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Election '74:

400,000 can vote on Monday; will choose from 175 hopefuls

By RICK FISHER

November 18 New Brunswickers will go to the polls to elect a new government.

This will be a successor government to that elected in Oct. 1970 although an electoral mandate can last five years, tradition has dictated governments seek a new mandate no more than four years after election. When the election was called the standings in the Legislative Assembly were PC 33, Liberal 25 and one independent.

This election has many firsts. This is the first election in which the whole province has been divided up into single-member constituencies. This is the first election which has more than 400,000 eligible voters. This is also the first time there are 175 candidates for the 58 ridings.

The Liberals and Progressive Conservatives are contesting every seat in the province while the NDP has lined up 35 candidates.

There are other organized parties on the political scene this time. The Parti Acadien has 13 hopefuls while the Canada Party has four. There are also seven independents running. Since the members of the Canada party have less than 10 candidates running for office the party name will not appear on the ballots.

The Liberals and PCs are the traditonally strong vote-getters in the province. The NDP for the first time are making a concerted effort to get a full slate of 58 candidates across the province. Both the Parti Acadien and Canada Party are using regional-oriented appeals. It was expected at the outset the NDP and the Canada Party would have more members running when nominations closed on the 4th of November.

Most of the Members of the Legislative Assemby who sat in the last house are re-offering. When nominations closed, 29 PC and 16 Liberals had filed papers to re-offer. There are also two winners of the recent by-elections in Campbellton & York ridings running again. They have never sat in the Legislature.

David Bishop and Fernand Dube were elected in two by-elections Sept. 30 and within two weeks Dube had been appointed tourism minister and the Legislature was dissolved. They were thrown into another campaign.

Only one of provincial premier Richard Hatfield's 16 Cabinet members is not seeking re-election, Department of Supply and Services Minister Carl Mooers.

Some of the members deciding to not re-offer are veteran Liberals who were cabinet ministers in the previous Robichaud Liberal Government.

There is a strong tradition in the province to voting patterns. Both the Liberals and the PCs have their traditionally safe seat. In the last election many of the members were re-elected and the election was decided in three key swing areas, Moncton, Sunbury and Madawaska. These three areas swung to the PCs and the result was the end of 10 years of Liberal mandate.

With the province having the election in single member ridings across the board , some of those safe traditional seats will be broken up. There is distinct interest in many of the newly created ridings where close results are expected.

Across the province there has been a fairly quiet campaign, even locally where there are a few contentious issues. Some issues such as the proposed French cultural center seem to have been abandoned altogether by the Progressive Conservatives. The bridge issue has been taken up by local candidates on their own without a provincial party platform backing.

The Liberals were a long time in developing policies on items like the nuclear power plant and Bricklin Canada Ltd. and in many other areas there is little difference between the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives.

This has also been a fairly short campaign being just over five weeks in length. This is in contrast to this summers' federal election which was several weeks longer.

Local candidates:

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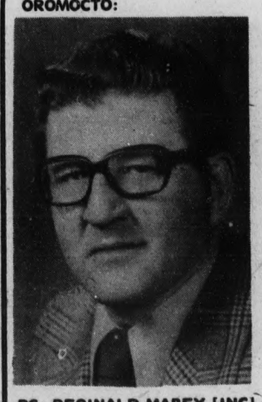
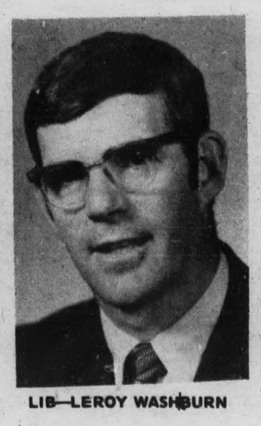
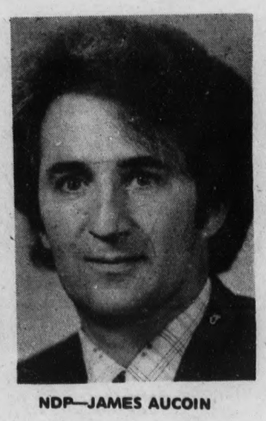


PC—REGINALD MABEY (INC)



LIB—LEROY WASHBURN



NDP—JAMES AUCOIN

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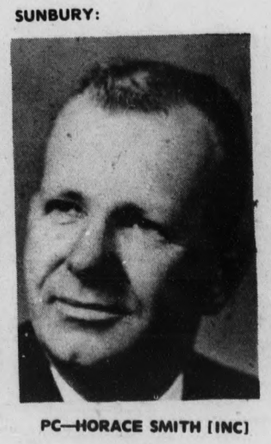
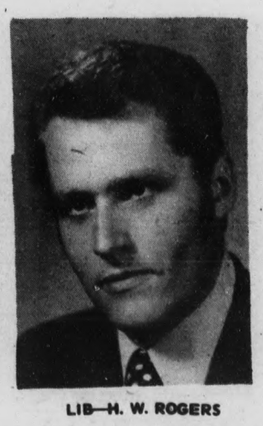


PC—HORACE SMITH (INC)



LIB—H. W. ROGERS

UNAVAILABLE AT PRESS TIME

NDP—ELIZABETH SNOW