

Adjournment Debate

● (1810)

Air, rain-water and milk samples continue to be checked on a regular basis to ensure there is no continuing risk to Canadians. More detailed analyses of the samples collected in the intensive monitoring program have been conducted. The Minister of National Health and Welfare has assured the House that radioactivity levels in Canada are at or close to those present before the Chernobyl accident. Of 350 imported food samples tested to date, 25 have been refused entry to Canada because they do not meet the stringent Canadian screening limits.

The Department of National Health and Welfare publishes each year an account of its environmental radioactivity monitoring programs across Canada. This report is presently being prepared for 1986. It will contain the results of the fall-out monitoring program, the Canadian reactor monitoring program and the measurements of natural radioactivity made in Canada for the entire year. Because of the significance of the Chernobyl reactor accident, all of the data collected by the Department of National Health and Welfare following the accident and made public will be included, as well as data provided to the Department by many other agencies which conducted monitoring and assisted the Department by sharing their results. This entails the consolidation of many thousands of measurements and is a major undertaking. It is anticipated that this report will be available within the next month or two.

STATUS OF WOMEN—HARASSMENT OF WOMAN FIRE-FIGHTER.
(B) REQUEST FOR PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, last November the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said at the First Ministers' Conference in Vancouver:

The federal Government, as Canada's largest single employer of women, is committed to ensuring the equality of women within its own workforce. We trust others will be encouraged to follow suit.

He outlined the federal government work plan for women in the *Dimensions for Equality* document. The case of Bobbi Stadnyk does not reflect any such commitment and most certainly does not set an example for the private sector. The refusal of the Minister responsible for the Status of Women to come to her defence is a denial of the Vancouver commitment as well as the Charter, in my view.

The experience of Bobbi Stadnyk, a fire-fighter for Transport Canada at the Regina Airport, demonstrates that as an employer the federal Government is guilty of allowing blatant sexual harassment of a woman who had the courage to become one of the first women fire-fighters in Canada. Bobbi served for four years as a term employee of Transport Canada, during which time she was subject to continuous harassment from her male co-workers. Her fire truck was deliberately polluted with Raid insecticide with the full knowledge of management. Her picture was pinned up on the dartboard and her fellow workers threw darts at her image. Her male counterparts took liberties by engaging in bum slapping. Bobbi Stadnyk was allowed to work for a year and a half in a dangerous operation in a mask

and uniform that did not fit her. Not only was a blind eye turned to the intolerable sexual harassment she was receiving, but her very health and safety were being jeopardized. The negligence on the part of her superiors in Transport Canada is inexcusable and unconstitutional.

Bobbi Stadnyk did not quit. She was not beaten down by the abuse she was subjected to. Finally she was promoted to full-time and put on probation. She became pregnant and went on maternity leave, which is her right. However, three days after returning from maternity leave this tenacious and brave woman found herself fired. Upon reading her personnel record she discovered it had been doctored by additions after she had signed it.

The case of Bobbi Stadnyk has been investigated by three separate bodies, Transport Canada, the Public Service Commission, and the Human Rights Commission. All three investigations found in favour of Bobbi. Yet over a year has passed and she has not received full reinstatement, back pay and damages.

On March 1 I asked the Minister responsible for the Status of Women to take a personal interest in seeing that the case of Bobbi Stadnyk was brought to an equitable conclusion. I was astounded when she refused and would only commit herself to "developing further policies in this regard". It is very hard to understand why the Minister charged with being an advocate for women would refuse to intervene in this case. This is not an isolated incident. It is part of the systemic discrimination which women often suffer in non-traditional jobs. The Minister has a responsibility to use her influence to ensure justice for Bobbi and to provide a positive example for all other women in the same position.

● (1815)

Bobbi Stadnyk is still fighting for her job. Negotiations with Transport Canada are dragging on. Although Transport Canada has admitted liability in the circumstances, compensation offers are unsatisfactory. She wants and deserves full reinstatement with back pay and damages.

I ask the Minister again to personally intervene in this case to ensure an equitable settlement for Bobbi Stadnyk and the women of Canada. Anything less will make a mockery of the Government's stated commitments to women as stated in *Dimensions of Equality* and of the credibility of the Prime Minister. When will the Government live up to its commitment to women starting with its own federal employees?

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, all Members know that these types of cases are difficult for both sides. I suppose it will be so as long as we are human beings. There are always two perspectives.

However, I would advise Hon. Members that both the Public Service Commission and Transport Canada have conducted an investigation into Ms. Stadnyk's complaint. They have concluded that although the Department had a legal right