

SOUTH AFRICA

Date of Elections: April 22, 1970

Characteristics of Parliament

The Parliament of South Africa consists of two Houses:

— The Assembly, composed of 166 Deputies elected for a period of 5 years, of whom 6 represent South-West Africa.

— The Senate, composed of 53 members, 10 of whom are nominated by the State President to represent the 4 provinces of the Republic and the Territory of South-West Africa; 41 Senators elected for the 4 provinces by an electoral college consisting of the members of the Assembly and the members of the Provincial Council. In addition, 2 Senators are elected for the Territory of South-West Africa by an electoral college consisting of the Deputies from that territory and the members of its Legislative Assembly. Senators hold office for 5 years.

In April 1970, legislative elections were called following the dissolution of the Assembly on March 2, 1970, 17 months before the normal expiry of its term.

Electoral System

Every white person of either sex who is over the age of 18 is entitled to vote, provided that he had not been convicted of treason, murder, pro-Communist or terrorist activities nor has been sentenced to imprisonment on any one of these grounds. Voting is not compulsory.

In 1969, voters' lists were drawn up on the basis of a census taken of all the electorate. Such a general registration will be carried out at intervals of not more than 6 years to keep the lists up to date.

In order to be eligible for either House, it is necessary to be a white person and South African citizen who has resided for 5 years within the territory of the Republic. A person must be 30 years old in order to be elected Senator, and 18 years old to be elected Deputy. No person shall be a candidate to either the Senate or the Assembly who has been sentenced to more than 12 months imprisonment, unless he had received a grant of amnesty or a free pardon or unless the term of imprisonment expired at least 5 years before the date of the election.

Undischarged bankrupts, persons declared of unsound mind by a competent court and certain persons holding a public office or holding an office of profit under the Republic are also ineligible.

A candidate may stand for 2 constituencies concurrently, and, if he is elected to both, must resign one of the two seats, for which a by-election is then held.

The Deputies are elected by simple plurality system in 166 constituencies which are divided up, within each Province, by a Delimitation Committee consisting of 3 High Court Judges appointed by the President of the Republic.

Should a vacancy occur in the Assembly during a legislature, a by-election is held to fill the vacant seat. If a casual vacancy arises in the Senate, a new member is nominated or elected, according to the category of the seat to be filled.

General Political Considerations and Conditions of the Elections

On September 30, 1969, South Africa's Prime Minister, Mr. John Vorster, announced to the annual Congress of his party, the National Party, in Orange Free State, that a general election was to be held in order, as he said, to give proof of the stability of the South African Government.

The closing session of Parliament would last from January 30 to February 27, 1970, and the elections would take place in the spring. This session of the Assembly was the last to be attended by 3 white representatives of South Africa's coloured population, their term expiring under the Separate Representation of Voters Amendment Bill of 1968. Henceforth, non-whites will only elect representatives to the "Coloured Persons' Representative Council" which consists of 40 elected and 20 appointed members. Elections held on September 25, 1969, revealed an anti-apartheid majority among the elected members.

The electoral campaign for the legislative elections of April 22, 1970, got under way in the early spring. On March 13, the deadline for the submission of candidatures, there were 407 candidates contesting the 116 seats in the Assembly. The governing party, Mr. Vorster's National Party, put up 145 candidates; the moderate United Party, the main opposition party, led by Sir de Villiers de Graaf, put up 149; and there were 80 candidates representing the Reconstituted National Party, an extreme right-wing movement led by Mr. Hertzog.

In addition, Mrs. Helen Suzman's Progressive Party presented 19 candidates, and there were 14 Independents.

The National Party built its campaign around the theme of "Separate Development" in accordance with the doctrine of Mr. Vorster who recommends the completion of separate development programmes for the white population on the one hand, and for the Bantus, coloureds, Metis and Indians on the other. Moreover, its manifesto stated that the Party would not deviate from the

traditional custom to practise and administer white and non-white sport separately.

The more moderate United Party approved the policy of separate development but hoped that it would be applied with greater consideration of humanitarian principles than it had been under the previous Government. It also proposed the adoption of a federal form of government that would allow coloureds to be represented in Parliament by 2 Senators and 6 Deputies.

The Reconstituted National Party, founded in September 1969 by Mr. Hertzog, following his expulsion from the National Party, advocated a Calvinist and nationalistic society in which Afrikaans would be the only official language.

The more liberal Progressive Party opposed the separate development policy considering that it endangered individual liberties as well as the economic development of the country as a whole.

The campaign was marked by several clashes between whites — in particular, supporters of the National Party succeeded in disrupting nearly all the rallies held by Mr. Hertzog's party.

The National Party suffered a slight set-back in the elections, losing 9 seats, but still has a comfortable majority in the Parliament. The moderate United Party gained 9 seats and the Progressive Party's sole representative in the previous House, Mrs. Helen Suzman, was returned with a large majority. The Reconstituted National Party failed to win a single seat. Mr. John Vorster reformed his Cabinet on May 12, and the new Assembly met on June 17, 1970.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Assembly

Number of registered voters	2,028,487
Voters	1,508,284 (74.4 %)*
Void or blank ballot papers.	10,524
Valid votes.	1,497,760

* Figure corresponding to the voters in 155 constituencies out of 166, since 11 candidates were declared elected uncontested. (Number of registered voters in these 11 constituencies: 132,147).

Political Group	Votes obtained	% "	• "5? . ° ^f. 8 in the Assembly
National Party.	820,968	54.43	117 (—9)
United Party.	561,647	37.23	47 (+8)
Reconstituted National Party	53,763	3.56	- C)
Progressive Party.	51,760	3.43	1 (=)
Others.	9,622	1.35	- (=)
			165**

* New Party.

** One seat, filled at a subsequent by-election, was won by the National Party candidate, bringing to 118, the number of that Party's representatives in the Assembly.

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

	Senate	Assembly
Men.	47	164
Women.	2	2
Vacancies.	4	—
	53	166

3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Professional. Category*

Farmers.	58
Company directors.	16
Attorneys.	11
Advocates.	10
Medical practitioners, dentists, pharmacists	9
Businessmen.	8
Employees.	4
Journalists.	4
Retired public servants.	4
Teachers.	4
Accountants.	3
Managers, representatives, sales administrators	3
Politicians.	3
Consultant.	1
Economist.	1
Storekeeper.	1
Unspecified.	26

166

4. *Average Age: 51 y₂*