

*Oral Questions*

most repugnant and most destructive devices ever perpetrated on the democratic process”.

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

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Will the Prime Minister consult his seatmate and prevail upon the House Leader to open up debate so that Canadians can have the full picture on this sales tax?

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. friend's concern for debate.

On Wednesday, January 24, it took three votes by the NDP to introduce Private Members' Bills. That wasted Wednesday, January 24.

On Thursday, January 25, we moved to Orders of the Day.

On Friday, January 26, it took one vote to dispose of committee concurrence, another vote to dispose of “that another member be heard”.

We have had dilatory tactic after dilatory tactic.

Today, I offer to the House the opportunity to debate this fully. I offer once again the opportunity to debate this fully. We are prepared to extend hours this evening if my hon. friends in the opposition parties want to debate this tonight. I suggest to them that they join with us in extending hours tonight so that we can end debate.

• (1420)

[Translation]

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons has had a change of heart. He is much more tolerant this afternoon.

Liberal members alone have collected over 400,000 signatures of people who object to the new sales tax. Add to this figure the signatures collected by NDP members and even by Conservative members, those people across the way who are afraid to present this petition here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, Canadians object to this tax for a number of reasons. It is a clear contradiction of the promises made by the Prime Minister during the last election. There is no collaboration with the provinces. It means double taxation, two sales taxes, no visibility, no simplicity, no neutrality!

Mr. Speaker—

**An hon. member:** Question!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether you rose because of me or because of that ruckus opposite!

**An hon. member:** Because of the ruckus!

**Mr. Speaker:** I can assure the right hon. member that he was the reason I rose. Perhaps you would like to put your question.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** You maintain your customary composure, Mr. Speaker.

Why—and my question is directed to the Prime Minister—why is the government so anxious to have this bill rushed through the House? So it can rush it to the ad people and media manipulators, to try and fool Canadians?

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Justice, Attorney General of Canada and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, we are ready for the debate this afternoon. Are you?

[English]

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, we are ready, if the minister will withdraw his notice of closure. If the minister will withdraw that, then we can talk some business.

I want to say to the minister and through him to the Prime Minister that although he is the House Leader, the Prime Minister is still the senior member of the House.

We have had less than six hours of debate on this measure, a measure which will revolutionize the tax system in this country. Yet this government does not care to listen to the thousands of Canadians who have talked to their members of Parliament. Their members of Parliament deserve to be heard in this House.

The government does not care to listen to the hundreds of thousands of Canadians who have taken the trouble to sign petitions, delivered again to Your Honour as Speaker of this House.

If the government proceeds to use this measure of closure—and it has given every indication that it will—then it will be the eleventh time since December 1988, since this session of Parliament began, that it has invoked the Draconian measure of closure, of stifling debate.