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On Sept. 24, in a communique read over state-run radio, the government of Lt. Gen. Prosper Avril announced that local, legislative and presidential elections will be held late next year. Presidential elections are to take place in two rounds, Oct. 17, and Nov. 11, 1990. The first will be among about 10 candidates, and the second voting round will be a runoff among an unspecified number of candidates receiving the most votes. The communique said, "All dispositions have been taken to guarantee security and ensure a peaceful transition of power." Installation of a civilian government is one of the conditions imposed by Washington in exchange for full restoration of some $60 million in foreign aid suspended after the 1987 election massacre. The government made the announcement after receiving recommendations Sept. 23 from an independent nine-member electoral council established in April to organize and supervise elections. The council spent the month of August on a fact-finding tour throughout the country. According to the communique, the electoral council plans to establish central, district, municipal, and local offices between now and year-end, followed by voter census and registration from January to March, 1990. The council will establish about 6,000 polling places to accommodate an estimated 3 million eligible voters. (Basic data from AP, 09/24/89)

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