

Taking back Canada

Svend Robinson speaks at Dal

New Perspectives on Justice

BY GEOFF GALLAGHER-MACKAY

Do you want to know how to fight the power? Do you want to know why things are the way they are in Canadian politics?

You missed a prime opportunity to find out, if you weren't in the Green Room Tuesday evening. The dynamic and engaging MP Svend Robinson spoke to a crowd of about one hundred on matters relevant to each and every Canadian.

Advertised as a discussion on how to take Canada back, Mr. Robinson was filled with substantiated scorn for the existing government (as all opposing parties usually are). He spoke extensively on the challenges faced by Canadians, both nationally and internationally. Robinson illustrated the problems of today, citing statistics such as immense bank profits and the high incomes of business executives. He did the politician's job of showing the failures of the current administration, making corporate greed and the blight of the "bean counters" the underlying theme of his many examples. Having outlined the issues at hand for the nation, he

then set about suggesting routes of change and improvement.

As any political discussion of the nineties must, much of Robinson's discussion centred around how the NDP would pay for its proposed changes. The urgency of addressing the employment situation in Canada was the core of his argument, as well as the usual call for a redefined tax system. The notion of a financial transaction tax was at the top of the list of tax alternatives. Robinson cited the statistic of the cost of unemployment and under employment being upwards of \$100 million annually, when contributions of the employed and withdrawals of the jobless are weighed. He next suggested that full employment is not the main goal of either the present Liberal government nor their Conservative brethren. The Socialist perspective of empowering labour and redefining the parameters of "work" was the centrepiece for how an NDP government would pay for the drastic alterations they call for in governing the country.

Robinson outlined a fundamental difference between the

NDP and the traditional parties. It is an unwise dog that bites the hand that feeds it, and old school politics bases its policy on the needs and desires of their corporate sponsors. By contrast, Robinson said the NDP does not accept donations from big business. As a grass roots party, it logically bases its policy on what is best for the grass roots. The changes called for by the NDP reflect this difference in sponsorship.

With every socialist argument there is usually a whiff of Utopianism. What was refreshing about hearing Svend Robinson speak was that this socialism was not an ephemeral idea, but a real attainable goal. In his closing comments he hoped that the audience would go away from the evening with a better sense of why it is important to increase the NDP numbers, both in Nova Scotia and in Ottawa. He made it clear that government is for those who are being governed, not those who pay for the election campaigns. Real government for the people was outlined by Mr. Robinson, and with hopeful plans for how it's going to be done.

BY KAREN DENSMORE

We as a society are constantly questioning justice. Does the punishment fit the crime? What is the purpose of incarceration? We question sentencing, social equality and government resources. With such questions plaguing today's society, it was most appropriate that this year's theme for the Dorothy J. Killiam Memorial Lecture series was "Crime and Punishment." The lecture series was organized by the faculty of Sociology and Anthropology.

The three main themes were outlined as follows: how punishment has evolved, restorative justice, and the women's movement in respect to sexual equality and justice. The purpose of the lecture series was to provide insights into more efficient, effective and equitable alternatives.

The first lecturer was Lawrence Friedman, a professor of Law at Stanford University. His lecture touched on the historical context of law, relating to our present day justice system. What I found interesting about Friedman's lecture were his comments about juries. Juries have always fascinated me; to think that one person's fate lies in the hands of twelve people. Dr. Friedman made the point that these twelve people do not have

to justify their reasoning for their decision. Seems pretty scary to me. I understand the significance of being judged by one's peers, but does this always happen? (O.J. Simpson comes to mind.)

What if we were to have professional jurors? People who are specially educated in philosophy, psychology, morals, ethics, religion, gender issues and real life experiences. The professional juror would sit on the scales of justice, balancing both judge and jury. It would be interesting to see if this idea could work in our justice system.

The second lecture, by John Braithwaite, a leading international expert on restorative justice, brought up many alternatives to incarceration. He discussed the judicial philosophies of natives in New Zealand and Canada as well as his own theory of "re-integrative shaming." The alternative Braithwaite presented consisted of holding a conference, instead of incarcerating an offender. In this conference the offender would have an opportunity to explain his/her actions. Also, the victim would be given a chance to tell their side of the story. The goal is that after the conference, the convicted person should feel shame, remorse, and want to change

Cont. p. 9: "Justice"

Homegrown: The Halifax Farmers' Market

BY TIM HOARE

According to "The Bacon Worship Page" on the internet, if you eat bacon twice a day, "It will make you more attractive to the opposite sex, or something." Being the carnivore I am, this came as inspiring news, but I would never admit to having surfed "The Bacon Worship Page" in my spare time, even for so juicy a tidbit as that. Nope.

The truth of the matter is that the above-mentioned excerpt was actually gleaned from the Little Dorset Farms meat counter down at the Halifax Farmers' Market, and I could tell that the proprietress was immensely proud of her publicly showcased blurb. She obviously lives by these words. Indeed, the Legg family's enterprise is "a farrow to finish operation" that started many generations ago in the dank, foggy regions of England. These days, the Musquodoboit Valley livestock live in much the same conditions they might have in centuries past: no drugs, no antibiotics, no growth stimulants. And believe it or not, you can taste the difference.

Let this not deter all you vegetarians. At the Farmers' Market, there is something for everyone, and it's been that way since 1750 when the market first started as "The Green Market". Almost everything for sale is organically grown and full of flavour, much the same as the market itself.

The Lapierre family at the Hillcrest Farm stall, to name but one example, are third generation marketeers who specialize in a delicious array of veggies grown organically in Nova Scotia, and they are a wonderful bunch of people. In fact, it seemed as though every single person I

spoke to on Saturday morning, be they shoppers or vendors, was cheerful, and that energy is contagious. Adam Kelly, a fellow consumer and student at Dalhousie, said it best: "It's true, man, getting up early in the morning makes you feel so active and so good."

The Farmers' Market has an all-too-uncommon feeling of togetherness to it, and a couple of days down there saves you the guilty feeling you get when you wake up and realize there are only five hours left in your day. Even better, when you get home you have the option to chef-up an enormous, delicious brunch before you hit the books, instead of something from the usual Kraft Dinner variety. Slide some freshly baked bread in the toaster, fry up a yummy omelette with organic mushrooms, green peppers, chives, onions, tomatoes and so on, and maybe even throw in a little melted gouda cheese made by the Van Den Hoek family for extra taste.

If you're not in the mood for an omelette, try Walter's fish. He smokes it all himself, and if you're lucky and you happen to look hungry, he might even slide you a freebie. If it is fresh, unsmoked fish you're looking for, try the "No Bone Zone" upstairs. Scott will set you up with salmon or haddock fillets fresh off the boats from the South Shore. As he put it, "This is not a flea market atmosphere. People come here for tasty, fresh



DAN RAFLA

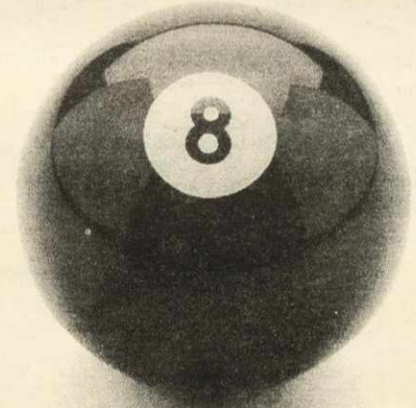
stuff, and that's what we give them."

Either way you look at it, you can't really lose at the Farmers' Market. Students get a 10% discount with their student I.D. cards, the prices are super-competitive, and the people are incredibly friendly. As one vibrant shopper from California explained, "You get to know all the people, you feel good buying non-pesticide food, and you help people to avoid supporting big, profit-driven agro-business." Now that the Farmers' Market is a co-op, students in Halifax can take advantage of a really positive cause.

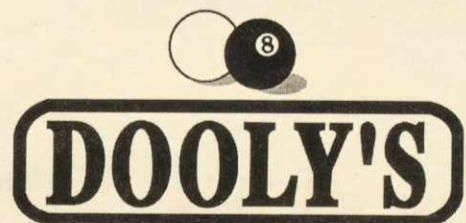
So get up a little earlier on Saturday mornings, have a coffee and make it down to the waterfront before noon to see for yourselves. I highly doubt anyone will regret the fact that Kraft Dinner no longer occupies precious space on their shelves.

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