

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** Is this a farewell speech or a question? Do you have a question, John?

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** The Secretary of State for External Affairs asks me whether this is my farewell speech. I will yield the floor right now to hear his farewell speech.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** He wanted unanimous consent yesterday so that we would adjourn the business of the House to hear his statement on Cambodia. We were agreeable, but I am sure I could persuade even the NDP to adjourn the House this morning and listen to the farewell speech of the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

The Minister of Finance quietly raised the old manufacturers' sales tax from 9 per cent to 10 per cent to 11 per cent to 12 per cent to 13.5 per cent. Yet he is trying to tell the country that 7 per cent is going to be a real break. Why does the minister not bite the bullet, come clean with the Canadian people and tell them what is in store for them after he insists on imposing this tax?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition has demonstrated—

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** The temporary Leader.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** —the temporary Leader of the Opposition, thank you—has demonstrated quite clearly why there is less than perfect understanding on the part of Canadians of the impact of the GST.

He has just talked about a \$7 billion additional impact of this tax. I do not know where he got that figure from.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Your numbers.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** He says it is my numbers. Where are those numbers drawn from? Did he ever take the time to read the December 19 statement? He says that it is not less of a tax. It is less of a tax for some products. We made that clear. The price of an automobile will go down \$500 or \$600 as a result of this tax. Some products will go up in price. But the over-all impact on inflation, as I indicated on December 19, is about 1.25 per cent.

These are misstatements of fact on the part of people like the Leader of the Opposition. People look to him and say, "Surely I can listen to this man with some degree of trust." Obviously, they cannot because those statements of fact are simply wrong.

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, this is the Minister of Finance who described this new tax as not adding one single cent of additional tax to the Canadian people. It is going to be a licence to print money and he knows it.

[*Translation*]

Thirty-one times in five years, Mr. Speaker, this minister raised taxes on Canadians. This minister now wants to hire 3,900 new tax collectors whose only job will be to collect this new tax.

The minister had promised small businesses in Canada that every year he would pay them a given amount of money to help them offset the cost involved in collecting the TPS, but now the minister is backtracking.

Would the minister agree that this tax, which the government claims to be a simple levy, will in fact prove to be an outright administrative chaos, a case of administrative anarchy for over 1,250,000 businessmen in Canada?

[*English*]

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition asked whether I would advise the Prime Minister of certain details of this tax. I would like to offer to the Leader of the Opposition that if he would like a briefing on this tax I will give it to him personally. Clearly he does not understand anything that he is talking about. How about five o'clock tonight? Tomorrow morning at nine o'clock? Any time the Leader of the Opposition would like to have a briefing on this tax I would like to do it.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Who briefed you, Michael?

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Ottawa—Vanier is one of the best known supporters of a change from the existing sales tax. He said that quite clearly.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!