



NEWS RELEASE

The Honourable Claudette Tardif, Ph.D., Senator

For immediate release

SENATOR CLAUDETTE TARDIF CRITICIZES THE ROADMAP

OTTAWA (June 20, 2008) – Senator Claudette Tardif welcomes the Government’s *Roadmap for Canada’s linguistic duality* with some reserve. “Some new elements have been added, such as support for francophone immigration, arts and culture programs and the university scholarships program in translation. Those are all good initiatives” she declared in the Senate Chamber. She added however that “not only is this Roadmap three months late, it is very short-sighted.”

Champion of Official Languages, Senator Claudette Tardif compared the budgets of the Liberal Action Plan and the Conservative Government’s Roadmap. She specified that “the Roadmap suggests that more money is going to be allocated than the Liberals spent on their action plan. That kind of superficial claim is false. The action plan proposed annual budget increases from 2003 to 2008. Analysis of the budget for the Roadmap shows that it will provide more money than the 2003 Liberal budget did, but that in many areas, it is not allocating any more money than was spent for 2008, the final year of the action plan.”

Furthermore, the former Dean of the Faculté Saint-Jean of the University of Alberta criticized the conditions of the new Program to Support Linguistic Rights, partly replacing the former Court Challenges Program. To be eligible to the Conservative program, applicants will have “to show that their case is likely to lead to new developments in language law and that they have tried mediation.” The Honourable Claudette Tardif pinpointed the extra mediation step in the judiciary process for lacking rigorous evaluation criteria. “This new criterion is more of an obstacle to promoting linguistic rights than an asset.” Mediation could increase the difficulty of the judiciary process for average Canadians and even penalize them.

Hoping for a more visionary and innovative Roadmap, Senator Tardif, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, reminded that “much remains to be done to promote linguistic duality, and I doubt that the Roadmap is sufficient to reach the optimal development.” At this moment, the Roadmap is “truly the path of least resistance”.



Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate

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