

BARBADOS

Date of Elections: September 2, 1976

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament on the normal expiry of their term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of Barbados consists of the House of Assembly and the Senate.

The House of Assembly is composed of 24 members elected for 5 years.

The Senate has 21 members, 12 appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Prime Minister, 2 on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition, and 7 to represent religious, economic or social interests or such other interests as the Governor-General considers appropriate.

Electoral System

Any citizen of Barbados who is at least 18 years old and who has resided in a particular constituency for a minimum of three months is entitled to vote in that same constituency. Also entitled are Commonwealth citizens of the required age who have resided in Barbados for at least three years immediately preceding the qualifying date (as elector). Disqualified from registration as electors are the insane, persons undergoing any sentence of imprisonment and persons under sentence of death or imprisonment exceeding 12 months.

Electoral registers are revised annually. Voting is not compulsory.

Citizens of Barbados at least 21 years of age who have resided in the country for at least seven years preceding the election are qualified to be elected as members of the House of Assembly. Candidates for appointment to the Senate must have been ordinarily resident in Barbados for the 12 months immediately preceding appointment. Ineligible, for both the House and the Senate, are undischarged bankrupts, the insane, persons owing allegiance to a foreign State, persons under sentence of death or imprisonment exceeding six months, persons convicted of a felony or of any other criminal offense involving dishonesty in the preceding ten years, and persons convicted of electoral fraud. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with the office of judge, Director

of Public Prosecutions, Auditor-General and (for the House of Assembly) minister of religion.

Candidates for the House must be nominated by a total of four electors and make a deposit of B\$250, which is forfeited if the candidate is not elected and does not obtain more than one-sixth of the total votes polled in his constituency. The Electoral Law sets strict limits on the amount of expenses a candidate may incur during his election campaign.

For election purposes, Barbados is divided into 24 constituencies. One member of the House of Assembly is elected in each by simple majority vote.

House of Assembly seats which become vacant between general elections are filled through by-elections. Vacant Senate seats are filled by appointment made according to how the seat was originally filled.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

Three parties contested the 1976 general elections: the ruling Democratic Labour Party (DLP), the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) and the newly-formed People's Political Alliance.

Outgoing Prime Minister Errol Barrow's 15 years of power ended with polling day as the BLP — which had campaigned, *inter alia*, for a programme to fight unemployment, for free enterprise and for new faces and new ideas in government — gained an additional 11 Assembly seats, bringing its new overall total to 17. BLP leader J. M. G. (Tom) Adams was subsequently sworn in as the island's new Prime Minister.

Statistics

1. *Distribution of Seats in the House of Assembly*

Political Group	Number of Seats
Barbados Labour Party (BLP) . .	17 (+11)
Democratic Labour Party (DLP) .	7 (—11)
	24