

local institutions of the islands and the people of the villages have always elected their own headman and local councils. A strong tradition of mutual assistance and co-ordinated community effort during the planting and harvest seasons and in periods of trouble exists in the Indonesian villages. The villagers are accustomed to discussing their common problems in order to find solutions which all can accept, a practice known in Indonesian as *mupakat*.

On this foundation the beginning of a more sophisticated political superstructure had been erected during the years since independence. The Provisional Parliament which sat during that time was dominated by the few parties which were national influential and at the same time well organized. These had become well known to the people, and their parliamentary record was a basis for judgment. In addition there was intensive campaigning of the kind familiar in democracies all over the world. Candidates travelled about the country for several months before the polling date, holding rallies, spreading slogans and jingles, broadcasting and distributing posters. There was thus ample opportunity for the electorate to form views on the issues presented, and the fact that some 80 per cent of the electorate voted indicates the active interest of the people.

The Voting:

In spite of all the difficulties, the election went off smoothly. On election day the voters stood waiting in two lines, while the electoral officers read speeches explaining the importance of the choice they were about to make. Then the ballot boxes were displayed to show that they were empty, shut and locked again and the voting began. The lines moved slowly through the booths as many of the voters puzzled out the complicated ballots; however, despite the delays, they remained patient and good-humoured. If there was little of the mechanical elaboration of many Western democratic elections, neither was there any disorder or rioting. Only occasionally would a confused voter try to mark the practice ballot on the wall of the booth instead of the real one, or stuff an unmarked ballot into the box in the belief that this was all he had to do to register his vote. By early afternoon the people in most districts had finished voting and returned to their homes.

Although the voting ended officially on November 29, it was some time before the actual allotment of seats to the various parties became fully known. The task was complicated by the fact that representation in the new Parliament is proportional. Indonesia was divided into sixteen districts for electoral purposes, and the quota of votes needed to elect a member was obtained by dividing the total number of votes cast in each district by the number of seats which were allocated for that district according to the density of the population. To further complicate matters, votes were transferable and provision had to be made to include appointed representatives of the Chinese and Arab minorities.

As recently announced, the results place the four major parties very close together. The Nationalist and Masjumi parties each won 57 seats out of the 257 seats in contest. The Nahdatul Ulama (Moslem Teachers') Party obtained 45 seats, and the Communists 39 seats. The remaining 59 seats are divided among 24 minor parties.

The new Government is a coalition of the Nationalist, Masjumi and Nahdatul Ulama parties, with Dr. Ali Sastroamidjoyo as Prime Minister.