

URUGUAY

Date of Elections: November 28, 1971

Reason for Elections

Elections were held to renew all the members of Parliament on the normal expiration of their mandate. These elections were combined with the presidential and municipal polls.

Characteristics of Parliament

The Parliament of Uruguay, the General Assembly, is bicameral, comprising a House of Representatives and a Senate.

The 99 Representatives and 30 of the 31 Senators are elected for 5 years. The Vice-President of the Republic is a member *ex-officio* of the Senate and enjoys the right to vote therein. He is also President *ex-officio* of the Senate as well as of the two Houses when they meet in joint session.

Electoral System

All citizens of either sex, at least 18 years of age, residing in Uruguay during the 3 months preceding the election and appearing on the electoral rolls, have the right to vote.

Foreign nationals who have relatives in Uruguay, have resided in the country for 15 years and have observed " good conduct " during their sojourn, and have economic interests in the country also have the right to vote. On the other hand, members of the Army and Navy holding a rank lower than Corporal, the mentally or physically unsound, and persons convicted of dishonest practices are not entitled to vote.

Voting is compulsory. Unjustified abstention is punishable by fine.

A candidate to the House of Representatives must be at least 25 years of age, be Uruguayan by birth or naturalized for no less than 5 years and in possession of his civil rights.

A candidate to the Senate must be at least 30 years of age, be Uruguayan by birth or naturalized for no less than 7 years and in possession of his civil rights. Judges, prosecuting attorneys, police officials and military officers may not be candidates to either the Senate or the House, in the constituency where

they hold office, unless they resign from their posts at least 3 months prior to the election; directors of national enterprises at least 12 months prior to the election.

A Representative or Senator may neither maintain a teaching post at the university level nor be a member of the armed forces; members of the military or university instructors who become parliamentarians are given a leave of absence during their parliamentary mandate. Furthermore, no one may hold simultaneously the offices of Representative and Senator.

Political parties must submit their lists of candidates to the National Electoral Court at least 20 days before the elections.

Members of Parliament are elected according to a party-list proportional representation system. The uniquely Uruguayan system, the Law of *Lemas*, is designed to encourage the representation of those smaller parties which have been assimilated into the 2 or 3 parties of nationwide importance. This system is used for senatorial and legislative elections.

For senatorial elections, all of Uruguay forms a single electoral constituency. To gain proportional representation, an electoral quotient is determined by dividing the total number of votes cast by the number of Senators to be elected; division of the total vote in each *lema* by this quotient indicates the number of seats to be allotted. Remaining seats are distributed by dividing the total votes of each *lema* by the number of seats already assigned to it, plus one. The *lema* which has the highest quotient wins the additional seat. This process is repeated until all the seats are distributed.

Within each *lema* the *sub-lemas* receive the number of seats attributed to them by virtue of the aforementioned process.

For election to the House of Representatives, the National Electoral Court determines, prior to the election, the number of Representatives allotted to each constituency. The Court considers the number of votes as in the previous election plus new registrants. None of the 19 constituencies may have less than 2 Representatives. After the election, the Representatives in each constituency are divided among the *lemas* by the same method used in distributing the Senate seats on the national level. Any remaining seats are distributed by dividing the total national vote for the *lema* by the number of seats already assigned to the *lema* in the constituency, plus one. The *lema* with the highest quotient obtains a seat, and this process is repeated until all the seats are distributed. This type of distribution allows a *lema* with insufficient votes in any single constituency to be awarded a seat. Seats are divided within each *lema* in the same manner used in the Senate.

Any vacancy arising in Parliament between general elections is filled by the substitute elected at the same time as the titular holder.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The electoral campaign began as of the summer of 1971. For the first time, the 2 major and traditional political organizations, the liberal majority *Colorado* party and the conservative opposition *Blanco* party were challenged by the leftist coalition, *Frente Amplio* (Broad or United Front).

Formed on March 26, 1971, the Front was comprised of Christian Democrats, Communists and Socialists, as well as Liberals and extreme-leftists. It also consisted of dissidents from the *Blanco* and *Colorado* Parties. Its President was the retired Army general Liber Seregni.

The 3 aforementioned parties also had candidates to the presidential elections, which occurred on the same day as legislative elections. One of the *Colorado* candidates, the outgoing President, Mr. Pacheco Areco, proposed, alongside his candidature to the Presidency, an amendment to the Constitution which, in existing form, limited a President to one 5-year term of office.

Whereas the *Blanco* and *Colorado* Parties proposed similar electoral platforms, placing primary emphasis on maintaining law and order, strengthening the national currency and combatting inflation, the Broad Front announced a series of 30 measures in its governmental programme of September 1. These measures, to be implemented as soon as the party came to power, included amnesty for political prisoners (essentially *Tupamaros* guerillas), control over private banks and export companies until their nationalization, agrarian reform, the setting up of a policy of full-employment and renewed industrial activity, and, finally, the restoration of diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Contrary to Uruguayan tradition, some violence marked the electoral campaign; there were, for instance, two abortive attempts on the life of Mr. Seregni. The Army, for its part, agreed to ensure the legitimacy of the elections.

Contrary to the predictions of certain observers, who felt that a large number of electors would rally around the Broad Front, the latter only obtained a fifth of the seats, with the 2 major parties virtually dividing the other seats.

The constitutional reform sponsored by Mr. Pacheco Areco, as well as his candidature to the Presidency, were rejected by the electorate. Indeed, it was another *Colorado* candidate, Mr. Jan Bordaberry, who became President. The latter only introduced his Government to Parliament on March 1, 1972, as there was some contention over election results; the Electoral Court had to intervene for the final results to be established. The new Cabinet consists of 11 members, including 8 Ministers from the *Colorado* Party. Two *Blancos* and 1 Socialist are also members in an individual capacity.

Statistics

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

Political Group	v , o n	Number of Seats in the Senate	Number of Seats in the House of Representatives
<i>Colorado</i> Party.	681,624	18	41
<i>Blanco</i> Party.	668,822	12	40
Broad Front.	304,275	5	18
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PUBLICATIONS OF THE CIDP

Unless otherwise indicated, the publications mentioned below are obtainable from the Inter-Parliamentary Bureau, Place du Petit-Saconnex, 1211 Geneva 28 (Switzerland)

PARLIAMENTS. — A Comparative Study on the Structure and Functioning of Representative Institutions in Fifty-Five Countries (New revised edition). Preface by Mr. G. Codacci-Pisanelli and Mr. A. de Blonay. Pp. 346 (1966). French edition also available. On sale in bookshops and, for members of the Union, at the Inter-Parliamentary Bureau. Sw. Fr. 25.—

Present-Day Problems of Parliament. International Symposium held in Geneva from November 4 to 6, 1965, by the CIDP, under the auspices of the Union.

1. **Verbatim Report.** Introductory reports and debates *in extenso*, in the original language (French or English). Pp. 250 (out of print).
2. **Official Report.** Special issue of the Inter-Parliamentary Bulletin. Introductory reports; synthesis and conclusions of the debates, by Mr. C. Dominice (English and French). Pp. 84. » 3.—

The Role of Parliament in the Elaboration and Control of Economic Development Plans (English and French). Mimeographed brochure. Pp. 50. (out of print)

Parliament and Its Means of Contact with Public Opinion through the Press, Radio and Television.

Reports and Debates. Introductory reports and verbatim record of the debates of the 2nd International Symposium, organized in Geneva from December 5 to 7, 1968, by the CIDP, under the auspices of the Union. In the original language, English or French. Mimeographed volume. Pp. 316. » 15.—

Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections

- I. *July 1, 1966 - June 30, 1967.*
Bilingual edition (English-French). » 7.—
- II. *July 1, 1967 - June 30, 1968**. » 10.—
- III. *July 1, 1968 - June 30, 1969**. » 15.—
- IV. *July 1, 1969 - June 30, 1970**. » 30.—
- V. *July 1, 1970 - June 30, 1971 **. » 30.—
- VI. *July 1, 1971 - June 30, 1972**. » 30.—

(The elections contained in Volumes II, III and IV are printed on detachable index-cards.)

* French edition also available.