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WHA- HAPPENED

"after ten years of accomplishment and change how could we lose this election."

It was obvious that once the shock of defeat had sunk in he really couldn't understand the rejection of the Liberal Party which history will record as changing the very basic fibre of the province.

Yet in the reflection of the days ahead the fiery Acadian ex-premier may find that too long in power brings an arrogant, designated-to-rule-feeling upon the cabinet and the back-benchers which can only be subdued by the voice of the electorate.

Since the 1967 election in which Robichaud defeated the short-term Tory Leader Charlie Van Horne, the government has increased in this arrogance until enough unrelated incidents build up to defeat the government, regardless of how many achievements it had recorded.

Richard Hatfield saw the Liberals' Achilles' heel and he planned his whole campaign attack around this arrogance until it became an expected fact that the Liberals were an insensitive bureaucracy which did not consult the people.

"My government will be one that consults the people while leading them, not one that rules the people of the province" said a jubilant Hatfield commenting on his surprise win in the election.

Hatfield had done his home work and he knew the particular sore points to hit but he resisted trying to run a loud boisterous campaign which others had tried and found did not work. You can't out Louie - Louie Robichaud, this is a well respected political dictum in New Brunswick and Hatfield didn't try, he ran quietly and effectively.

This is borne out in the mass of advertising used by the two parties. The Liberals depended a great deal on mass media advertising showing the accomplishments of the last ten years in glossy magazines and well laid out ads but they failed to do something that Ike Smith - defeated Tory Premier in Nova Scotia failed to do - they didn't relate the ads to people. Only occasional ads could be identified with the small electorate who cast the deciding vote.

Huge pictures of large booms and cranes plus acres of buildings were not so nearly effective as a picture of a one room school house along side of a multi million dollar complex which implies to the voter that he has received something for his soaring taxes.

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The Conservative party did not make this mistake. The adopted Carleton County nasal slang of Richard Hatfield, speaking of rubbing his fingers in the soil, could not be matched by the slick voice of a Liberal ad proclaiming excitedly news of an expanded industrial economy.

Conservative candidates fought the election door to door, face to face, while the Liberals fought from crowd to crowd.

Hatfield himself adopted the strategy of one of New Brunswicks shrewdest politicians in winning the premiership. He travelled the province wide tirelessly mending fences destroyed in the volcano campaign of Van Hornes which petered out just as quickly as it had erupted.

Hatfield spoke to insignificant groups across the province letting people meet him, recognize him and fall for his boyish charm.

One politician had done that before in this province, exactly ten years before and that was Louie Robichaud who defeated the entrenched non-government of Hugh John Flemming, by tirelessly stumping the province heralding the defeat of that government.

This summer while Robichaud debated a new federal constitution Hatfield spoke to small groups such as the Richieu Club in Moncton in his halting Diefenbakerish French outlining his thoughts and his personality.

Hatfield won this election in Moncton City where the race is always a cliff hanger but this time the results were definitely Conservative. When searching for the answer it is easily discovered.

Liberal organizers in Moncton were over-confident and attempted to convince the people that there were no issues but those waiting six months to gain admittance to a hospital didn't agree. Even the residents who were French speaking and traditionally in favour of the premier could not except the stop gap measures used by the government in handling the language problem encountered in the school board where their complaints seemed to be ignored.

However the best analysis presented of the surprising loss by the Liberals was offered by the man who should best know why - Richard Hatfield won.

The Conservative candidates fought the election on the insensitivity of the Liberal government and they took the riding by a landslide.

"People make more demands on government today than they have at any other time. We attempted to meet these demands and make friends for the government but we also made enemies. We worked day and night to keep up with the demands and it appears that we made more enemies than friends" explained Mr. Robichaud.



PREMIER-ELECT RICHARD B. HATFIELD

Lean and Hungry

George Kopp

