

OFFICIAL REPORT (HANSARD)

Tuesday, September 26, 2006

Youth

Ms. Ruby Dhalla (Brampton—Springdale, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, no thanks to them the Conservative government inherited one of the largest surpluses in Canadian history. Despite the surplus, the Conservatives are cutting programs which actually help the youth of this country find jobs, the visible minorities, the francophones and the aboriginals. The Conservative government cut the very program, the youth employment strategy, which helped over 50,000 youth find jobs this past summer alone.

How can the Minister of Human Resources justify cutting a program that is helping Canada's young people?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member really should stop mixing her words and wixing her mords, because in fact the youth employment strategy has not been cut. We will continue to provide help for youth at risk.

What we are doing is saving taxpayers' money on summer job supports and subsidies for corporations that would have hired the students anyway. We are going to help the students who really need help because of where they live or other barriers they face.

Ms. Ruby Dhalla (Brampton—Springdale, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, I think the minister needs to check her facts because the Conservatives just cut \$5 million in funding that was helping youth in this country.

The bottom line is that the Conservatives receive an F because they have abandoned the young people of Canada. The Conservatives could have made a choice to make youth a priority, but instead they chose to cut the very programs that help them. The Minister of Human Resources had a choice to ensure that she invested in young people, but instead she chose to slam the door in their faces.

Why did the minister not stand up to her boss to ensure that she would protect the interests of young Canadians?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, when the summer career placement program was brought in eight years ago, it was intended to help students who could not find jobs easily. Over eight years of Liberal government, that program just went crazy, so that corporations that could well afford to hire students and would have hired them without the program were hiring students.

We are going to help the kids who really need to get the jobs. We are going to help the kids, not the cronies.

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