

## WESTERN SAMOA

### Supplementary information on the general elections of 24 February 1979

#### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament on the normal expiry of their term of office.

#### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The unicameral Parliament of Western Samoa, the Legislative Assembly, consists of 47 members elected for 3 years. Forty-five of these members are elected from a like number of territorial constituencies on a franchise confined to *matais* (elected family leaders) and two are elected by persons outside the *matai* system and registered on the individual voters' roll.

#### **Electoral System**

Electors for representatives of *matais* chosen in constituencies must be at least 21 years of age, holders of a *matai* title and registered on the electoral roll of the constituency concerned. Citizens of Western Samoa at least 21 years of age may have their names entered on the individual voters' roll. No person's name can simultaneously appear both on the *matai* and individual voters' roll.

Candidates for the Legislative Assembly must be qualified electors who are not insane, undischarged bankrupts or persons who have been convicted, in Western Samoa or America Samoa, of an offence punishable by death or by imprisonment for a term of two years or more, or convicted, in Western Samoa, of a corrupt practice, unless such offenders have received a free pardon or have undergone their sentence or punishment. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with that of public servant.

Candidates must be nominated by two registered electors and make a monetary deposit of 40 *tala*, which is forfeited if the candidate obtains less than one-fourth of the total number of votes received by the successful candidate.

By-elections are **held** for Assembly seats which become vacant between general elections.

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

As defined in the Constitution of 1960, Western Samoa's political institutions combine the forms of British-style parliamentary democracy with elements of the traditional Samoan social structure. Since there are no formally established political parties,

parliamentary candidates campaign as individuals; 45 of the 47 MPs are elected by approximately 10,000 holders of *matai* titles (a *matai* being the head of an *aiga*, the traditional Samoan extended family unit).

On polling day, more than half of the sitting members lost their seats. The new Assembly subsequently elected Mr. Tupuola Taisi Efi as Prime Minister.

Statistics

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

Men	46
Women	1
	<b>47</b>

## PUBLICATIONS OF THE CIDP

Unless otherwise indicated, the publications listed below are obtainable from the Secretariat of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Place du Petit-Saconnex, 1209 Geneva (Switzerland).

**PARLIAMENTS OF THE WORLD: A Reference Compendium.** A comparative study of 56 Parliaments in a series of 70 tables preceded by explanatory texts. Pp. 985. (London, The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1976). French edition of 881 pages published by Presses universitaires de France. Paris. On sale in bookshops and, for members of the Union, at the Inter-Parliamentary Secretariat, at the reduced price of Sw. Fr. 105.—. English version out of print.

### SERIES "REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS"

Nos. 1, 2 and 3 out of print

No. 4 **The Member of Parliament: His Requirements for Information in the Modern World**

Volume I: Bilingual verbatim record of debates of the 3rd Inter-Parliamentary Symposium, held in Geneva from 18 to 20 January 1973. Pp. 329.

Volume II: *Synthesis of the Inquiry on the MP's Means of Information.* Geneva, 1973. Pp. 128\*.

Both volumes Sw. Fr. 25,

No. 5 **Who Legislates in the Modern World?**

Bilingual verbatim record of debates of the 4th Inter-Parliamentary Symposium, held in Geneva from 29 to 31 January 1976. Pp. 281 . . . . . **22.—**

No. 6 **Provisions for the Information of Members of Parliament concerning the Activities of the United Nations and Specialized Agencies**

Findings of an Inquiry. Geneva. 1977. Pp. 45\* . . . . .

No. 7 **World-Wide Bibliography on Parliaments**

Bilingual. Geneva, 1978. Pp. 440 . . . . . **35.-**

No. 8 **Parliaments and the United Nations**

Bilingual verbatim record of debates of the 5th Inter-Parliamentary Symposium, held in Geneva from 27 to 29 April 1978. Pp. 252 . . . . . **23,**

No. 9 **World-Wide Bibliography on Parliaments - Volume II (1977-1979)**

Bilingual. Geneva, 1980. Pp. 290 . . . . . **27.-**

### CHRONICLE OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS\*\*

I. / *July 1966 - 30 June 1967.*

Bilingual edition (French-English) . . . . . **7.—**

II. / *1 July 1967 - 30 June 1978\**. . . . . **10.—**

III. / *July 1968 - 30 June 1969\** . . . . . **IS.—**

IV. / *(1 July 1969 - 30 June 1970) to XIV (1 July 1979 - 30 June 1980) \** **30.—**

\* French edition also available.

\*\* Prior to volume XII (1977-1978), this work was entitled "Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections".