

*Main Estimates*

because there may not be any. What is the best estimate now? Is it, as it appears to me to be, \$3.120 billion? If the minister could give us those three figures it would clear up our confusion, because these are the three main items.

**Mr. Johnston:** Madam Speaker, I would be happy to take that question under advisement and let the hon. member know the exact numbers which are provided for. Some of the information appears in the material which I have before me, but some of it will require further analysis which it would not be appropriate for me to make during the course of this response.

**Mr. Crosbie:** This is most mysterious, Madam Speaker. The implication of what the President of the Treasury Board now says is that the Minister of Finance last night went ahead and gave this House his own estimates which were not prepared in consultation and co-ordination with the President of the Treasury Board, and that the President of the Treasury Board cannot give me the answer to those three simple items because he does not know how the Minister of Finance has calculated additional interest costs, additional oil import subsidization costs and how he has calculated the guaranteed income supplement.

Surely that is the job of the Treasury Board. I believe that is the way we did it when we were in government and things were properly run. Treasury Board prepared these estimates and went over them with officials of the Department of Finance. The Department of Finance agreed with Treasury Board on their estimates, or vice versa, and the Minister of Finance and the President of the Treasury Board knew what was what.

The President of the Treasury Board today is saying that he and the Minister of Finance have different figures and that he does not know how the Minister of Finance arrived at his.

**Mr. Johnston:** With respect, Madam Speaker, I believe that is a complete distortion of the answer I gave. I simply requested the opportunity to review the material and to provide it to the hon. member. By far the largest single item, of course, of the ones we have discussed in the over-all budgetary position of the items raised by the hon. gentleman, is the debt costs which are rising from \$8.350 billion in 1979-80 to \$10.275 billion in 1980-81.

**Mr. Anguish:** Madam Speaker, the question I should like to raise is this. In light of the large deficit of the government that has been occurring over the last couple of years—in 1978 \$10 billion and in 1979 in excess of \$16 billion—do we expect to have this same deficit between revenue and expenditure in 1980-81? If not, how does the minister expect to overcome this?

**Mr. Johnston:** Madam Speaker, that question is more properly addressed to my colleague the Minister of Finance. The issue of the deficit was dealt with by the Minister of Finance during his remarks last night. I believe the statement he made completely covers the government's intentions with respect thereto, including the reference he made to the possibility of a

reduction in the \$60.4 billion amount through the application or implementation of the blended oil price.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I think I should start limiting the questions. I shall recognize, however, those who have already indicated their intention of asking a question—the hon. member for Richmond-South Delta (Mr. Siddon), the hon. member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Beatty) and the hon. member for York-Peel (Mr. Stevens). The hon. member for Richmond-South Delta.

**Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta):** Madam Speaker, with all due respect to the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Johnston), I believe that he has somewhat confused the definition of his figures. In his statement he indicated that government spending as projected in the estimates amounts to some \$58.4 billion, while in fact the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) indicated last night that under his revised plan for spending the amount would be \$59.8 billion in relation to the projection under the public account basis in our budget, which was presented by the former minister of finance, of some \$57.3 billion.

I should like to ask the President of the Treasury Board if it is true that the increase in deficit for the projected 1980-81 year is indeed \$2.5 billion and not a lesser amount, as he indicated a few moments ago.

I should like the opinion of the President of the Treasury Board as to where this is leading Canada. In particular, has he contemplated five-year projections as to what percentage of government spending we might anticipate in the form of deficit in the 1983-84 fiscal year; and in doing so, has he recognized that the budget of the former minister of finance predicted that percentage deficit would be reduced to some 6 per cent within four years?

The Canadian people would like to hear what the plans of the minister and the government are to produce a corresponding reduction in the deficit of his government.

**Mr. Johnston:** First, Madam Speaker, there seems to be some confusion in the mind of the hon. member about the purpose of the main estimates. They represent seeking authority for expenditures by this government. They do not represent an expenditure plan by this government. I think that point was made clear during the comments of the Minister of Finance last night.

In addition to that, Madam Speaker, I think we have demonstrated—and it is clear from this exchange—that in fact there is very little discretionary increase, if I may call it that, in the expenditure plans of this government. The guaranteed income supplement of approximately \$345 million is indeed an increased expenditure which it is within the discretion of this government to make. As the Minister of Finance indicated last night, the increase in oil prices which we have discussed and increased debt charges accounted, for the most part, for this increase of approximately \$2 billion.

As the hon. gentleman well knows, Madam Speaker, a deficit represents a shortfall between expenditures and reve-