

Supply

present formula we have to work under. That is clearly one of the difficulties. The premier recognizes that.

The premier of New Brunswick is now saying to us, to the federal ministers, the Prime Minister: "We will accept part of the burden. We will accept part of the cost, but let us consult a little bit more on what happens in Atlantic Canada and maybe on where some of those federal monies are going to be spent or how they might be best spent".

Again, it leads me full circle back to our constitutional proposal. It is clearly underlined in that proposal that Ottawa cannot do it alone, that we need to have some help in this thing and the help will come from the 10 provinces with which we will consult. We will work together to work through our economic difficulties. When the day comes to deliver a budget in the House of Commons, it will not be shrouded in the kind of secrecy in which it has been shrouded in the past. We will go through that consultative process so at the end of the day the finance minister in the province of New Brunswick knows what we are doing; the finance minister in the province of Ontario has a sense of where we are going.

We have all criticized in this House the finance minister of the New Democratic government in Ontario.

An hon. member: Not all of us.

Mr. Thompson: The hon. member, a member of that party says "not all of us have criticized". I have not criticized him either. He was doing what he thought was right. He was elected to do that. At the end of the day we may disagree, but he was doing what he was elected to do.

If you reflect on the situation in Ontario, despite the party that has formed the government in that province, today it is going through the same kind of difficulties that we are nationally, federally. It is cutting it back. Maybe if it had to do it over again, it would not have gone on a borrowing spree as it had to in the spring of 1991. Maybe it would have pared it back then. It is recognizing that there are some structural deficiencies in the economy of Ontario and it is going through a very, very difficult period. It is going through that same process we have had to go through here for the last two or three years.

An hon. member: There is going to be less money for transfer payments to Atlantic Canada.

Mr. Thompson: The member said it. There is going to be less money for transfer payments to Atlantic Canada. I hope there is. I hope the economy in Atlantic Canada is

so vibrant that we do not need those transfer of payments.

• (1800)

That is where we want to lead ourselves in Atlantic Canada to work through this thing. We are going to need the help of the rest of Canada for a few more years to come and some of the structural changes that we are proposing to the economy and some we have already carried out are going to help us in the long run.

I am a little bit uncomfortable in the short term because there are industries in my riding that are suffering as there are in all parts of this country, but it is not because we have ignored them. It is a problem of money. There is not enough of it to go around and I wish there were more, but there is not.

We are going to work through it together in the spirit of a true confederation, the kind of Canada that we all want.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the hon. member's remarks in the House and he was speaking about the idea of breaking down provincial trade barriers. I want to suggest to him what would happen if we in effect removed the protection that we have for small industries located in Atlantic Canada. Let us use breweries for example. The great cry has been to allow Moosehead to be sold throughout the rest of Canada.

Is there not a danger that once that protection is removed and the transportation component, the high cost of transportation in this country is invoked, those Moosehead jobs or those of any other small manufacturing jobs in Atlantic Canada or in other regions will relocate to Toronto, and that Labatt's will buy the licence, add another shift of three or four people and match the output? Is that not the danger of arbitrarily removing the provincial barriers? Is it also not a danger of big companies from the golden horseshoe, from Quebec, getting the contracts to build whatever in Atlantic Canada and bringing their own workers with them?

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, we are running out of time. I would love to have a few minutes anyway to attempt to answer that question, but I see we have one minute left.