

Oral Questions

Last week in this House the minister refused to release the terms of reference for the national health forum. The minister said: "The terms of reference of the forum will be released when we are ready to release them".

If the minister is truly interested in using the national forum to stimulate a nation-wide debate on the future of our health care system which is currently falling to pieces, why is she unwilling to release the terms of reference?

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, we are trying to work as closely as possible with the provinces in order to accommodate their role.

It is very important that we do our very best to make sure they participate in this forum, to make sure it is as effective as we would like it to be. We will be releasing the terms of reference very shortly.

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, this health forum seems to be a bit of a farce. The Prime Minister says one thing, the Minister of Health says something else. The terms of reference were supposed to be released. They have not been.

What, if anything, specifically does the minister know about this health forum? What are its terms of reference? When is it going to be?

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, as much as the Reform Party would like to set the agenda, we set the agenda. If the hon. member wants to know more about the forum on health perhaps he should read the red book for starters.

We are continuing to negotiate. The Prime Minister and I are working very closely on the health forum because we think it is a very important exercise. We will, when we are ready, release the terms of reference.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. After trying for days to convene talks on a permanent ceasefire in the former Yugoslavia, the special envoy of the Secretary General of the United Nations decided yesterday to abandon his efforts aimed at bringing together all of Bosnia's warring factions in Geneva.

Can the Deputy Prime Minister confirm that the United Nations and the great powers have failed in their diplomatic efforts to get the parties involved in the conflict in the former Yugoslavia to negotiate a lasting ceasefire in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, we are all aware of the diplomatic efforts that are being made. We are also aware that the best way to solve these problems is through negotiations,

and that is exactly the avenue that we are pursuing with our Minister of Foreign Affairs.

• (1440)

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères): Mr. Speaker, can the Deputy Prime Minister tell us if the United Nations and the great powers intend to propose new peace initiatives in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[English]

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, obviously the Canadian government is very concerned about the situation there. We are anxious to pursue a negotiated settlement.

We have, along with other members in the United Nations, been sending very strong messages to the belligerents that we would like to see the ceasefire hold. Obviously the foreign minister, who is now in Europe, will be dealing very specifically at the negotiating level with these issues.

* * *

CANADIAN VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

On Friday the minister said the decision to offer space for the Canadian Vietnam veterans memorial in the capital region is to be taken by the National Capital Commission.

However, we have been told by the NCC that if the minister or cabinet so instructs, the NCC will give permission for such a memorial.

This government has the authority to make this decision if it so desires. Will the minister take action now to ensure that the NCC will make available a site for the Canadian Vietnam veterans memorial?

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to take note of the member's question and will relay his request to the minister.

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make it plain that over 10,000 Canadians served in the American forces in Vietnam; hundreds of them lost their lives.

Canadians have placed a memorial at Arlington to honour Americans who served in the Canadian Armed Forces during the second world war. We would like the minister to allow Americans to honour Canadians who served with the American forces in Vietnam.

* * *

FISHERIES

Mr. Derek Wells (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.