

Government Orders

my head in shame and be pleased that nobody noticed that the member in question is a member of the Conservative Party.

I hope my friend from the Liberal Party would agree with me about this kind of boasting of what Ontario has received. In fact, Ontario has been hit so hard by this government. People across Ontario have been damaged so badly by the free trade deal, by the GST, by the cutbacks which have hit the Ontario budget.

Surely, it seems to me to be mistaken for this member from the Conservative side to get up and suggest that somehow manufacturing has been helped by these extra tax handouts that have been given.

Mr. Marchi: Mr. Speaker, the other fact and the other great variable of this equation awaits us in a number of weeks when the hon. member's friends in Ontario present their budget. We have had bad federal policy aggravated at the provincial level by a government that seems to be anti-business. If that bill goes through, it will be passing labour laws and regulations found in no international jurisdiction. It is a question of not aggravating an already bad situation.

I implore the Premier of Ontario certainly to offer some light and some hope in a number of weeks when the government brings down its Ontario budget.

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, as I listened to this debate in the last few moments I have become more suspicious of what is intended here than I was before I came in here.

I rise today as a representative of a constituency in a province that out of necessity has been a recipient of equalization and transfer payments for a great many years.

I am sure I speak for all residents of that province when I say that this is not the way we like to have it, but this is the way that it has been. We would rather be in a financial situation where we are on the other end and contributing to the equalization rather than on the receiving end. Unfortunately, at least for the short-term future, it would appear that we will continue to be on this end. As for legislation which affects this, it is of great interest to me and to members of my province.

The whole question of transfer payments and equalization goes to the very heart of being a Canadian. In

these times of far-reaching talks on national unity, we must always remember that this country and its various parts must receive the same level of services from its governments. We cannot allow our dedication to deficit fighting create two or more different classes of Canadians.

As residents of this country we are entitled to equal services wherever we live. This is something which we can never allow to slip away. Residents of Prince Edward Island, Atlantic Canada, western Canada, northern Canada and central Canada are all entitled to the same level of services.

I fear that over the past years we have seen some slippage in these principles. The provinces in my part of the country are faced with mounting deficits because of cuts to payments they receive from the federal government.

When the ministers of finance met in January they announced a minor increase in transfer payments. That was small comfort to those provinces that had large pieces of their budgets taken away earlier. I again urge the government not to fight the deficit on the backs of the poorest people in the poorest provinces of our country.

Last week when we were in our constituencies I had the opportunity to speak to students in junior and senior high schools about staying in school. I took this proposition to them. I think I was successful in convincing some who had been thinking about leaving this year in the senior high school to go out into the workforce that they would be better off probably to stay in school for another term. The question that was most often asked of me by them was: "If we are going on to post-secondary education, how are we going to afford it?"

This is a very serious question across the country. The less money going to the provinces for post-secondary education, students are forced to pay higher tuition fees. Of course, when you add that to the fact that they are out there competing with so many people looking for summer jobs, jobs that are not there, this almost says to these students what I fear is coming, that if you do not belong to the rich class, you are not going to be able to go to university.