

NEW ZEALAND

Date of Elections: November 29, 1969

Characteristics of Parliament

The Parliament of New Zealand is constituted by the House of Representatives, which consists of 84 seats. In fact, an Electoral Amendment Act of 1965, sanctioned by a modification to the Electoral Law of 1956, led to the creation of 4 new seats in the Parliament, from the 1969 elections. 80 seats are filled by citizens of European stock and 4 are reserved for representatives of the Maori population.

The New Zealand electorate went to the polls on November 29, 1969, to renew the members of the House of Representatives which had been dissolved on October 28, 1969, on the expiry of the previous legislature.

Electoral System

With the exception of mental defectives and those who have been deprived of their civil rights, every person 20 years of age or over who is a British subject or an Irish citizen ordinarily resident in New Zealand and who has resided in the country for at least 1 year, may register as an elector and vote in respect of the electoral district in which he has resided continuously for more than 3 months. There is no legal obligation to vote, but each elector is bound to register on the electoral lists which are revised continuously. Statutory provisions exist for postal voting for those in hospital, etc.

Any member of the electorate may stand for Parliament provided he is neither bankrupt nor a contractor. However, it should be noted that the Labour Party recently decided not to endorse the candidature of any person 70 years of age or over. If a civil servant wishes to stand for election, he must ask to be discharged of his office, and, if elected, must hand in his resignation.

New Zealand is divided into 84 constituencies, of which 4 are reserved for Maori electors and the remaining 80 for electors of European stock. Only half-breeds may register as electors or present themselves as candidates in either of the two categories of electoral districts. The 84 members of the House are elected in single-member constituencies by simple plurality of vote.

The Electoral Law provides for the holding of by-elections for any seats falling vacant, provided this does not occur shortly before a general election, in which case the by-elections are postponed until then.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The National Party, led by Mr. Holyoake, and the Labour Party, led by Mr. Kirk, are the only two New Zealand political parties with really nation-wide support. The Labour Party, in opposition for many years, hoped to defeat the National Party which had been in power from 1949 to 1957, and since 1960. The socialists advocated the immediate withdrawal of troops stationed in Vietnam, whereas the National Party adhered to the time-table set by Mr. Nixon. Mr. Holyoake's supporters stressed the Government's record since 1960, particularly the restoration of New Zealand's economic boom and the high living standard of its population — both of which they attributed to the liberal policy of supporting a system of private enterprise and offering incentives to industry. For its part, the Labour Party advocated increased State intervention in the economy, the introduction of price control, greater State participation in various activities including shipping, and increased aid to private schools. Many observers expressed the opinion that Labour's education policy lost the party many votes.

Finally, the Social Credit Party offered substantial tax reductions and subsidies to assist the consumer; however, its total vote declined considerably and it lost the only seat it had held in the previous legislature.

Statistics

*1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats
in the House of Representatives*

Number of registered voters.	1,503,092
Voters	1,350,441 (89.4 %)
Blank or void ballot papers	9,088
Valid votes	1,341,353

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats* in the House of Representatives
National Party	54	605,960	44.87	44 (+1)
Labour Party . .	84	593,253	43.93	40 (+4)
Social Credit Party	84	121,569	9.0	- (- 1)
Others	43	20,571	1.5	- (=)
				84

* The House of Representatives consisted of only 80 seats during the previous legislature.

New Zealand

2. Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category

Profession	Number of Deputies
Farmers.	23
Manufacturers or businessmen.	13
Accountants.	8
Lawyers.	6
Teachers.	5
Union secretaries.	5
Journalists.	4
Married women.	4
Civil servants.	2
Air Force Officers (retd.).	2
Medical practitioner.	1
Others.	11
	84

3. Distribution of Deputies according to Sex

Men.	80
Women.	4
	84

4. Distribution of Deputies according to Age Group

	Members of the National Party	Members of the Labour Party	Total
Less than 40 years	3	6	g
40-45	4	12	in
46-50	9	5	14
51-55	12	7	19
56-60	9	7	16
61-65	3	1	4
66-70	4	2	6
	44	40	84