

SINGAPORE

Date of Elections: December 23, 1976

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament following the premature dissolution of this body on December 5, 1976. Previous general elections had taken place in September 1972.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Singapore consists of 69 members* elected for 5 years, plus the Speaker and/or Deputy Speaker when it happens that these officials are not chosen from amongst the members of Parliament.

Electoral System

All citizens resident in the country and at least 21 years of age are entitled to vote. Disqualified are persons owing allegiance to a foreign State, persons under sentence of death or serving a sentence of imprisonment for a period in excess of 12 months, the insane, persons convicted of election-connected offences and persons on active duty with an armed force not maintained out of moneys provided by Parliament, unless possessing a domicile in Singapore.

Electoral registers are revised at the latest three years after the last general election. Voting is compulsory, failure to vote resulting in the offender's name being expunged from the register.

Candidates for Parliament must be qualified electors who are residents of Singapore at the time of their nomination and who are able, with a degree of proficiency sufficient to enable them to take an active part in the proceedings of the Parliament, to read and write at least one of the following languages: English, Malay, Mandarin, Tamil. Not qualified to be members of Parliament, however, are undischarged bankrupts, persons sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than one year or to a fine of at least S\$ 2,000, and persons who have been candidates or election agents to candidates and who have failed to lodge a return of election expenses as required by law. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with an office of profit in Singapore. The

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 16.

Speaker and/or Deputy Speaker cannot be a member of Parliament who is either a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary.

Each candidate's nomination paper must be signed by two persons as proposer and seconder and by not less than four other persons, all of whose names must appear on the register of electors for the candidate's electoral division. A candidate must make a deposit of S\$1,200, which is reimbursed if he obtains more than one-eighth of the total number of votes polled in his division.

For election purposes, Singapore is divided into 69 divisions, each returning one member by simple majority vote.

By-elections are held to fill parliamentary vacancies occurring between general elections.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

Parliament was dissolved in December 1976 — some nine months before the scheduled date of the elections. The election date was announced on December 6.

On Nomination Day (December 13), 16 candidates of the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) were returned unopposed. A total of 108 candidates (including three women) were in contention **in the** remaining 53 electoral divisions. Two of these were independents, the remainder representing six political parties. The opposition parties agreed not to compete against each other so that votes would not be split between them and that they might thus succeed in winning some seats.

During the campaign, the PAP pointed to the achievements made — especially in raising the living standard of the populace — during the more than 17 years of its rule, while the theme of the opposition was essentially that there should be an opposition voice in Parliament.

This was, in fact, not to be, as the PAP won the 53 contested seats and 72.4% of the votes cast and remains the only party represented in Parliament. Mr. Lee Kuan Yew remained Prime Minister.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats
in Parliament

Number of registered voters	857,297	(53 contested constituencies)
Voters.	815,130	(53 constituencies) (95.08%)
Blank or void ballot papers	18,558	(53 constituencies)
Valid votes.	796,572	(53 constituencies)

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Number obtained	%	Number of Seats
People's Action Party (PAP)	69	590,169	72.40	69 (+4)
Workers' Party	22	91,966	11.28	
United Front	15	56,191	6.89	
<i>Barisan Sosialis</i>	6	25,411	3.12	—
United People's Front	6	14,233	1.75	
<i>Pekemas</i>	2	9,230	1.13	—
Justice Party	2	5,199	0.64	
Independents	2	4,173	0.51	

* Four seats added since last elections

2. Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Sex

Men	69
Women	—
	"69"

3. Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Age Group

26-30 years.1
31-35.7
36-40.	22
41-45.	14
46-50.	5
51-55.	10
56-60.	8
61-65.1
66-70.1