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## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Canadian International Development Agency  
Overseas Program Funding

Question by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Wednesday, February 16, 2011

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[*Translation*]

### INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

#### CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OVERSEAS PROGRAM FUNDING

**Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. The Minister for International Cooperation cut funding for a Christian religious organization working in the area of social justice and human rights, which had received the support of the Canadian International Development Agency. The minister did not stop there; she then altered a document to falsify the record of her relations with CIDA officials. This conduct is unbecoming of a minister, who must show accountability, transparency and responsibility towards Parliament and Canadian citizens.

What will be the consequences for the minister for having misled Parliament and Canadians and how does she justify such an ill-considered action?

[*English*]

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, the minister has been clear in the House of Commons and in committee that she made this decision. These decisions are the responsibility of ministers. The decision was the right one. One of the things that we committed to when we formed the government was to ensure that monies that are expended for various programs would be directed to those who need it most, and, most of all, that we would be accountable to the Canadian taxpayers who provide this money for these programs.

**Hon. Jane Cordy:** Honourable senators, was the word “not” on the document when the minister signed it?

**Senator LeBreton:** I will repeat my answer. The answer is clearly obvious. The minister made the decision not to grant these funds. That is her job. The minister made the decision and she made it in the interests of the Canadian taxpayers who provide these funds. When we look at the outstanding work this minister has done in untying food aid and properly delivering money and services to the people who need it, rather than to people who talk about it, it is a commendable action on her behalf. She will continue to perform her good work in assisting those groups in Africa and elsewhere that require assistance, while also being mindful of Canadian taxpayers. However, the minister is the minister, and the minister will make the decision.

**Hon. Robert W. Peterson:** Honourable senators, is the leader saying that the minister misleading Parliament and altering an official government document is condoned by her government?

**Senator LeBreton:** I am saying that the minister made the decision not to grant these funds. That decision is her right as a minister and that is why she is a minister. The minister is ultimately responsible for making these decisions. That is the decision the minister made and it was the right decision.

• (1420)

**Senator Peterson:** Honourable senators, I am not questioning the right of the minister to make decisions, but she misled Parliament and altered an official document. Is the leader condoning that?

**Senator LeBreton:** I am simply saying that the minister stated in the House of Commons and in committee that she made this decision and I believe, as do most reasonable people, that it was the right decision.