

NAURU

Dates of Elections: 6 December 1986 and 24 January 1987

Purpose of Elections

General elections were held on 6 December 1986 on the normal expiry of the Parliament's term, but the polling results did not provide for a stable Government. The legislature was therefore dissolved on 30 December and new elections took place on 24 January 1987.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Nauru comprises 18 members elected for 3 years.

Electoral System

All citizens who have attained the age of 20 years and are resident in the country are entitled to vote in general elections. Voting is compulsory except in certain specified instances.

Any citizen who has attained the age of 20 years is qualified to be elected as a member of Parliament unless he is insane, an undischarged bankrupt, under sentence for an offence punishable by death or imprisonment for at least one year, does not possess the required residence or domicile qualifications, or holds an office of profit in the service of Nauru or of a statutory corporation.

A written nomination of a candidate must be submitted at least 14 days prior to polling day, signed by the candidate and two or more electors of his district. It is not necessary that the candidate be a member of a recognized political party.

For election purposes, Nauru is divided into eight constituencies; two members are returned in seven of these, four in the eighth, according to a system of preferential vote. In each constituency, the candidate who has received the largest number of first preference votes is, if that number constitutes an absolute majority of these votes cast, declared elected.

By-elections are held to fill parliamentary seats which fall vacant between general elections.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The December 1986 elections resulted in a deadlock, Parliament being divided into two groups, each having nine members. As a consequence, it proved impossible to fashion a clear governing majority and a fresh poll was called for 24 January 1987. The campaign focused

mostly on local and economic issues, and all candidates ran as independents since there were no recognized political groups or parties*.

In these latter elections supporters of the outgoing President of the Republic, Sir Hammer DeRoburt, emerged victorious and re-elected him to his post. All but one of the incumbent MPs retained their seats. Mr. DeRoburt formed a new five-member Cabinet.

Statistics

1. *Results of the Elections*

Number of registered electors.	2,443	
Voters.	2,264	(92.67%)
Blank or void ballot papers.	54	
Valid votes.	2,210	

2. *Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Professional Category*

Lawyers, businessmen, etc.	12
Government service.	6
	18

3. *Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Sex*

Men	17
Women.	1
	18

4. *Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Age Group*

30-40 years.	7
40-50 ».	7
50-60 ».	2
60 and over.	2
	18

* In February 1987, the Democratic Party of Nauru was established. Eight MPs subsequently joined this new party, the first in Nauru since 1976.