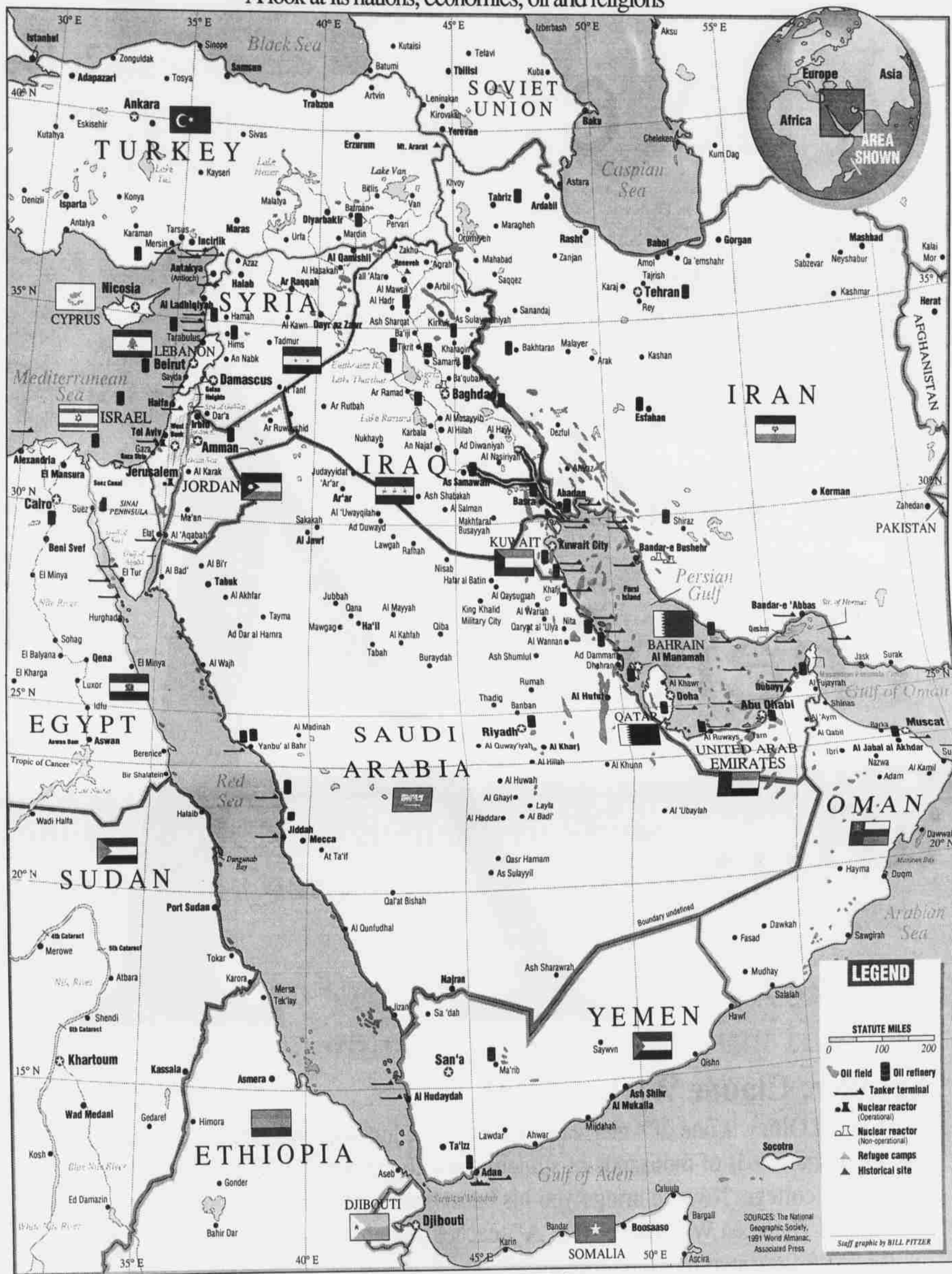


SPECIAL MAP

THE MIDDLE EAST

A look at its nations, economies, oil and religions



MAJOR POWERS

Population	Per capita GNP	Oil reserves (in barrels)
Egypt Arab Republic of Egypt Sunni Muslims make up about 90 percent of population. President Hosni Mubarak wanted an Arab solution to the Persian Gulf crisis, but supported the U.N. embargo and has sent troops to Saudi Arabia.	Iran Islamic Republic of Iran Was once home of the ancient Persians, is now the largest (in area) non-Arab country in the Middle East. Shiite Muslim government overthrew the shah's monarchy in 1979. Fought war with Iraq from 1980 to 1988.	Iraq Republic of Iraq Territory was once ancient Mesopotamia. Shiite Muslims make up half the population, but minority Sunnis have traditionally ruled. President Saddam Hussein, rules as dictator, and attacked Kuwait Aug. 2, 1990.
Lebanon Republic of Lebanon Once prosperous, Lebanon has been ravaged by civil war since 1975. Shiite Muslims hold a majority, followed by Maronite Catholics and Sunni Muslims, then Christian groups and the Druze sect.	Oman Sultanate of Oman (Absolute monarchy) Although most Omanis work the fields and sea, oil is the main source of revenue. Most are Arab Muslims of the Ibadi sect. Oman controls the Musandam Peninsula along the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz.	Saudi Arabia Kingdom of Saudi Arabia The Saudis guard two of Islam's most holy sites, the cities of Mecca and Medina. It also guards the world's greatest supply of oil. Conservative Wahhabi Sunnis make up the vast majority; large Shiite population in east.
Israel State of Israel (Parliamentary democracy) Jewish state was created in 1948, in region known as Palestine. Occupied territories include: Gaza Strip and Golan Heights (1967), and the West Bank (1967). Fourteen percent of population is Muslim.	Jordan Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan A constitutional monarchy full of problems. Dependent upon subsidies from Saudi Arabia and Iraq to remain solvent. Blockade of Iraq has added to economic woes. More than half of population is resident Palestinians.	Kuwait State of Kuwait (Constitutional monarchy) Oil wealth from the 80s provided Kuwait with one of the world's most complete welfare systems (foreign workers make up 60 percent of population). Iraq's initial invading force outnumbered Kuwaiti forces 5 to 1.
Syria Syrian Arab Republic Sunni Muslims make up about 70 percent of the population; Alawite Muslims are second largest group with 12 percent. Syria is one of the fastest growing countries in the region; about half the population is under age 20.	Turkey Republic of Turkey The largest non-Arab population in the Middle East is also a NATO member. Almost 99 percent are Muslim, mostly Sunni. The economy has been severely affected by the blockade of Iraq and closed pipelines.	United Arab Emirates Federation of emirates Formerly under British protection, the seven Trucial States became an independent federation in 1971. Economy changed dramatically during 70s oil price rise. The U.A.E. are mostly Sunni Muslim.

SOURCES: The National Geographic Society, 1991 World Almanac, Associated Press
Staff graphic by BILL FITZGER