

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, one of the promises contained in the infamous red book pertains to accountability. However, when key questions of importance are asked in question period relating to federal overspending, health care, native self-government and criminal justice, the government consistently demonstrates an unwillingness or inability to answer.

The only time the government answers any questions is when one of its own members asks the Liberal question of the day.

We on this side of the House are asking legitimate questions affecting the lives of Canadians. Where is the accountability and when will question period become answer period? Canadians want and deserve straight, hard answers to these questions. Reformers will keep demanding the government fulfil its promise to be more open and accountable.

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[Translation]

PALESTINIAN SELF-GOVERNMENT

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Israel and the PLO signed in Cairo an historical agreement regarding Palestinian self-government.

Following several decades of political and military conflict, Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat have agreed on an action plan for the creation of a Palestinian territory in the Gaza Strip and in Jericho.

This agreement marks the beginning of the end of a long and difficult armed occupation of Palestinian territories. Certainly apprehensions persist on both sides, but it is now up to the parties to show their good will and lay the foundations for co-operation between the Israeli and Palestinian people.

We congratulate negotiators on both sides on this truly remarkable achievement. This agreement goes a long way toward bringing lasting peace to the Middle East, and we hope it will be received favourably by all those who live in the region.

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[English]

NATIONAL FOREST WEEK

Mr. John Loney (Edmonton North): Mr. Speaker, the week of May 1 to May 7 marks this year's National Forest Week. Each year the Canadian Forestry Association bestows on a municipality the title of forestry capital of Canada.

I am proud to inform the House that the city of Edmonton was chosen as the 1994 forest capital. I am delighted that the people

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of Edmonton have been recognized for their commitment to promoting the contribution of urban and rural forests to the city's environment, economy and social development.

Edmonton is a green city, noted for having one of the largest urban parkland areas per capita in all North America. These forested areas are enjoyed by local residents and by numerous visitors. Edmonton is also the gateway to the huge northern forest lands of Alberta which are becoming increasingly important to the diversification of Alberta's economy and to Canada's forest sector as a whole.

Allow me to congratulate the people of Edmonton and all the forestry workers in my region whose contribution has made 1994 a memorable year for my city.

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BOSNIA

Mr. Reg Alcock (Winnipeg South): Mr. Speaker, last week I had an opportunity to attend an international meeting of parliamentarians concerned about the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

I was proud as a Canadian of the work that Canada is doing there. I wish to commend the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of National Defence and the men and women who are on the ground in Bosnia-Herzegovina doing important work. I cannot help but wonder whether or not we can do more.

During World War II Canadians opened their hearts and their homes to the children who were caught in war zones. I would urge us to think about doing the same again to provide some relief for those people who are in such terrific danger and to get the children out of the way of the bullets.

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TRANSPORT

Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton): Mr. Speaker, high licensing fees for taxis and limos at Pearson airport are forcing operators on to the unemployment lines.

Each year rising insurance rates, gas prices, vehicle maintenance and licence fees along with poor business have made it impossible for operators and their families to survive.

It is like the tobacco smuggling problem. High licensing fees are driving legal operators out of business and have opened a window of opportunity for non-licensed operators to illegally scoop fares.

I call upon the Minister of Transport to direct the airport authority to lower its licence fees. Lower fees would ease the financial pressures on the operators and put an end to illegal fare scooping.