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	9 Chapter 2 Critical Junctures: 9 California's Political History	the Native American lands now known as San Diego for a distant monarchy, thereby paving the way for European settlements along the West Coast. Assisted by Spanish troops, colonization accompanied the founding of Catholic missions throughout Baja (lower) and then Alta (northern) California. These missions, as well as military presidios (army posts), were constructed along what became known as El Camino Real, or the King's Highway, a path that roughly followed a line of major tribal establishments. Over the next two hundred vears.					
	25 Chapter 3 Direct Democracy	native peoples were either subordinated or decimated by foreign diseases, soldiers, and ways of life that were unnatural to them, and the huge mission complexes and ranches, or rancheros, that replaced these groups and their settlements became the focal points for social activity and economic industry in the region.					
	43 Chapter 4 The State Legislature	The western lands containing California became part of Mexico when that country gained independence from Spain in 1821, and for more than two decades, Mexicans governed the region, constructing presidios and installing military leaders to protect the towns taking					
	63 Chapter 5 The Executive Branch	shape up and down the coast. In 1846, a rebellious band of American settlers, declaring California a republic, raised the hastily patched Grizzly Bear Flag at Sonoma. Within weeks, the U.S. Navy lay claim to California, and for the next two years an uncomfortable mix of American military rule and locally elected "alcaldes" (mayors who acted both as lawmakers and judges) prevailed.					
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