

# Begun Is Backed for Koch's House Seat by Beame and Former Mayor Wagner

By FRANK LYNN

In what has become a contest of personalities and endorsements, two former New York City Mayors, Abraham D. Beame and Robert F. Wagner, yesterday backed Martin S. Begun, for the Democratic nomination for the House of Representatives seat vacated by Mayor Koch. Mr. Begun is one of the least known of nine candidates for the nomination.

The endorsement was the first political activity by Mr. Beame since he left office a week ago and came just before he was to begin a Caribbean vacation. Both he and Mr. Wagner live in the 18th Congressional District, and both have worked with Mr. Begun, a former district leader and an administrative dean at New York University School of Medicine.

While the former Mayors were conferring their blessings on Mr. Begun, Governor Carey set Feb. 14 as the date for what may be a record number of special elections to fill not only the House seats of Mr. Koch and of Herman Badillo, now a Deputy Mayor, but also the State Senate seats of City Council President Carol Bellamy of Brooklyn, the State Insurance Superintendent, Albert Lewis of Brooklyn; Mayor James D. Griffin of Buffalo, and the Assembly seats of Borough President Andrew J. Stein of Manhattan; Henry Dwyer, deputy Nassau County executive; Town Supervisor Fred Field of Albany County, and Thomas Frey of Rochester, the new director of state operations.

Most attention, however, will be focused on the East Side 18th District, the so-called Silk Stocking District, because it can probably lay claim to having the wealthiest and most influential constituency in the country. At the same time, however, it also includes some of the worst slums, on the Lower East Side, and the middle-class bastions of Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village.

With even the candidates conceding that issue distinctions among them are negligible, most of the nine who are seeking the endorsement of 970 Democratic county committee members in the district

at a meeting Jan. 15 are concentrating on personal appeals and endorsements. Since there is no time for a primary, the committee will actually nominate the candidate.

The Liberal Party is expected to go along with the Democratic nominee who will thus be a heavy favorite to succeed Mr. Koch. The Republican nominee is likely to be S. William Green, a former assemblyman and former regional director of the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Bella S. Abzug, the former West Side

Representative, is considered the front-runner in the East Side contest despite her losses in the United States Senate and mayoral primaries in the last 18 months.

Mrs. Abzug also appears to have the most major endorsers including 12 district leaders in the 18th and such influential politicians as Lieut. Gov. Mary Anne Krupsak, Secretary of State Mario M. Cuomo, Borough President Stein, former Gov. W. Averell Harriman and Felix G. Rohatyn, the chairman of the Municipal Assistance Corporation.

Former City Councilman Carter Burden, who also lost a race—for Council President—last year, appears to be running second to Mrs. Abzug and has the backing of eight district leaders in the 18th. Burden aides said that he did not seek prestigious endorsements and did not have any.

Mr. Begun, who, many politicians believe is in third place, has the backing of Edward N. Costikyan, who was to be Mayor Koch's first deputy mayor until a disagreement between the two; Joel Harnett, the unsuccessful mayoral candi-

date, and Eugene Bockman, the husband of the Manhattan Democratic leader, Miriam Bockman, who is neutral.

Assemblyman Alexander B. Grennis has the support of Ramsey Clark, the former United States Attorney General, and Peter A. A. Berle, the State Environmental Conservation Commissioner.

Russell Hemenway, chairman of the National Committee for an Effective Congress, has the support of two district leaders and of Thomas Finletter, the former cabinet member.

Allard K. Lowenstein, who has taken a leave as a member of the United States delegation to the United Nations, has the backing of another former mayor John V. Lindsay, who does not live in the district although he once represented it.

