



CANADA

Debates of the Senate

1st SESSION

• 39th PARLIAMENT

• VOLUME 143

• NUMBER 94

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**Funding for Millennium
Scholarship Foundation**

Question by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

THE SENATE

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

[Translation]

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

FUNDING FOR MILLENNIUM SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. When the Auditor General of Canada tabled her report on Monday, May 1, 2007, she said:

I am pleased about the good management practices we found in these programs aimed at giving young Canadians better access to higher education.

In her report, she came to the conclusion that the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation is making progress toward improved access to post-secondary education. However, an article in the *Ottawa Citizen* on May 2, 2007, suggested that the foundation would no longer receive funding in 2008-09.

Can the minister tell us whether funding for the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation will be renewed?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): Honourable senators, we were very pleased by the Auditor General's report on all fronts. The government was pleased to have a report and committed, in those areas where responses were needed, to respond.

With regard to a report in the *Ottawa Citizen*, every single day we are subjected to some person or other coming out and making an accusation about something the government will or will not do. We simply cannot be put in a position of responding to

newspaper articles written by people who speculate and pass on misinformation. I did not see the article myself, and I have no idea what the senator is referring to exactly.

[Translation]

Senator Tardif: I would like an answer to my question, even if it is just speculation. Will this program be renewed?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: I will take that question as notice. I am asked this type of question quite often. There were various students' programs that we were supposedly cancelling; in fact, we did not cancel them, we enhanced them. The list goes on and on. I will simply take that question as notice.

[Translation]

Senator Tardif: Given that the foundation provided \$40 million to 20,000 people from under-represented groups, such as low-income Aboriginal students from rural areas, will the government continue to offer its support, or is it going to withdraw its support for less fortunate students?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, obviously the government is expending a significant amount of money on our students in all areas, particularly on Aboriginal students and minorities. In that respect, this government is unlike Justin Trudeau, who obviously has not figured out what minority language rights are. When I heard what Justin Trudeau had to say, I thought to myself that his big backers, former Senator Hebert and Senator Fairbairn, should take him out and give him a good history lesson on the BNA Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.