

# Would expand role in housing

The basic position of the NDP is that a housing crisis exists in Ontario, and that it will not be solved by a combination of government talk and private profit-making.

Said Johnson: "They tell us slavery is abolished. Don't believe it. A young couple who have a 40-year mortgage around their necks are just as much slaves as a person with a ball and chain around the ankles. And they're the better off ones."

"If a husband doesn't make \$17,000, or if husband and wife don't make \$26,000 combined, then they're condemned to live in apartments for the rest of their lives."

starts were 89,980 in 1971, 102,933 in 1972, and 110,536 in 1973 but that in 1974 this figure fell back to 85,503 starts.

He said a government commission in 1973 reported a "near crisis in housing", and then the housing starts dropped by 22 per cent in 1974.

25,000 more a year

Johnson said "the government has put money into the private sector and said 'build us homes'. It's obviously been a failure because we haven't enough. It's been in their (developers) interest to build a few homes and jack the price up."

Johnson said rent review boards would be set up to prevent "unjust increases" in rents and to guarantee security of tenure for tenants.

He scoffed at Tory plans to embarrass the owners of apartment buildings publicly if they raise the rents too high.

"How can you embarrass a guy who lives in West Germany or America? He couldn't care less. It has to have more teeth than that."

He said the NDP would also broaden the government's direct involvement in rental housing to include apartments for moderate as well as low-income families.

X ELECTION 1975

## Plan no-fault car insurance

The New Democratic Party says a "basic part" of Ontario NDP policy is the establishment of compulsory no-fault automobile insurance to be administered by a public corporation, along the lines of the plan adopted in 1971 by the Manitoba NDP government.

Johnson said "Manitoba's car insurance premiums have been falling behind Ontario's ever since."

He gave the example of a 27-year-old commuter with a standard car insurance policy who drives a 1974 Ford Galaxie 500.

**Differences**

He said the driver in Winnipeg pays \$188 a year, while the driver in Hamilton pays \$277 for the exact same coverage.

For drivers under age 25, he provided another example. Johnson said a 22-year-old driving that same Ford Galaxie would pay \$213 per year in Winnipeg but \$348 in Hamilton.

And he said standard policy coverage in Ontario is "virtually identical" to Manitoba's.

**Gas tax**

He said the plan is paid for in part by a two cent a gallon tax which amounts to \$15 annually for an average driver. That amount was included in the examples given.

Johnson said he finds the current difference in insurance rates between those below and above age 25 is "discriminatory."

"Kids today have been driving since 16, and they are much better and have better reflexes compared to some guy who just starts driving at age 30."

# NDP would change regional government

Bill Johnson says the NDP would not disband the system of regional government, but it would set up special committees and "each region would be studied and reorganized."

He said the law would be altered so that regional chairmen would have to be elected to their posts.

The NDP candidate said regional government "was doomed from its inception. We didn't do anything wrong but we were put under

trusteeship by the appointment of a chairman." He called this a "puppet government."

Johnson said "in a democracy you don't do this. There are lots of people who could have run this region—various mayors and ex-reves."

More problems

He said "government appointments" are also a problem with the Niagara Escarpment Commission and the Halton and Credit Valley

conservation authorities. "There are far too many appointees who are nothing more than bagmen or women for the Conservative party."

Referring to the conservation authorities, Johnson said that "being so involved in environmental problems, I could name many deserving people who could sit-people from Pollution Probe in Georgetown or the Bruce Trailers or people from the ratepayers associations."



CANDIDATE Bill and wife Mary relax on the lawn of their rural Milton home with dog Yuri.

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## Environmentalist discusses issues

Tradesman Bill Johnson operates high-pressure boilers, air compressors and pumps at the Domtar Fine Papers Ltd. mill in Georgetown.

He's called a stationary engineer.

But a transformation occurs when the whistle blows at 3:30 p.m.

Says the energetic New Democratic Party candidate: "I don't move around much at work, but I sure do outside."

For the 53-year-old NDP standard bearer in Halton-Burlington riding is an environmentalist and concerned citizen who has been scrapping with local politicians, government agencies and quarry operators for 15 years.

**Battles pit**

Johnson, who lives on 15 Sideroad in the former Nassagaweya area of Milton, is also president of the Nassagaweya Ratepayers Association which has been battling this year to prevent creation of the proposed Springbank sand and gravel pit west of Campbellville.

As well, he has become what he calls a "garbage expert" since 1972 when he and three other persons set up Group United Against Rural Dumping (GUARD) after two companies proposed filling an Esqueping quarry with 350,000 tons of Toronto garbage.

He used information obtained in that fight to help other communities like Pickering ward off big city

refuse, and became a land use specialist for the 60-organization Ontario Garbage Coalition.

Union member

Although he's a proud trade unionist who belongs to the 150-member Local 474 of the United Paperworkers International Union, he has never been a union official.

Says Johnson: "I've always been busy in municipal affairs."

"I figured there were a lot worse things going on outside the union than inside it."

And he didn't align himself with the NDP just because of his union membership.

**U.K. Laborite**

He says he supported the Labor Party in Britain before coming to Canada in 1952, and drifted into the CCF (now NDP) party upon arrival.

Johnson's a small man, with a greyish-black beard and moustache covering his deeply-tanned face. Bushy eyebrows jiggle when he starts speaking excitedly.

Yet his size hasn't affected his combative nature.

He joined the British Army when he was 16 and served throughout the Second World War as a parachutist in the commandos.

Most of his action was in raids on the French and Norwegian coasts, and Johnson was in on the Dieppe raid, the D-Day landings and the liberation of Holland.

And yet he enjoys the tranquility of the home he built himself in five acres of treed land in Nassagaweya.

**Carvings**

In his quiet hours, he carves animals and native figures from wood. They resemble Eskimo soapstone carvings.

The NDP candidate is married, and he and wife Mary have two grown children. Malcolm, 27, is a shipper in Kitchener, while Lynn, 25, is a nurse in Toronto.

Mary Johnson shares her husband's interest in the problems of society today, but expresses herself in a more subdued fashion. She handles most of the office work involved in his political and community actions.

**Studies history**

Mrs. Johnson had polio as a child and walks with the aid of a cane.

In her spare moments, she delights in studying British history and proudly shows visitors a 600-year-old brick from England she treasures.

The NDP candidate's campaign is being organized by a 14-member election committee of the Halton-Burlington NDP Riding Association.

Johnson says a "limited campaign" is planned because "I'm an environmentalist and I don't want to litter the countryside with garbage. He will instead use lawn signs and TV and radio spots.



BILL JOHNSON studies NDP policy papers over coffee as he prepares to meet voters in Halton-Burlington riding.