

type of treatment. How can you expect the Canadian public to have confidence in a government, or to have the proper attitude toward it, when government themselves are presenting figures in a way that, if you were in the private sector filing prospectuses with respect to share issues, you would literally be convicted of contravening the securities legislation on disclosure? That is only one example, Mr. Speaker.

I can add up totals of evasive types of presentations and non-disclosures totalling \$10 billion by 1984. We have heard the Minister of Finance previously, and again today, come up with this figure of some \$40 billion that he has saved the Canadian public. If he believes that, he is being fooled by his own fool figures. The fact is that the only reason he can pretend that he has saved anybody any money is simply that he is not disclosing it. He is simply not disclosing, to the tune of almost \$16 billion in payment charges, the amount he is going to lift from the Canadian public in the charge for oil compensation to which I have been referring. For example his debt is another \$13 billion higher in the aggregate than that proposed in the Crosbie budget. If you add those two things alone you have \$29 billion of his so-called \$40 billion saving. The reason I mention this type of thing is because I think it is so unfortunate that we have a Minister of Finance, in Canada's time of need, who stoops so low as to start cooking the books in that fashion.

Mr. Speaker, let me give you other examples of what I am referring to here. I say that there is \$10 billion you can identify there by 1984 which would normally be considered expenditures, or amounts we have to allow for, that somehow or other they are shuffling off to the side—the Post Office approach. You will remember his cute little trick there. The Minister of Finance says, "Of course, I have assumed that the revenue from the Post Office will be sufficient to meet the expenditures and there will be no deficit during my projection." Expressed in another way, he is saying, "If we are able to roll onto the Canadian public directly the deficits of the Post Office through increased postage and other charges, then, lo and behold, we will have no deficit." He then has the nerve to say, "Of course, since we will have no deficit, and since I assume we will have no deficit, I will not show it in my figures."

● (1540)

There is the unemployment insurance dodge. What the minister is doing is taking it out of the general accounts, the estimates, and rolling it on to the employees and employers, and saying, "You will pick up another \$1 billion between now and the end of the year", because it will allow him to show a more favourable budgetary presentation.

Mr. Evans: It is required by the legislation, and you know it.

Mr. Stevens: If we read between the lines, we must wonder what this budget will do to the agreements which now exist between the federal government and the provincial governments. The figures mean only one thing, that the government proposes to rewrite those agreements to put a greater load on

the provinces. There can be no doubt about that. That is another way the government will pick up what it thinks will be a \$2 billion saving, and it will not be done in the federal name but simply picked up at the provincial level.

I mentioned these points because they show the mentality of the people who are now governing this country. Rather than face the hard realities, that expenditures are out of control and, that we need the strongest president of the treasury board possible, instead of a weak one, we are finding that the government is trying to disguise the figures. The government is in the lap of its public relations people who simply say, "It is perception that counts, not reality. Do whatever you have to do but do not tell the truth, and you will see how we will muddle through."

Let me put it another way. What we have received from the budget is an increase of 12.5 cents per gallon in the oil compensation charge, and an increase of 5 cents per gallon in the oil and gas revenue tax. Those figures total 17.5 cents per gallon, which compares to the 18-cent excise tax for which we were voted out. For half a cent on that item alone, the country changed from responsible government to irresponsible government.

As far as oil pricing is concerned, we are told that the increase will be \$3.80 per barrel compared to our price of \$4 a barrel. Of course, the 75 cents increase per barrel which the government ran up earlier in the year was not added to the \$3.80 because it would put the price at over \$4.50. The public relations people did not want to hear that on budget night so they said, "Let's forget that for the time being, and talk about \$3.80." In truth that is what we have bought.

An hon. Member: Deception.

Mr. Stevens: Clearly, it is deception. In the words of Hugh Anderson, it is "wilful deceit" on the part of the government. The fact that the government has maintained the ongoing spending levels will have the effect of softening up and conditioning Canadian consumers to the concept that perhaps they should spend even more.

Last night the President of the Treasury Board startled myself and other members of the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates by stating that he felt that 49 per cent of the people at the deputy minister's level in the public service were underpaid in this country. I do not know whether he based that comment on fact, or whether it was just a wish. But when the government is facing a deficit of \$14 billion and serious doubts in the financial community as to whether the country can handle this debt load which the federal government proposes over the coming years, one of the last things it should be saying is that its employees, who presumably are partly responsible for the position which the government is in, should be paid more.

As a rule one pays for results. If the government were running at a surplus, or relatively close to a surplus, then I could see, if it were felt that somebody was underpaid, it as an opportunity to suggest a bonus or some other type of increase in pay. However, that is not the situation in this country today.