longer detectable. Nevertheless Canadian and American officials are monitoring and patrolling the beaches as a precautionary measure.

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ROMANIA

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs.

I am sure all members of the House share a concern about events in Romania yesterday. I wonder if the right hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs is prepared to tell the House what message was communicated to the Romanian Ambassador yesterday and what message might be subsequently communicated to the Government of Romania today, given the additional information that we have, and just what the government intends to do over the long run with respect to the deteriorating situation of Romania.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, all members of the House are very deeply concerned about the reports coming out of Romania, both those specifically with regard to Reverend Laszlo Tokes and also with the evident repression of the citizens of Romania by their authorities. I have issued today a statement condemning that action by the authorities in Romania.

One of the difficulties of course is that it is hard for us to get details out of that closed country which has become even more closed, including to the extent that when Canadian diplomats were sent to register our approval the foreign ministry officials in Romania refused to receive them.

That is an unacceptable breach of diplomatic practice as the repression of the people of Romania by their government is unacceptable. I think it raises questions as to how we can maintain constructive relations with a country that acts in such utter disregard of diplomatic practice and of the rights of its own people.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that when the minister said "register our approval" he meant "disapproval".

I wonder: what is the situation in the Canadian Embassy and what is the situation of Canadians in Romania? Are we adequately staffed there? What does the government intend to do over the next few days to make sure that we get the kind of information that we need and that the government is able to take the steps it ought to take in this case?

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for correcting the record.

I believe we are adequately staffed in Romania, although we keep that under constant review. I have asked for a report on the situation and safety of Canadians there.

● (1500)

I do not yet have that. We are seeking information about the extent and nature of the repression in that country, not only from authorities and our own officers in Romania, but also from those in neighbouring countries and other organizations which might be able to break through the curtain of repression that seems to have become even stronger in that country. Naturally, as events develop, I will keep the House advised, if it is in session, or otherwise will communicate with the foreign policy spokesmen of the other parties in the House.

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GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, in order to introduce its goods and services tax, last week the government announced a series of cuts affecting the Public Service, the national museums, libraries, research and development and the tourism industry in the national capital region. To add insult to injury, the Prime Minister called Canada's capital, "Fat City". The Prime Minister should come with me to see Ottawa's food banks, Ottawa's homeless and Ottawa's poor.

Will the Prime Minister stand up in this House and apologize?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I will not stand up and apologize, but I will stand up and correct the record that my hon. friend has just given to the House.

On December 9, 1989, I was asked the following question by a journalist: "Would you agree with the thesis that it is much easier to sell Canadians if they see Fat City, Ottawa, sort of belt–tightening a little bit?" The statement came from a journalist and not from me.