

NEW ZEALAND

Date of Elections: November 25, 1972

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held to renew all the members of the House of Representatives on the normal expiry of their terms of office. Previous elections took place on November 29, 1969.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of New Zealand consists of 87 members elected for 3 years. Since 1969, this total had increased from 84 by the creation of 3 new constituencies.

Citizens of European stock fill 83 seats, while 4 are reserved for representatives of the Maori population of New Zealand.

Electoral System

Every person 20 years of age or over who is a British subject ordinarily resident in New Zealand and who has resided continuously in the country for at least 1 year may register as an elector and vote in that electoral district in which he has resided continuously for more than 3 months immediately preceding the date of his application for registration, except the insane, prisoners and persons found guilty of corrupt electoral practices in the preceding 3 years. If necessary, employers are bound to grant their workers time off to vote.

There is no legal obligation to vote, but each elector is bound to register on the electoral rolls, which are revised continuously.

All registered electors may stand for Parliament except undischarged bankrupts and certain contractors with the Government. If a public servant stands for election, he is placed on leave of absence for the purpose of his candidature and, if elected, must resign.

A candidate must be nominated by not less than 2 registered electors of his district between 27 and 20 days prior to election day; no elector may make more than 1 nomination. A deposit is also obligatory and is forfeited by an unsuccessful candidate if he receives less than % of the total number of votes obtained by the candidate elected.

New Zealand is divided into 87 single-member constituencies, of which 4 are reserved for Maori electors and the remaining 83 for electors of European

stock. Only half-castes may register as electors or be candidates in either but not both of the 2 categories of electoral districts. All members of the House are elected by simple plurality of vote.

By-elections are held to fill any seat falling vacant between general elections.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The parliamentary seats were contested by 447 candidates, including those of the National Party, the Labour Party and the Social Credit Political League in every one of the 87 constituencies.

The National Party, in power since 1960, released its 140-page election manifesto on October 30, when the outgoing Prime Minister, Mr. Marshall, opened the party's campaign. Domestically, the manifesto emphasized regional development and sought, *inter alia*, giving the Ombudsman jurisdiction over administrative acts of local bodies and doubling factory output during the decade, while advocating increased trade treaties with the European Economic Community. The Labour manifesto, made public on October 31, placed the most emphasis on the state of the economy, social welfare and housing. The party also stressed " law and order ", pledged to end compulsory military training and to lower the voting age to 18 and, in foreign affairs, to recognize the People's Republic of China, withdraw military units from Viet-Nam, Malaysia and Singapore and review the country's commitments under SEATO. The Social Credit Political League, finally, advocated a policy of monetary reform involving the establishment of a National Credit Authority to secure public ownership of credit.

Election day saw the second Labour victory in the last 23 years. None of the smaller parties and groups came near obtaining representation. The only one that emerged as a new force was the Values Party, which favoured attention to the quality of life and the preservation of the environment; it obtained 2 % of the vote.

Mr. Norman Kirk, who also assumed the role of Minister of Foreign Affairs, was sworn in as Prime Minister on December 8, the membership of the New Labour Government including 2 Maoris and 1 woman.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the House of Representatives

Number of registered voters	1,583,256
Voters	1,410,240 (88.4%)
Blank or void ballot papers.	9,088
Valid votes	1,401,152

Its

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Number of votes obtained	% of votes	Number of seats in the House of Representatives
Labour Party	87	677,669	48.37	55 (40)
National Party	87	581,422	41.50	32 (44)
Social Credit Party	87	93,231	6.65	—
Values Party	42	27,467	1.96	—
Other parties and independents	58	21,363	1.52	—
				87*

* 3 seats added since last election.