

Election could go any way

It's almost impossible to predict the winner of the Halton-Burlington riding race in the June provincial election, according to the NDP candidate Bill Johnson.

Johnson, who is contesting the seat at Queen's Park for the second election in a row, commented, "Mr. Reed has been hurt by party leadership and support while Mr. Gray

has been coming across as pompous and out of touch."

"As for myself, I really don't know," he added. In the last election Mr. Johnson polled 6,567 votes, well behind the Liberal candidate Julian Reed who was elected with 10,998 votes. Gary Dawkins the Conservative candidate grabbed 10,535 votes.

The 55-year-old bearded Johnson is quick to point out, however, that this time he's running a stronger campaign and personally feels he lost votes in the last election because people thought of him only as an environmentalist.

"I'm an activist," he said. His record tends to back up this statement. He is currently the chairman of the Halton Hills Concerned Citizens Committee which was originally organized as the "Save Domtar" committee after the Domtar plant in Georgetown was closed. The group assisted in expediting placements and cutting through red tape with unemployment and workmen's compensation claims, but in time the group expanded its assistance.

"Mainly we get people who don't know where to go or which level of government to go to for help," he said. "We give them advice and send them happily on their way."

Johnson himself lost his job at Domtar and currently works as a stationary engineer at the Canada Centre for Inland Waters in Burlington, although for the election he was granted a leave without pay.

Johnson is also the president of the Nassagaweya Area Ratepayers Association, a former director of Ontario Garbage Coalition, past chairman of Group United Against Rural Dumping, chairman of the "854" committee to improve local phone service, a founding member of the Foundation for Aggregate Studies and president of the Halton Federal NDP.

Being a recognized "activist" does have its drawbacks, however.

"Once you get a reputation for helping people, they're always phoning you up," he said. "That's why I have two phones in my house."

It's not that he's complaining though. Johnson claims to work 18 hours a day and he thrives on it.

"I would be lost on an ordinary eight-hour day," he said.

At times in the election his opposing candidates have brought the shadow of socialism out from the closet to scare prospective voters away from voting NDP, but this doesn't bother Johnson.

"When people are in trouble they'll come to anyone who can help them and for the most part, they come to me," he said. "If I do become part of the provincial government I will continue as I have done in the past and will never turn anyone away because of their political or religious affiliation."

Once someone suggested Johnson should run as an independent candidate, but Johnson rejected the idea.

"I couldn't see splitting the opposition vote three ways," he said. "It would only hurt the opposition and allow the Tories to have a free ride.

Besides, I would not give up my political ethic just to cater to someone else's beliefs."

Johnson drifted into the NDP in 1952 after immigrating to Canada from England where he belonged to the labor party. He quickly points to the Saskatchewan and Manitoba NDP governments as examples of how an NDP government can work.

"Both have triple A ratings on the Wall St. stock exchange, which must tell the people something," said Johnson.

"Besides, we haven't had a free enterprise system in Canada since the country was taken over from the Indians," he added.

"What we have now is social capitalism," he said. "We're always told about handouts that the government gives to various segments of the less fortunate in our society," Johnson said.

"But have you ever heard of a corporation turning down a handout such as a tariff or a tax writeoff so they can make profits?"

Johnson repudiates a claim by many of his party's opponents that an NDP government would create a "monster" bureaucracy.

"It would be hard to create more of a bureaucracy than we have already," he said. "Both the federal and provincial governments have given lip service to cutting back of the civil service, but there's not any mention that they're being replaced by contract workers."

He admitted that in certain areas an NDP government would need more people but Johnson adds, "They'd be workers and not sitting around."

Johnson said he ran in the last election because he realized if things were to change, they'd have to change at Queen's Park. The same, he says, holds true in this election.

He described the Liberal incumbent as a personal friend and "nice guy" but added, "There's no place for nice guys in Queen's Park."



Bill Johnson --N D P Candidate

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Silver medal

Raymond Cote of Acton, a graduating student in Electronic Engineering Technology at Sheridan College, will receive a silver medal at the Brampton campus convocation on June 9. A total of 51 graduating students will be awarded the Board of Governors' silver medal for outstanding academic achievement during convocation this year.

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Canada must drop man-made barriers

The first step to national unity is to drop man-made barriers, says Bill Johnson, NDP candidate for Halton-Burlington.

"At the present time Canada, due to poor leadership, is divided into 10 provinces which are all acting like 10 Baltic states," Johnson said. "Each premier is only concerned about what his province can get out of Canada and not what the province can contribute to Canada as a whole."

