

## SOLOMON ISLANDS

**Date of Elections:** 6 August 1980

### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament in the first such poll since Solomon Islands became fully independent in July 1978\*.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The unicameral National Parliament of Solomon Islands comprises 38 members elected for a maximum of 4 years.

### **Electoral System**

All citizens of Solomon Islands who are at least 18 years of age are entitled to vote in the constituency in which they are ordinarily resident. Disqualified from voting are persons under sentence of death or imprisonment for at least six months, the insane and persons debarred because of election-connected offences.

Electoral registers are compiled on the ward level of each constituency and revised annually. Voting is not compulsory.

Qualified electors who have attained the age of 21 years are eligible for election to Parliament. Disqualified are persons under allegiance to a foreign State, holders of public or election-connected offices, and undischarged bankrupts.

Candidates must be supported by at least three electors ordinarily resident in the same constituency and deposit a non-refundable sum of \$100.

The 38 members of Parliament are elected in a like number of constituencies by simple majority vote.

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

### **General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

The Parliament elected on 22 June 1976 continued to sit after independence and until the expiry of its four-year term. Most of the members had originally been elected as independents, and such status was again quite prevalent among the 244 candidates in 1980.

One of the main political issues in the campaign was that of decentralization of administrative authority to the country's different regions. On polling day, approximately

\* See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections and Developments XIII* (1978-1979), pp. 26-27.

two-thirds of the outgoing members were defeated as the Solomon Islands United Party (SIUPA), headed by Prime Minister Peter Kenilorea, won the most seats, although falling short of an absolute parliamentary majority.

In late August, the newly-elected Parliament re-elected Mr. Kenilorea as Prime Minister. Half of the members of his new Cabinet were independents.

**Statistics**

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

Number of registered electors. . . . .	99,843
Valid votes. . . . .	58,136

<i>„ .... , r.</i>	Number
Political Group	'-
Solomon Islands United Party. . . . .	.16
People's Alliance Party. . . . .	.9
National Democratic Party. . . . .	.2
Independents. . . . .	.11
	38

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

Men. . . . .	38
Women	
	38