

That Owambo election

These extracts from the Rand Daily Mail of August 3 offer some interesting facts about the Owambo elections.

The Legislative Assembly consists of 56 seats, 21 elected. Fifteen elected seats were not opposed. The other six — three each in the Kwanyam and Kwambi tribal areas — are being contested. The other 35 have been filled by nominees under the traditional tribal system.

Owambo is still controlled by the quasi-emergency Proclamation R17, which was introduced after the 1971 strikes, inhibiting freedom of movement and curbing political activity.

Swapo and Demcop (the Democratic Co-operative Party) both called for an election boycott on the grounds that it was not a free election.

When the 59 polling stations closed last night, an estimated 3 per cent of the 50 000 voters had used their ballots.

In Owambo only 1 300 people voted and in the White-ruled south an estimated 100. With 50 000 eligible voters, the percentage poll was 1,6.

“The fact that the whole election passed without incident indicates that the silent majority in Owambo still accepts the Owambo government and the way the territory is developing constitutionally. Otherwise attempts would have been made to impede the election.”

**Mr. Jannie de Wet, Commissioner General for
the indigenous people of South West Africa**