with accompanying thuggery and official corruption. Nevertheless, national cultural identities are emerging in those Afro-Caribbean societies. "Listen to their music," says Segal. "Calypso, reggae, salsa, and merengue."

Arab Democracy?

"Democratization and the Problem of Legitimacy in Middle East Politics" by Michael C. Hudson, *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* (Dec. 1988), Dept. of Oriental Studies, University of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz. 85721.

Nothing suggests that the young Moslem nations of the Middle East are on the verge of becoming Western-style democracies. Since the mid-1950s, the *mukhabarat* (authoritarian) regime has remained the norm—notably in Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and the Persian Gulf monarchies.

However, says Hudson, a Georgetown Arabist, Americans should not ignore "the scattered signs of democratization."

The three largest Mideast countries—Egypt, Turkey, and (even) Iran—possess functioning electoral systems and parliaments. Morocco's political parties, parliament, and press are not simply mouthpieces for King Hassan II. Both Tunisia and Algeria seem to be easing up on one-party controls. King Hussein's Jordan maintains a partly-elected bicameral legislature. Civilians in the Sudan have twice toppled military regimes and set up multi-party systems.

According to Hudson, even the "Pal-

estinian political system, with all its peculiarities of non-stateness, displays important elements of democratization" through the Palestine National Council and various popular organizations.

More "democratization" is possible, the author says, thanks to three trends: 1) liberalization is "breaking out" elsewhere, notably in China and the Soviet bloc, influencing the Middle East; 2) "civil society"—each nation's modern-minded elements, including business—may be developing greater power vis-à-vis the government; 3) the authoritarian Arab state may be reaching the limits of its capabilities—technological, bureaucratic, moral—and "ruling elites" may be seeking popularity and support through slightly more democracy.

Will all this lead to a less repressive era in Mideast domestic politics? "Maybe," says Hudson. But a few years ago, he adds, "I would have answered 'No.'"