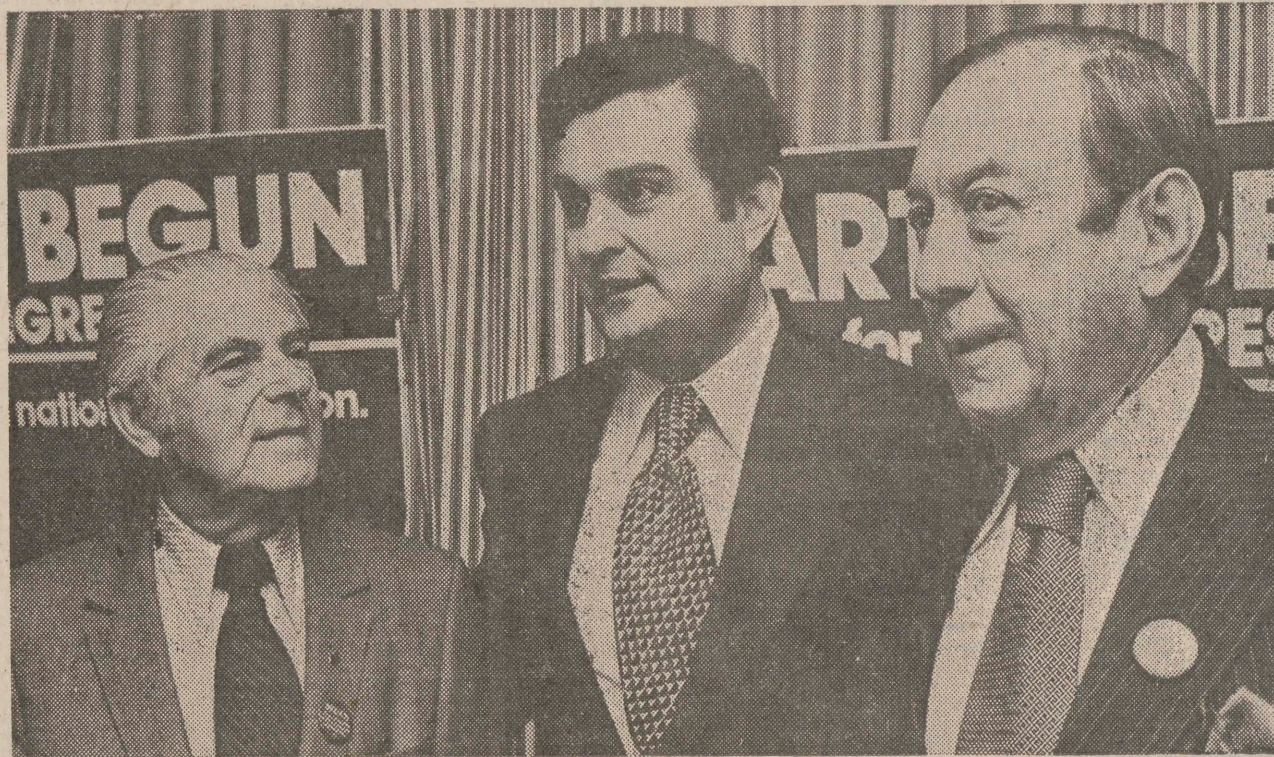
Bringing up the rear are three candidates who are given virtually no chance of winning the nomination—Robin Duke, wife of Angier Biddle Duke, a wealthy former ambassador to Spain; Roger Waldman, a lawyer and George Spitz, a perennial candidate.

Mrs. Duke is supported by two former Washington officials. C. Douglas Dillon and Roswell Gilpatric as well as Mary Lasker, the philanthropist.

However, none of the candidates has the backing of the man who could probably swing the election, Mayor Koch. He has said that he will remain neutral and, so far there has been no sign of even covert intervention through intermediaries.

Most of the candidates have been inundating the county committee members with literature and invitations to kaffeeklatsches and cocktail parties where they can meet the candidates. In addition, the Congressional hopefuls have been traveling a circuit of political-club meetings in the district.

Unless a candidate wins a majority quickly, the county-committee balloting is likely to continue for several hours, with candidates who fail to receive at least 5 percent of the vote, or the low candidate in each tally, dropping out until one candidate wins a majority.



The New York Times/Neal Boenzi

Former Mayors Abraham D. Beame and Robert F. Wagner with Martin S. Begun, whom they endorsed as Democratic choice for Mayor Koch's House seat in the 18th Congressional District.