

# BOB CROCKETT,

by Jennifer Tweddle

Bob Crockett is the NDP Candidate for Hillsborough. During an enlightening interview on January 25th, he gave the following answers to some pertinent issues:

Q: The Conservative Budget was brought down by your party and the Liberal's. What would the increase have been for the average student?

Crockett: All I can go on is what the budget would mean to anybody. Basically it falls on the gasoline exise tax. This falls on someone who is reliant upon a vehicle for transportation, especially here where we have no transit system within the city. So that's based on the gallonage used per year. That's an extra 18¢ a gallon for anyone using their own vehicle. And, I suppose, I would have to leave it up to the individual to figure out how much they use to go back and forth to univeristy. That's an immediate increase of 18¢ a gallon added costs to the transportation problems. There's also a problem with the budget in light of its inflationary trend. It would increase the costs of everything else we purchase; clothing; books, I suppose, unless they're subsidized in some fom; food, etc. That was by Crosby's own admission. He indicated that by their estimate, the cost of living would rise around 11%. Now at the end of this year, the cost of living was 9.8%. The budget would have fueled inflation to that extent.

The budget would also have created a problem in unemployment. Once again, why a government would bring down a budget, then admit

the faults openly - all they've done is given the Liberals and our Party fuel to fight with. Crosby indicated that unemployment would increase to approximately 8.3%. This increase would mean another 110,000 unemployed across the country. That would hit the student as well because the job market is not so lucrative when they come out - especially the graduate class.

What's the sense of going to university when there is no job market in the end? Get that job market opened up and you'll attract people to universities for the education they desire for the job they want.

Those are the immediate things that come to mind when you ask that question.

Q: In regard to summer jobs and permanent jobs for graduates; a significant problem for university students; does your party have a policy on instigating greater incentives or job creation?

Crockett: I think it goes deeper than that. The idea of incentives to create jobs for seasonal employment is a problem that only perpetuates what's going on. First I think we have to go back to the real problem - the unemployment situation. We have a definite platform in regards to creating jobs. One thing we have to do is get the manufacturing section busy again. Approximately 20% of the manufacturing industry is idle at the moment. If this was producing, it would create jobs. For example, take it all in a basket, and say that to get the manufacturing sector going we first must have markets for the product they produce. To get markets, you have

to be able to provide guaranteed delivery. That comes back to transportation and we all know our problem with that. So it's our platform that we upgrade the railroad system. The C.N., which is a crown corporation has deteriorated to the state that it's in. First of all we have to upgrade the rail beds and build more rolling stock; cars for moving potatoes and ore cars. This, then, provides a transport

system so when you do start producing goods, can get them to a market and a guarantee of delivery. Also, we are talking about a merchant marine - another way of getting products out of this country to the market. We rely too much on the United States market. We have to develop markets in the third world. This is basically what we're up to. We're saying with an improved rail transportation system we can meet the needs of both the U.S. market and the third world. The merchant marine creates jobs because those jobs are now non-existent. The steel industry would be involved because they must build the ships, rails etc.

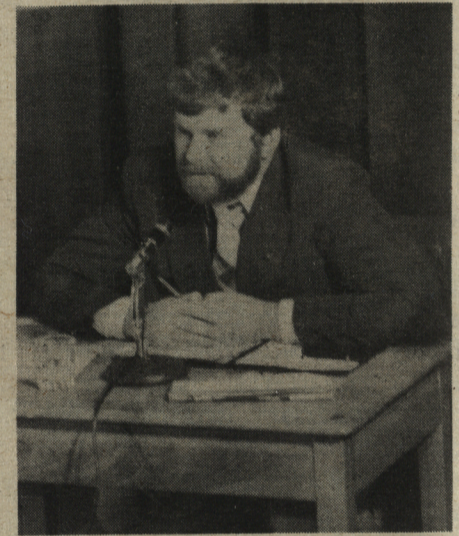
So it's not a boom and bust thing. This proposal goes deeper and is much more solid than relying on incentives of the moment to hire students on band-aid efforts, such as the nlp and wrap programs we have seen over the years. They haven't worked. They haven't created the employment. They are just things to take care of the matter at the moment. Getting back to your original question, the merchant marine provides a ready market for students during the summer months.

Q: University enrollment is declining across Canada. Does your party have any policy on attracting people back to universities? This of course, is financial as well as attracting foreign students.

Crockett: I think it goes further than that. It goes back to the idea of jobs. What's the sense of me going to university when there is no job market in the end? That has a lot to do with the decline

today. Get that job market opened up and you'll attract people to universities for the education that they desire to achieve the job they want.

There, of course, is another problem. There are not as many children coming up through the school system. There is a natural decline due to the decline in the birth rate in all western countries. Now, basically what researchers are telling us is, down the road, we're going to face a labour shortage because of the decline in the birth rate. Eventually we'll see people over 65 years of age being kept in the labour market because there will be a real decline in the youth coming up through. They predict that within the next 15 years.



Q: Does your party have a policy on the legalization of marijuana?

Crockett: Yes, all parties are the same. Party policy is identical pretty well between the three parties. It's removing marijuana from the Criminal Code - to make it a little easier for people who are caught with simple possession. Now I'll give you my personal opinion. I don't agree with that policy. Of course, we all have to realize party policy is arrived at through normal procedures. The party asks us, when we are interviewed on these subjects, to first of all convey the party position, and then, if you feel you are at odds with that, you can express the fact that you are at odds. Personally, I don't believe that marijuana should be put in a position where its legal or the penalties are reduced for possession or anything else.

People will probably say look at liquor. Well look at the problems with liquor. There are problems within the family, problems with individuals who have actually



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