

PHILIPPINES

Date of Elections: April 7, 1978

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of the interim Legislative Assembly provided for by constitutional amendments passed in October 1976.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral interim Legislative Assembly (*Batasang Pambansa*) of the Philippines comprises 190 members, of whom 165 are directly elected. The remaining 25 seats are held by the President of the Republic, 10 members of his Cabinet, and 14 members indirectly elected by youth, agriculture and labour organizations.

Electoral System

Pursuant to the Constitution of 1973, as amended, all citizens of the Philippines over the age of 18 years, not disqualified by law, resident in the country for at least one year and in their voting district for at least six months, are entitled to vote.

Assembly candidates must be natural-born citizens, over 25 years of age, literate and registered voters in their district. Directly-elected members of the Assembly are chosen according to proportional representation.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The Assembly elections were the first since President of the Republic Marcos imposed martial law throughout the country in 1972*. In October 1976, the nation's voters had approved a number of amendments to the 1973 Constitution, including one providing for the creation of an interim Legislative Assembly. The 1973 Constitution had provided for an elected National Assembly but, under transitional provisions, gave the President power to convene an interim National Assembly. This power was not availed of until 1978, when the interim Assembly was elected; this same body is to act until martial law is ended, when further elections are to take place with a view to returning to a democratic system of government.

* See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections VII (1972-1973)*, p. 11.

The April election was announced in January, and the election campaign commenced in February. On polling day, the President's ruling New Society Movement won convincingly, also capturing the 21 Manila seats — the only ones contested by the opposition People's Force Party, or " Laban " (a coalition of the Liberal Party and other political, labour, student and community organizations). The balloting was followed by opposition charges of fraud in the vote count.

The Constitution permits President Marcos to assume the additional post of Prime Minister, and to legislate by decree. He formally convened the newly-elected Assembly on June 12,1978.

Statistics

*1. Results of the Elections
and Distribution of Seats in the Assembly*

Number of registered electors	21,463,094
Voters	18,355,862 (85.52 %)

Political Group	Number of Seats
New Society Movement	152
<i>Pusyon Bisaya</i>	<u>13</u>
	165

*2. Distribution of Legislative Assembly Members
according to Professional Category*

Lawyers.	77
Public officials.	35
Businessmen	29
Members of the teaching profession.	12
Farmers.	11
Engineers.	9
Doctors.	5
Labor leaders.	5
Students.	5
Journalists.	3
Retired Generals.	2
<u>Others</u>	8
	201*

• Some members of the Assembly have more than one profession.

3. *Distribution of Legislative Assembly Members
according to Sex*

Men170
Women11
	181*

4. *Distribution of Legislative Assembly Members
according to Age Group*

20-29 years.7
30-39 »20
40-49 »57
50-59 »67
60-69 »29
70-79 »9
80 and over.2
	181*

- Data pertaining to the members who had thus far taken their oath of office.