

ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

Date of Elections: October 27 and November 3, 1971

Reason for Election

The elections, prompted by the early dissolution of Parliament by the President of the Republic on September 8, 1971, were held to elect members of the People's Assembly, which, pursuant to the new Constitution adopted in September 1971 *, replaced the previous National Assembly.

Characteristics of Parliament

The Parliament of the Arab Republic of Egypt (A.R.E.) consists of one chamber, the People's Assembly. It has 360 members: 350 are elected, at least half of whom must be workers and farmers; 10 are members appointed by the President of the Republic. The term of each Parliament is 5 years, counted from its first meeting.

Electoral System

All citizens of either sex at least 18 years old are entitled to vote provided they have not been deprived of their political rights. Naturalized foreigners are allowed to vote only upon the expiry of a period of 5 years from the date of their naturalization. All male citizens fulfilling the requisite conditions for voting are automatically registered on the electoral rolls; women, on request. The rolls are revised each year in December, and a person who fails to vote is liable to a fine of 1 Egyptian pound.

Any candidate for election as member of the People's Assembly must be a national of the A.R.E., inscribed in the register of electors, at least 30 years old on the date of the elections, and be proficient in reading and writing. If his Egyptian nationality was acquired through naturalization he must have possessed it for at least 10 years. Furthermore, and unless exempted by the President of the Republic, a candidate is subject to the following requirements:

- He must have been an active member of the Arab Socialist Union for at least 1 year;
- His estate and property must not have been subject to sequestration under the provisions of Law No. 533 of 1954 or Law No. 162 of 1958;

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 12.

- He must not be among those whose agricultural property has been limited according to the provisions of the Laws on Agrarian Reform;
- He must not be among those to whom the Socialist laws have been applied in respect of amounts exceeding £E10,000.

There is incompatibility of office as regards membership in Parliament and tenure of office in the civil service, except in certain cases determined by the Assembly.

Candidatures must be presented in writing to the competent administrative authority, the Governorate, within 10 days from the date fixed for declaring candidatures. Twenty Egyptian pounds must be deposited at the same time with the said authority.

Egypt is divided into 175 constituencies. In each, 2 members are elected; at least one of them must be a worker or a farmer.

A *worker* is any person who, in industry, agriculture or the services, is engaged in manual or intellectual work, is dependent upon this work for his livelihood, is not entitled to belong to a trade union of professionals and does not possess any diploma from a university, institute of higher education or military school. However, any person who started out in life as a worker and later obtained a university diploma, but has remained affiliated to his worker's trade union is regarded as a worker, notwithstanding his having obtained such diploma.

A *farmer* is any person who, together with his wife and children under age, does not own more than 10 feddans (4 hectares) of land, and for whom agriculture is the sole income and occupation. He must moreover reside in a rural area.

The elective seats are filled as follows:

- If, in a constituency, 2 candidates, including at least 1 worker or farmer, obtain an absolute majority of votes cast in the first round of voting, both are declared elected.

- If neither of the 2 candidates who have obtained an absolute majority is a worker or farmer, only the one who has received the most votes is elected. A second round of voting is then organized for the election of the constituency's second Deputy in which only the 2 workers or farmers who were best placed in the first round may participate.

- If only 1 candidate obtains an absolute majority in the first round, a second round of voting is organized. All candidates may participate in this second round if the person elected in the first round is a worker or farmer; if this is not the case, only worker and farmer candidates may participate.

- If none of the candidates secures an absolute majority of the votes cast, a second election is held among the first 4 candidates who have received a

relative majority, provided that at least 2 of them are workers or farmers. In this case, if no candidate secures an absolute majority in the second round, the seats are attributed to the 2 best-placed candidates on condition that at least one of them is a farmer or worker and that they have won at least 20 % of the votes of the total electorate.

As a provisional measure, according to the Electoral Law, the members representing the constituencies of the Suez Canal and of the Sinai are designated by the President of the Republic from among members of the Arab Socialist Union in these parts of the A.R.E. Six constituencies are involved.

Where any seat becomes vacant between general elections it is filled by electing or appointing a new member, according to whether the seat, before it became vacant, was filled by election or appointment.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The dissolution of the National Assembly formed part of President Anwar El Sadat's continuing political reform program. The legislative elections followed the reformation of the Arab Socialist Union, professional syndicates and trade union executives.

The 6-week electoral campaign followed the near-unanimous ratification by referendum of a new Constitution, on September 11, 1971. A.R.E. political forces are grouped under a single national organization, the Arab Socialist Union, which combines workers and farmers, members of the armed forces, intellectuals and the national capital in common action; nevertheless, a great number of candidates appeared for the 169 seats (minus Suez and Sinai) at stake; 1,660 for the first round and 464 for the second, when 141 seats were still contested.

The new Assembly held its first meeting on November 13, 1971.

Statistics

1. *Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category*

Workers and farmers.	188
Other categories.	172
	~360*

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men.	353
Women.	7
	~360*

* Including the 10 members appointed by the President of the Republic.