

SAN FRANCISCO

"THE NATION'S WESTERN CAPITAL"



Photo by R. L. Copeland, released by
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce

Aerial View of Downtown San Francisco

SITUATION

San Francisco, "City by the Golden Gate," whose City Hall is situated at 37 degrees 47 minutes north latitude and 122 degrees 25 minutes west longitude, on a hilly peninsula with altitudes ranging from sea level to 933.6 feet U. S. Base, is bounded on three sides by water. Of a total of 93.2 square miles, only 46.38 are land, it is among the few world cities with the distinction of having more than half of its entire area washed daily by the ocean's tidal currents.

San Francisco has within its boundaries three islands — Yerba Buena, Treasure and Alcatraz — besides the Farallon Islands group some 32 miles west, which has been included in the City and County of San Francisco since 1872.

POPULATION

The 1970 U. S. Census gave San Francisco a population of 701,370, representing a loss from 1960 of about 4.8%, 685,200 (1973 Census). Even though several cities in the Bay Area lost population in the decade, the losses were countered by sizable gains in the newer, outlying cities of the metropolitan area. Many of the older areas in the city have become less congested, and in most dwellings the total number of occupants has dwindled. Predominating nationalities of foreign-born residents: Italian, German, Irish, Canadian, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Mexican.

CLIMATE

San Francisco's unique location at the northern end of a narrow peninsula which separates San Francisco Bay from the Pacific Ocean and forms the southern shore of the Golden Gate — the only sea level entrance through the coastal mountains into the Great Valley — causes this to be known as the air-conditioned city, with a cool, pleasant summer and a mild winter. Flowers bloom throughout the year, and warm clothing is needed in every month.

As a result of the steady sweep of air from the Pacific, there are few extremes of heat or cold. Temperatures have risen to 90 degrees or higher on an average of but once a year and dropped below freezing less than once a year. As a rule abnormally warm or cool periods last but a few days.

Pronounced wet and dry seasons are another characteristic of this climate. On the average, 84% of the total annual precipitation falls during the five-month period November to March, leaving but 16% for the remaining seven months of the year. Long-time records of the Weather Bureau reveal that the sun shines in San Francisco during 65 to every 100 possible hours.

GOVERNMENT

San Francisco has a consolidated City and County government, with legislative powers vested in a board of supervisors of eleven members, five and six being elected every two years for four-year terms. The Mayor, Treasurer, Assessor, City Attorney, Public Defender, District Attorney, Sheriff serve four-year terms, and Superior and Municipal Court Judges are elected by the people and serve terms of six years. The Chief Administrative Officer is appointed by the Mayor, but thereafter has permanent tenure. The Controller, appointed by the Mayor, subject to confirmation by the Supervisors, also has permanent tenure. The Mayor appoints members of, and supervises, police, fire, civil service, public utilities, park and recreation, social services, library, city planning, art, housing, parking, permit appeals, redevelopment, retirement commissions, War Memorial Board of Trustees, Port Commission, Health Service System Board, Human Rights Commission, and may remove his appointees except civil service, public utilities, recreation and park, and social services commissioners. The Mayor also has power of veto over legislation.

State and Federal Government Offices

San Francisco contains district and regional offices of many branches of the State and Federal Governments. Located here are over 90 major agencies of the State, including top-rank commissions and boards. These and many lesser divisions and branches make a total of about 175 State groups. There are 75 Federal Agencies in San Francisco, including representatives of the Legislative and Judicial branches, Executive departments and independent agencies. The 14 Executive departments include: Agriculture, Air Force, Army, Commerce, Defense, Health, Education and Welfare, Interior, Justice, Labor, Navy, Post Office, State Transportation and Treasury, and numerous special agencies related to regional administration of Federal activities.

HISTORY

Discovery

San Francisco owes its discovery and much of its history to the daring and adventure-loving early Portuguese, English and Spanish explorers. The romance of those early days clings to the city and lends charm to its atmosphere even today.

Though San Francisco's heritage is rightly credited to the Spanish, more than two centuries before Portola's arrival, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542 discovered the Farallon Islands (now a part of San Francisco); next, Sir Francis Drake, famed English explorer, passed by the Golden Gate and in 1579 discovered