

Wellington Street than it is to build another harbour facility to promote tourism in this country.

The government has all its priorities wrong. Talking about developing tourism and small business, this government has talked incessantly about high interest rates and has always talked about the previous government. It blames everything on the previous government, but it will run out of those stories one of these days. It is beginning to sound like a worn record.

Just to put the record straight once again, I want to state very clearly that when this government took power in September 1984, interest rates in this country stood at exactly 13 per cent. Today, they stand at 14.25 per cent, the largest real interest rate that we have had in this country for years.

The development and environmental protection of tourist sites is very important. Environment itself is another area where we will have to prepare for Tourism 2000. We will have to protect the natural sites so they are not damaged by tourism.

The environment and the protection of our tourist sites is going to be very important. Environment is going to be a big issue in the 1990s. We hope it is. We do not know what this government is going to do, but we hear all kinds of rumours.

I see my hon. friend over here who has done a lot of work on the environment. He has held conferences and has contributed greatly. I am sure that if the government would only ask him what to do, he could give some very good advice.

The government must pay more attention to the environmental issues of this country. It must pay more attention to tourism and less attention to the silly things that it considers to be important. It must manage the finances of this country in such a way that Canadians are going to have something to look up to, instead of levying 31 tax increases and another massive tax increase pending with the GST as of January 1 of next year, if this goes on—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): We will have to interrupt the hon. member. He may want to conclude his remarks after Question Period.

[*Translation*]

It being one o'clock, I do now leave the Chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

S. O. 31

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the presence in our country of Reverend Lazlo Tokes. Mr. Tokes, an ethnic Hungarian Romanian clergyman, is credited with having sparked the downfall of the Ceausescu regime in Romania last December by his defiant stand against ruthless persecution.

We Canadians have followed the events in Romania and have been hopeful that the dramatic changes would have brought about new freedom, hope for justice and peace to the region. The hope persists, but unfortunately we have seen increased persecution of the Hungarian minority in Romania. It is with great sadness and concern that yesterday we watched the clashes between some Romanians and the Hungarian minority, leaving at least six dead and about 300 injured. Such violence threatens the growth of democracy.

I am concerned that while Romania has finally achieved freedom from an inhumane dictator and has set up a provisional government, a truly free and democratic society cannot be achieved without support for human rights. The international community must help to protect the rights of the Hungarians and all citizens in Romania, and I call upon the Canadian government and parliamentarians to use their influence in all ways.

Official Canadian election observers have been requested by both the Romanian and Hungarian governments for the May elections in Romania. I further call on our government to consider Canadian food aid to Romania. Our wish and goal is to see Romania accept a clear and consistent standard of human rights, protection of minority rights, and democracy. Only then will a truly free and just society be achieved.