

BRAZIL

Dale of the Elections: November 15, 1970

Reason for Elections

Voters were called to the polls to renew the mandates of all members of the Chamber of Deputies upon the normal expiry of the previous legislature and to fill the 46 seats in the Senate (44 at regular expiry of their mandates and 2 that had become vacant.)

Characteristics of Parliament

The Brazilian National Congress is bicameral.

From now on the Chamber of Deputies (according to the revised Constitution of October 1969) consists of 310 members elected for 4 years on the basis of 1 for each of the Territories and on the number of voters in each State (1 Deputy per fraction of 150,000 voters up to 3 millions, 1 Deputy per fraction of 300,000, from 3 to 6 millions, 1 Deputy per fraction of 500,000 above 6 million).

The federal Senate comprises 66 members, i.e. 3 per State (the territories are not represented in the Senate), whose mandate is 8 years and who are renewed alternately by a 1/3 and by 2/3 every 4 years.

Electoral System

All citizens of either sex, aged 18, are eligible to vote, except military personnel up to the rank of non-commissioned officer, illiterates, all those incapable of expressing themselves in the national language, and those deprived of their civil rights.

Voters are obliged to register themselves on electoral rolls, the revision of which is not foreseen by any precise law, and to exercise their voting right. Whoever fails to carry out his electoral duty and cannot present valid excuse (illness, travel, etc.) is liable to be fined, and in case of its non-payment may be deprived of a certain number of rights and privileges (issue of a passport, an identity card, going into public service, etc.).

Voters are eligible to stand for election to the National Congress without distinction of sex, but must be resident in the State where they are candidates for a period of at least 1 year and be put forward by a political party that has been duly registered.

The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with active military service, employment in a public company or similar concern, any other elective responsibility, at federation, state or commune level.

Deputies are elected in the 3 Territories by simple plurality of vote and in each of the 22 States under the party list system with no possibility of political alliances or vote-splitting but with preferential voting. The seats are distributed proportionally among the lists established according to the method of the strongest average. The electoral quotient is calculated on the basis of votes given including the blank ballot papers. The seats won by each list are afterwards allocated to candidates who have collected the most preferential votes.

Senators are elected, also in the framework of each State, by simple plurality of vote.

Should a seat fall vacant in the Chamber of Deputies during the legislature, recourse is made to the first of the "next in line" on the list of the Deputy who held this seat. In the Senate a seat falling vacant is occupied by the substitute elected at the same time as the titular Senator.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

In November 1970, citizens had to appoint a Chamber of Deputies with fewer members, elected on a new basis to ensure a fairer representation, to replace the one elected in 1966 holding 409 Deputies, which had only met for 2 years. In fact the National Congress had been in recess since December 14, 1968.

The electoral campaign was led by two political groups meeting with criteria decided by article 152 of the Constitution revised in October 1969. Particularly the latter provides that a political party must be established on a nation-wide basis and act within the framework of a programme approved by the Higher Electoral Tribunal and institutionalises party discipline by foreseeing the disqualification of any Senator or Deputy failing to respect his party's instructions.

On the one hand, there was the Alliance for National Renovation (ARENA), the ruling party which first made known through the voice of its Secretary-General, Mr. Arnaldo Prieto, its intention of raising the level of the electoral campaign by focussing it on an overall view of the present day issues. Its candidates emphasised the achievements, especially in the sphere of economy and education, of governments which had been in power since the coup d'Etat in April 1964.

The other party, representing the official opposition, was the Brazilian Democratic Movement which declared itself in favour of the abolition of the emergency measures contained in the Institutional Act No. 5, of defence of

individual rights, of taking part in the benefits of the national development and establishing reforms in the domains of agriculture and education.

The election results, marked by a high rate of abstentions — taking into account the obligation to vote — as well as the void or blank ballot papers, gave victory to the ARENA party which holds a considerable majority in Congress.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections in the Chamber of Deputies

Number of registered voters.	28,966,114
Voters.	22,435,521 (77.45 %)
Void ballot papers.	2,098,828
Valid votes.	20,336,693
Blank ballot papers.	4,690,952

Political Group	Votes	%	No. seats in Chamber of Deputies	No. of seats at previous elections
Alliance for National Renovation . . .	10,867,814	48.44	223	277
Brazilian Democrat Movement . . .	4,777,927	21.29	87	132
			310	409

2. Results of elections to the Senate

Number of registered voters.	28,966,114
Voters.	22,406,627 (77.4 %)
Total votes.	46,986,492
Valid votes.	33,965,345

Political Group	Votes gained 15/11/70	%	Seats gained 15/11/70	Number of seats in the Senate
ARENA	20,524,470	60.4	41	
MDB	13,440,875	39.6	..	7
			46	66

3. Distribution of members of Parliament according to Sex

	Chamber of Deputies	Senate
Men	309	66
Women	1	—
	310	66

4. Average Age:

Chamber of Deputies	Senate
45 years	55 years