To loosen up the man-made barriers, Johnson said driver's licences should be good all across Canada and not restricted to just one province. Tradesmen, doctors, lawyers and other professionals should be able to practice on a Canada-wide basis instead of just in one province, he added.

The next step would be to legislate a guaranteed minimum wage across Canada. "This would end the financial disparity from coast to coast," he said.

The financial disparity in Quebec is one of the reasons why that province has been pushed to secession, said Johnson.

"Businesses have located there simply because of the cheap labor," he said. "This is part of the problem."

Johnson warned that Canadians must not only look at Quebec, but also at provinces like Alberta which have also voiced displeasure with federalism.

"The solution might mean the rewriting of the constitution, but if that's what it takes then it's a cheap price to pay for national unity," he added.

PC proposal will increase automation

A Progressive Conservative plan to allow up to \$300 million in tax write-offs for companies prepared to buy production machinery would only speed up automation and create more unemployment, according to NDP candidate Bill Johnson.

If a large manufacturer gets a chance to buy production machinery tax free it's not going to create jobs but increase automation," Johnson said.

"It's going to cost the working taxpayer who will end his own job," he added. Johnson said he personally supports aid to the small businessmen to create jobs.

In addition Johnson said he would support a plan to "opt out" of manpower.

"Manpower training programs have shown that they're not effective," Johnson said.

In replacement of the manpower programs, Johnson would prefer to see apprenticeship training programs in such areas as tool and die makers, machinists

and millwrights. "It saddens me when I hear about all the unemployed people and yet a skilled professional can still find a job in Canada," said Johnson.

Johnson also felt immigration should be slowed down until the present unemployment problems are solved.

He said the premier of Ontario should suggest at the next premiers' conference that immigration be stopped until the unemployment level is lowered to four per cent. At that point immigration could resume, but on a basis of Canada's needs.

A guaranteed annual income is another program Johnson would like to see introduced.

"It will not kill initiative like some capitalists suggest," he said. "There's been a big cry about the work ethic lately, but I don't hear much talk about the work ethic of capitalists who are on the golf courses while they let their money do the work for them."

Proposes licencing

If Bill Johnson wins the Halton-Burlington riding in the June 9 election, one of his first acts will be to introduce a private member's bill to ban long term landfill sites across Ontario.

The NDP candidate said the bill would grant landfill sites a five year licence to operate-which he feels would give municipalities "ample time" to convert to resource recovery and reclamation plants.

"If for economic reasons five years isn't long enough, the regional municipalities could apply for an extension, but only for one year," he said.

Johnson feels this would force municipalities to become more involved in establishing recycling and resource recovery centres as well as keeping the existing dumps in better condition.

Johnson, an environmentalist with a long history of involvement with resource recovery and dump sites, said he doesn't buy statements which say resource recovery is in the experimental stage.

Johnson claims the current problem with the location of a 200 acre landfill project on Site F in Milton is a direct result of "Tory mismanagement".

"They were the ones who gave us regional government without any plan for police protection, fire protection, sewage disposal and garbage disposal," he said.

Johnson added the regional government was instituted to streamline services and cut out the overlapping, but it hasn't done either.

If anything, he points out, regional government has added to regional disparity. "We've got less represent-

ation in the north and that's why Milton's got the dump and not the regional headquarters," Johnson said. "We (north) get all the baddies and they (south) get all the goodies." To remedy the situation Johnson feels a provincial study of the regional government should be made.

Johnson said he would support a plan to "opt out" of manpower.

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JACK JOHNSON, MPP officially presenting notice of a motion for adoption The Speech from the Throne.

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2. LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY - Reduce work stoppages and slow-downs through advanced labour-management negotiations
3. INFLATION - Support the Anti-Inflation Program until governments have developed a strategy to moderate inflation
4. HOUSING - A target of 900,000 housing starts over next ten years
5. AGRICULTURE - Federal Government must instigate some tariff protection for our agricultural products
6. SMALL BUSINESS - Fair profits and encouragement to help Ontario grow
7. RENT CONTROL - Rent control program to be continued until end of Anti-Inflation program
8. YOUTH EDUCATION - Ensure education programs for students to have strong grounding in reading, writing and arithmetic
9. HEALTH CARE - To maintain highest quality of health and hospital services
10. CONFEDERATION - To maintain a United Country under a strong Provincial government

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