

minister's borrowing outside Canada by a very considerable extent.

Interest rates, Mr. Speaker: what were the assumptions on interest rates in the budget of October 28? The assumptions there were that interest rates were going to decrease quite rapidly in 1981. Has anybody noticed interest rates decreasing rapidly? They have been high now ever since the late fall. Unless there has been some change today—and I did not get a chance today to hear what happened to the Bank of Canada rate—it is now 18¼ per cent at the banks and has not changed for a number of months.

So assumption after assumption of the budget of last October 28 has been shown by events to be wrong; yet this minister says that he has presented his estimates on the same assumptions as in the budget. Well, we can already see that his estimates are pretty well worthless.

Just look at his statement, Mr. Speaker. Examine the statement that the minister just gave. He gave it to the press yesterday and it went to the world yesterday, and we are getting it now and we can comment on it now, 24 hours later. He says that total spending—the first page—of \$67.6 billion in 1981-82 is 12.8 per cent higher than the forecast for 1980-81.

It was the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) of this government that, in a solemn commitment in Toronto in January of 1980, said that the rate of spending “under our government will not increase more than the real increase in the gross national product”. That was his statement. It was proven to be entirely false last year, and this year, on these estimates brought before the House, it is false again. The Minister of Finance says we should change that because it was a trend line. How trendy the Liberal government is! They are always so trendy that they just suit many people up in Toronto, the sophisticated, trendy types, on the trend line of the gross national product. But it is not on the trend line of the gross national product. It is not on the gross national product at all. That is another promise broken.

Nor is the spending, Mr. Speaker, \$67.6 billion. The minister there is trying to hide his real spending. What is he hiding? One item that he is hiding is \$2.4 billion in spending for oil subsidization under the oil import subsidization program. That is not apparent in the estimates this year, Mr. Speaker. Why not? Because the Minister of Finance imposed new charges on the public, and the public is going to pay into a fund \$2.4 billion this year that is going to be spent on the oil import subsidization plan.

So there are only several hundred millions of dollars still appearing in the estimates, rather than the total amount which would be several hundred million plus \$2.4 billion. So why is the President of the Treasury Board trying to pretend to the people of Canada that his spending is only going to be \$67.6 billion? You have to add to that \$2.4 billion in spending on the oil import subsidy plan. That brings the spending, when you add that on, up to \$70 billion. And it is not a 12.8 per cent increase; it is a considerably larger increase. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, there is another incorrect statement.

Estimates

Let us compare this with the estimates of previous years. Last year, in the budget of October 28, the unemployment insurance contributions went up: a very considerable increase. Everybody employed in this country today who pays unemployment insurance premiums is paying more because of the minister's budget of October 28, and the increased sums paid in those premiums are being used to meet the increased employment costs. So additional hundreds of millions—I haven't got the exact figures here now—but a billion, or a billion and a half, or whatever the amount is, has to be added on to the \$67.6 billion if there is to be any correspondence with previous years for actual spending by the government.

So it is not 12.8 per cent; it is not 13 per cent; it is not 13.5 per cent: it is something very much in excess of all of that. And the gentleman who is doing all the secret spending—or they try to keep it secret—is now in the House facing us, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde). So much for restraint!

Mr. Speaker, this statement of the President of the Treasury Board is so ludicrous, if it was not so serious for Canada. Let us look at page 2 of his statement. I quote him, Mr. Speaker:

And I cannot help but point out, Madam Speaker, when considering the President's program—

That is the program of President Reagan announced a week ago. What the U.S. government proposes to do for three years we have been doing for the past seven years. Imagine, what President Reagan proposed last week, this government has done for seven years! Mr. Speaker, how does this square with *Hansard* of Thursday, February 19, when the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) put a question to the Minister of Finance about priorities and suggested to him that, if he wants guidance, he should take a look at President Reagan's economic package which he presented last night. That is at page 7454. The hon. member for St. John's East asked that. He said that if he wants guidance, he should look at President Reagan's economic package. And here is what the Minister of Finance said.

An hon. Member: Is that where you got your ideas?

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, the untrammelled rabble over there are trying to heckle me, but it will not do any good; rabble can't bother me. At page 7455 of *Hansard*, here is what the Minister of Finance said:

I want to tell the hon. member that I do not intend to take guidance, as he has suggested, from the message given last night by the President of the United States in terms of the reduction of expenditures.

Why don't these two get their act together? The President of the Treasury Board is taking guidance right from the President, and he says that for seven years he has been doing what President Reagan is doing; that is what his government has been doing. He said that we are rapidly moving ahead with work programs across the federal government to achieve exactly the same objectives as those proposed by President Reagan; and just last Thursday, February 19, the Minister of Finance scoffed at President Reagan. He said this: