

## ■ CHAPTER 3 ■

### **Preparations for the Poll**

In preparing for the election, a number of steps were taken. The division of the country into 150 constituencies was confirmed, each of which would return a single member to the National Assembly. Procedures for nominations began to be put in place.

Dates for both elections for the President and to the National Assembly and nomination days were set by the Electoral Commission. The date for these was set by a Statutory Instrument issued by the Commission on 10 September for 31 October. Nomination day for the National Assembly was fixed in the same Instrument, for 1 October, between 0900 hours and 1500 hours, while an additional day, 30 September, was also fixed for the nomination of the Presidential candidates.

Voting was by secret ballot in a first-past-the-post system in which each voter indicated the candidate of his choice.

#### **Nominations for the National Assembly**

The Electoral Commission was responsible for the nomination process for election to the National Assembly. It had the power to name the day, and the times when nominations in each constituency were permitted. The Commission also announced the place in each constituency where nominations were to take place, and Returning Officers had to attend, during the period appointed, at nomination offices in all constituencies to receive nomination papers.

The actual nomination procedure was quite simple and required the prospective candidate to submit to the Returning Officer a completed form in the prescribed time and manner. A nomination could be declared invalid on the ground that the paper was not in order, was not lodged within the stipulated period or that the prospective candidate did not pay the appropriate fee. If this occurred, the declaration that a nomination was valid or invalid could only be challenged by an election petition. A person seeking nomination in more than one constituency by lodging nomination papers in many constituencies, would have all these nominations declared invalid. Where only one candidate was nominated in a constituency, the Returning Officer had to declare that person elected in that constituency. Each Returning Officer had to inform the Commission of the names of the candidates validly nominated and had to give local notice that a poll would be held in the constituency. The notice would announce the polling day and the names of the candidates, in alphabetical order of surnames.

Although we were unable to be present for the National Assembly nominations which took place on 1 October, we established on our arrival in Lusaka that they went smoothly and we received no complaints about them. There was a total of 328 valid nominations for the 150 seats in the National Assembly.

## **Presidential Elections**

Separate provision was made for the nomination of Presidential candidates. The returning officer for the election to the office of the President is the Chief Justice, and the process is similar to that covering the nomination of candidates for election to the National Assembly.

Persons registered as voters for this election were entitled to vote by secret ballot. The election date and nomination day were selected by the Electoral Commission, and were announced by Statutory Instrument dated 10 September 1991. Nomination day was fixed for 30 September and 1 October 1991 between 0900 hours and 1500 hours at the High Court building in Lusaka in the same Instrument.

The poll for the Presidential election was held at the same polling station in every constituency as for the National Assembly elections. Each voter was required to vote first for the Presidential candidate and then for the National Assembly candidate. This procedure was designed to avoid putting the respective ballots into the wrong ballot box.

Voting for the Presidential elections and the National Assembly elections were counted at the same counting centres and there was provision that where counting room facilities permitted, the count for both elections was conducted simultaneously. However, where this was not possible, the Presidential count preceded that for the National Assembly. The final collation of the votes for the President was carried out at the Electoral Commission's office and the results announced by the Returning Officer, the Chief Justice.

The candidates nominated for the 1991 Presidential election were Dr Kenneth Kaunda, President of Zambia and leader of UNIP, and Mr Frederick Chiluba, President of the MMD. Mr Chiluba was the successful Presidential candidate.