HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

2ND EDITION

JOHN V DA GRAÇA

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J O H N V D A G R A Ç A

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

The title of the first edition “Heads of State and Government” has been retained for the second, even though it does not clearly describe all the lists of leaders. Whilst reigning monarchs, presidents and their equivalents are all heads of state, i.e. the person who represents the country in terms of international law, the position of head of government is less clear. In some countries, such as the USA, the President is both head of state and head of government, whilst in others such as the UK, the monarch is head of state and the prime minister is head of government. In some other countries such as France, the head of state is also the head of government, but there is also a prime minister whose duties are often described as being in charge of day-to-day government business. I have not attempted to distinguish between the different types of prime minister, since in terms of diplomatic protocol, they are equivalent. The roles of heads of state also vary from executive leaders (USA), through figureheads with some constitutional role in government (UK), to a complete separation from government business (Sweden). The Swiss presidency is an unusual position – the incumbent has no powers attached to the position; simply functioning as a chairman of the cabinet and a contact for foreign heads of state for protocol purposes.

In addition to Monarchs, Presidents and Prime Ministers, there are other positions included because of the authority vested in them, such as heads of ruling communist parties, military junta heads who did not assume the presidency, and some personalities who held no formal post yet wielded supreme authority.

The purpose of the first edition was to present an easy-to-use reference guide to the leaders of mostly present-day nations. This second edition has the same function and updates the first, quite a task considering the major political changes which many countries have undergone in recent years, including the disintegration of the USSR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia and the consequent emergence of several new states. The scope of the book has also been broadened to include more international organizations, more regional government leaders, more governments-in-exile and colonial governors of the twentieth century, this last limitation because of the excellent coverage of the topic by Henige.

The information comes from many sources, including various encyclopedias, yearbooks (especially Europa, The Statesman’s Yearbook and Whitaker’s Almanac), Keesing’s Record of World Events, specific history books, and correspondence with many libraries, archives and government offices. I am most grateful for all the assistance I received. This book is not the only chronological list of leaders, but an examination of the following will show that there are differences. I nevertheless acknowledge them all as having been extremely useful for my compilation:

Carpenter, C. (1978). *The Guinness Book of Kings, Rulers and Statesmen*. Guinness Superlatives Ltd, Enfield.

Henige, D. P. (1970). *Colonial Governors from the Fifteenth Century to the Present*. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison.

Ross, M. (1978). *Rulers and Governments of the World Vol.I*. Bowker, London & New York.

Spuler, B. (1978). *Rulers and Governments of the World Vols.II & III*. Bowker, London & New York.

Truhart, P. (1984-88). *Regents of Nations, Part I* (1984), *Part II* (1985), *Part III (1)* (1986), *Part III (2)* (1988). K.G.Saur, Munchen.

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/1058/rulers.html>

I am also indebted to friends and contacts in various countries who took the time and trouble to find information for me.

STATISTICAL RECORDS

Longest reign by a hereditary ruler:

Prince Heinrich XI (Reuss-Greiz). March 1723–June 1800. 77 years 3 months.

(Longest serving current hereditary ruler: Raja Tuanku Syed Putra (Perlis, Malaysia) since December 1945.)

Longest reign by a king:

King Louis XIV (France). 72 years 4 months.

King Minhti (Arakan, now in Myanmar) reputed to have reigned 1279–1374. 95 years.

Pharaoh Pepi II (Phiops) (Egypt) believed to have reigned c2281BC–c2107BC. 94 years.

(Longest current reigning king: Bhumibol Adulyadej (Thailand) since June 1946.)

Longest rule by a head of state (other than a monarch):

Francisco Franco Bahamonde (Spain). April 1939–November 1975. 36 years 7 months.

Longest presidency:

Alfredo Stroessner (Paraguay). August 1954–February 1989. 34 years 6 months.

(Longest serving current President: Gnassingbé Eyadéma (Togo) since April 1967.)

Longest premiership:

Ibrahim Didi (Maldives). 1883–1925. 42 years.

(Longest serving current PM: Fidel Castro (Cuba) since February 1959.)

Longest governor-generalship (Commonwealth):

Florizel Glasspole (Jamaica). June 1973–March 1991. 17 years 9 months.

(Longest serving current Governor-General: Howard Cooke (Jamaica) since August 1991.)

Longest leadership of a ruling communist party:

Kim Il Sung (North Korea). September 1948–July 1984. 36 years 10 months.

(Longest serving current party leader: Fidel Castro (Cuba) since October 1965.)

Shortest reign by a monarch:

King Louis XIX (France). A few hours on 2 August 1830.

Luis II (Portugal) was technically king for 20 minutes on 1 February 1908.

Shortest presidency:

Pedro Lascurain (Mexico). Approximately 1 hour on 18 February 1913.

Shortest premiership:

Siaka Stevens (Sierra Leone). A few minutes on 21 March 1967.

Shortest governor-generalship (Commonwealth):

John Paul (Bahamas). July–August 1973. 21 days.

Shortest leadership of a ruling communist party:

Georgy Malenkov (USSR). 6–14 March 1953. 8 days.

First female president:

- a. independent state – Maria Estela de Perón (Argentina). 1974–76.
- b. regional state – A. F. Nuorteva (Karelia, Russia). 1924–28.

First female prime minister:

- a. traditional – Kaakumana (Hawaii). 1819–32.
- b. modern – Sirimavo Bandaranaike (Sri Lanka). 1960–65.

First female governor-general (Commonwealth):

Elmira Gordon (Belize). 1981–93.

First female state governor:

Nellie Ross (Wyoming, USA). 1925–27.

Note: Of the more than 20,000 names listed in this book, just over 200 are female, and more than 160 of them have held office in the last 50 years.

Highest number of separate reigns by one monarch:

Emperor Takla Giyorghis I (Ethiopia). 6 reigns between 1779 and 1800.

Highest number of separate presidencies:

Antonio de Santa Anna (Mexico). 6 times between 1833 and 1855.

Highest number of separate premierships:

Alexandros Koumoundouros (Greece). 11 times between 1865 and 1882.

Most presidents:

Switzerland: 83

Most prime ministers:

France: 117

ABBREVIATIONS

b = born

f = formerly

† = died in office

Political party abbreviations are shown under the respective country/region