

## **ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**

**Date of Elections:** 9 March 1989

### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the seats in the House of Representatives on the normal expiry of the members' term of office.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The bicameral Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda is composed of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

The Senate comprises 17 members appointed by the Governor-General, of whom 11 on the advice of the Prime Minister (including one inhabitant of Barbuda), 4 on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition, 1 at his own discretion and 1 on the advice of the Barbuda Council.

The House of Representatives comprises 17 elected members.

All members of Parliament serve for a maximum of 5 years.

### **Electoral System**

All citizens of the British Commonwealth at least 18 years of age who possess the requisite residence or domicile qualifications are entitled to vote in House elections.

Citizens who are at least 21 years of age, have resided in the country for a minimum of 12 months immediately preceding the date of appointment, and are able to speak and read the English language with sufficient proficiency to enable them to take an active part in the proceedings of the House concerned are qualified to become members of Parliament. Disqualified are persons under allegiance to a foreign State, undischarged bankrupts, the insane, persons under sentence of death or imprisonment for a term of at least 12 months, and those connected to electoral offences or guilty of certain crimes within the preceding 10 years. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with certain public offices, electoral responsibilities, and the post of minister of religion.

Members of the House of Representatives are elected in single-member constituencies by simple majority vote. House seats which fall vacant between general elections are filled through by-elections held within 120 days of the vacancy.

Background and Outcome of the Elections

General elections had previously taken place in April 1984, when the Antigua Labour Party (ALP) won 16 of the 17 House seats. The next year, a new opposition party, the National Democratic Party (NDP), was formed in Antigua. In April 1986, it merged with the United People's Movement (UPM) to form the United National Democratic Party (UNDP). In 1988, economic problems, particularly the size of the national debt, became of increasing concern.

As a result of the 1989 poll, the ALP lost a seat but still retained a total of 15. Prime Minister Vere Bird thus won his fourth consecutive term in office.

Statistics

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

Number of registered electors . . . . .	38,800 (approx.)
Voters . . . . .	20,000 (approx.)

Political Group	... % of Votes obtained	Number of Seats
Antigua Labour Party (ALP) . . . . .	66	15
United National Democratic Party (UNDP) . . . . .	31	1
Barbuda People's Movement (BPM) . . . . .	.1	1
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