

### Supply

The Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) responded to a question by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. de Jong), with regard to the incident of the disciplining of this flight attendant. The Minister said, as recorded at page 13721 of *Hansard* on May 28, 1986 the following:

Air Canada has no policy that prohibits public contact employees from discussing politics, religion or any other subject with customers.

Not only has Toni Corrado exercised her rights within the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but she did not violate any of the requirements of employment with Air Canada.

Let me put on the record what caused this matter to be raised. In a letter dated March 18, 1986 addressed to the Hon. Don Mazankowski, P.C.M.P., Minister of Transport, Room 135E, House of Commons, the following is stated:

Dear Don:

I wish to lodge a formal complaint in regard to an attendant on our flight Air Canada No. 156, Vancouver to Toronto, March 11, 1986. The attendant's name is Toni Corrado and her official number is 57. She resides in Toronto.

I was travelling with a group of people to the Montreal convention. When she learned this she continued to complain about you and the Progressive Conservative Government and their interference during the last strike. She advised us not to let anyone east of Toronto know that we were Conservatives.

I hope that you will deal with this matter appropriately.

It was a pleasure seeing you in Montreal and we enjoyed meeting your wife.

Yours sincerely,  
Mrs. Donna Ford

I put to this House that nothing contained in that letter could lead anyone to believe that the flight attendant named had done other than to exercise her rights under the Charter, and neither had she breached any of the regulations governing employment with Air Canada as outlined by the Minister in the House. I think we can lay that to rest. If the complaint and the words used in that complaint were an accurate description of what took place, I do not think anyone could argue but that it in no way indicates that that particular employee had done anything but exercise her rights according to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

● (1530)

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Forrestall) is presumably here to defend this inappropriate action. If that flight attendant said that she disagreed wholeheartedly with New Democratic Party policy and thought that: "Ed Broadbent, Ian Deans and Les Benjamin acted inappropriately", and if she said she was not satisfied with our conduct during the strike, I say to the Parliamentary Secretary that I do not believe for one moment that Mrs. Ford would have written that letter. I also do not believe that Air Canada would have paid one iota of attention to it because the complaint is so trivial.

That is why this is such an important matter. This letter was clearly sent to the Minister because it was from one Conservative to another, asking that certain action be taken to punish someone for doing something to which they are entitled. I suggest to the Parliamentary Secretary, as I would to the

Minister if he were here, that the obligation of the Government in this regard is to assure that every Crown corporation, every agency of the Government and every Department of the Government understands the rights and freedoms that are enjoyed by every Canadian. No agency, including Air Canada, has the right according to any statute to discipline an employee for having exercised his or her legal rights. That understanding goes to the very nub of what is wrong in this case.

I do not want to leave the impression at all that I think the Minister of Transport knew personally that this was happening. I have never said that and do not believe it to be true. However, this letter is clearly both of a business and personal nature, given the reference to their meeting. Therefore, I suggest that when such a letter is sent to the Minister, his officials or personal staff should bring it to his attention. Furthermore, I believe that when Air Canada received a copy of that letter from the Ministry officials it would have automatically assumed that this letter would have been seen by the Minister—since it was addressed to him and contained personal references—and he would have authorized that it be sent to Air Canada for action. That is where the buck must stop.

When this letter was sent, it should have been pointed out that according to the information contained in the letter, the attendant named therein simply exercised her right as a citizen of Canada to be critical, pass judgment, or make comment about the actions of the Government, Parliament or the actions of individual Ministers.

**Miss Carney:** While on the job?

**Mr. Deans:** The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Miss Carney) asks: "While on the job?" Yes. Let me quote the Minister again, in case the Minister of Energy did not hear it the first time. The Minister said:

—Air Canada has no policy that prohibits public contact employees from discussing politics, religion or any other subject with customers.

Quite clearly, if there is no such policy then the woman in question did not violate any policy. If there is such a policy, it would be in violation of the Charter of Rights in any event. The Government should consider this matter, with all of its ramifications, as well as its implications.

This is not a matter for the collective agreement, nor a question of whether someone can be disciplined for violating the collective agreement. The collective agreement in no way addresses this matter.

**Mr. Forrestall:** Absolutely incredible.

**Mr. Deans:** The collective agreement does not address this matter. This concerns a fundamental right of every Canadian, whether or not there is a collective agreement.

**Mr. Forrestall:** I suggest you are using an individual for another purpose. Sophistry is what it is.