

SALVADOR

Date of Elections: March 10, 1968

Characteristics of Parliament:

On March 10, the electorate went to the polls to renew the 52 members of the Legislative Assembly, Salvador's unicameral Parliament, whose two-year mandate had come to an end.

Electoral System:

Citizens of Salvador of both sexes are allowed to vote from the age of 18 provided they enjoy full civil and political rights, are mentally sane and registered on the electoral lists which are revised a few weeks before polling day. Voting is considered a right and a moral obligation.

Eligibility to the Legislative Assembly requires that a candidate be Salvadorian by birth, aged at least 25, not have lost his political rights during the 5 previous years and be domiciled or born in the department in which his candidature is submitted. Furthermore, all candidates must be educated and of reputable character, while the holding of anarchist or Communist ideas or ideas harmful to public order may be considered a cause for ineligibility.

Since 1964, elections to the Assembly are held in each of Salvador's 14 departments on a closed party-list system with proportional representation.

In every department, the total number of valid votes cast is divided by the number of seats to be filled.

The resulting quotient is then divided into the number of votes obtained by each party, thereby giving the number of seats allotted to each.

Seats not accounted for after this operation are allocated to the parties with the greatest remainder of votes.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections:

The creation of a permanent control body in 1961, known as the Central Council for Elections, contributed towards making general elections in Salvador more meaningful.

Two major parties contested the March 1968 elections: the Party of National Conciliation (PCN), which held 31 seats in the previous Legislature, and the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), represented by 15 deputies.

Three other groups took part in the campaign: the Party of Renovating Action (PAR), which previously had 4 seats, the Republican Party of National Evolution (PREN) and the Salvadorian People's Party (PPS), each of which held a single seat.

There was a tendency towards the regrouping of political forces, hitherto spread over a multitude of frequently ephemeral parties, around the two streams of thought represented by the Government Party, the PCN, and the Christian Democrats.

In the absence of any more detailed results, it should be mentioned that the outcome of the March 10 elections was to give the Party of National Conciliation 27 out of the 52 available Assembly seats.