

MALAWI

Date of Elections: April 17, 1971

Reason for Elections

In 1969, the Malawi Parliament had reached the end of its term of office, which had been extended to 1971 so that the legislative elections would occur the same year as the renewal of the Chief of State.

Characteristics of Parliament

The Malawi unicameral Parliament, or National Assembly, comprises 60 elected Members instead of 50 as in the past.

Moreover, the President of the Republic may designate up to 15 additional Members to represent certain social-professional classes such as farmers and businessmen. Furthermore, under the terms of the Constitution, he has the right to select Ministers from among non-Parliamentarians; the latter then become members of the National Assembly.

Members have 5-year terms of office.

Electoral System

Male and female citizens of Malawi, no less than 21 years of age and resident in their constituency during the 2-year period preceding the elections may vote.

Electoral rolls are prepared in the constituencies and revised each year or whenever the need arises. Voting is not compulsory.

Male and female Malawi citizens no less than 25 years of age may stand for election provided they have been resident in the country during the preceding 2 years, that they are able to read and write English, that they are Malawi Congress Party members and that they are registered on the rolls. The parliamentary mandate is not incompatible with other offices.

Lists of candidates are prepared during District Conferences of the Congress Party, on the advice of the population in each district. There is a limit of 5 candidates per constituency.

Deputies are elected in 60 single-member constituencies by simple plurality of vote.

A by-election is held in the case of a vacancy during the legislature.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The Malawi National Assembly was dissolved on March 16, 1971, and a final selection of candidates was made by the Malawi Congress Party OB April 11, 1971.

All the candidates claimed to be following the Party's electoral programme. Names of candidates in each constituency were submitted in order of merit to the Head Office of the Congress Party who forwarded the Usts to the President of the Republic. The latter selected one candidate in each constituency.

As they were unopposed, the candidates were declared elected; the elections which were due to be held on April 17, 1971, did not, therefore, take place.

A new Cabinet was formed by President Banda on April 22, 1971, after the elections.

Statistics

1. *Distribution of Seats in the National Assembly*

p	Number	Number
"	of candidates	of Seats obtained
Malawi Congress Party.	56 *	56 *

* 4 seats were still vacant on June 17, 1971.

N.B. — In June 1971, President Banda nominated 8 of the 15 parliamentarians he is empowered to designate.

2. *Average age: 42 years approximately*