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## **Standing Committee on the Status of Women**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Monday, March 29, 2010**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Hedy Fry**



## Standing Committee on the Status of Women

Monday, March 29, 2010

•(1530)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.)):** Pursuant to Standing Orders 110 and 111, we have a certificate of nomination of Suzanne Clément to the position of coordinator, which was referred to the committee on Thursday, March 4, 2010. As you well know, the committee has 30 days within which to deal with this issue, so we are just within our timeframe.

We have present today, Suzanne Clément, *coordonnatrice, chef d'agence Bureau de la coordonnatrice*. We have Havelin Anand, director general of the women's program and regional operations directorate. And we have Cindy Paquette, director of the corporate services directorate.

We have the CV, and I hope all the members have it, which was sent to us by the minister's office in keeping with the rules.

We will give Madame Clément 10 minutes within which to present with regard to the position of coordinator. Then we will open it up to questions and answers.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément (Coordinator, Head of Agency, Office of the Coordinator, Status of Women Canada):** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll give copies of my notes for the interpreters.

[Translation]

I welcome this opportunity today to introduce myself to the members of this committee and to respond to questions you may have regarding my experience, skills and vision as the newly appointed coordinator at Status of Women Canada as of December 14, 2009.

[English]

I am a graduate of the University of Ottawa in political science. I have been a member of the public service of Canada for over 30 years. I've occupied a wide range of executive-level positions in that time, for over 20 years, in areas of horizontal policy initiatives, directing large national contribution programs, strategic communications, and in key liaison roles, such as corporate secretary.

I'm very honoured to have been given this new responsibility and I intend to carry out the duties of my position to the utmost of my abilities and experience. I am also very pleased to be working with the team at Status of Women Canada.

As you all know, our mandate is to achieve equality for women. It is to promote the full participation of women in the economic, social, and democratic life of Canada, in particular by removing barriers for

women and for women to participate fully in the economy and our society.

Moving the equality agenda forward is a shared responsibility. Our minister and many of her predecessors have pointed out, many times, that it is not something that any single department or agency of government can achieve on its own. It requires the establishment of solid partnerships and collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders within and outside of government. This includes working with other federal departments and agencies and other levels of government, as well as non-governmental organizations, voluntary sector organizations, and the private sector.

[Translation]

One of my key goals over the coming months and years is to strengthen the influence of Status of Women Canada to strategically advance, in line with our *raison d'être*, the status of women and girls. We also have a significant role to ensure broader gender considerations are understood and taken into account in federal legislation, policies and programs. I want to build on the work done over the past decades and increase our capacity to influence priority setting at different levels.

In more concrete terms, I want to ensure that we, as an organization, are sitting at the right tables and at the right moment, to influence key recommendations and decisions being made, especially when these decisions can affect the status of women and girls.

•(1535)

[English]

Across federal organizations, I want our work to positively influence and challenge what others do, especially on government-wide initiatives and priorities. Given our unique perspectives on a wide range of issues affecting women and girls, and the types of networks we have forged over the years, I see Status of Women Canada as a facilitator and an incubator of ideas to move issues forward. I see our organization helping to bring the right players to the same table. I also see us contributing to the quality of information and analysis needed to make informed decisions.

Gender-based analysis represents one of the most important processes to influence priority setting and funding decisions to support gender equality. But as the standing committee has pointed out over the years, and as the Auditor General found in the spring 2009 audit, GBA has been unevenly implemented across government since 1995.

Building on the GBA action plan, which was tabled with the public accounts committee, I intend to widely promote the use of GBA and its integration into institutional processes. Work is well under way in many departments and agencies. I see Status of Women Canada playing a leadership role and a challenge function, and providing our federal partners with the advice and support they need to achieve results.

I will also continue to work with other GBA champions, in particular those in the three central agencies, to further develop our understanding and expertise of how gender-based analysis is best implemented and monitored.

At the program level, I want to make sure we are effective in achieving our objectives through the grants and contributions program under the Women's Community Fund and the Women's Partnership Fund. In the short couple of months since my arrival at Status of Women Canada, I have already witnessed the high level of interest and commitment of the NGO community across Canada to work with us in removing barriers to women's full participation in Canadian society.

Given that many of the issues women and girls face are horizontal in nature, we will continue to develop partnerships and leverage the efforts of other departments, levels of government, NGOs, and the private sector in the delivery of our programs.

Over the years, I have gained a solid understanding of the machinery of government and of how the decision-making process functions. I have also been placed in positions where I had to play a convening role and work across government departments to advance key files. I know that I can build on my experience and skills to fulfill my current duties.

[Translation]

In regards to values and ethics, I can assure the members that I adhere to the public service competencies expected of a head of agency, which include a commitment to excellence, accountability, and service with integrity and respect.

Thank you for allowing me this brief presentation. I am at your service.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Madame Clément.

We will begin our questioning. As you know, the first round of questions is seven minutes, and it includes questions and answers.

Committee members, as you know, you are here to assess whether you agree or believe that Madame Clément is fit, because of her academic background, her experience, etc., to fulfill this very important role. You may ask her questions with regard to that, to policies, or to things that have to do with the mandate she is going to be asked to fulfill.

It is out of order to ask her questions with regard to her personal... belonging to any political party, to what her personal donations to parties are. You are to stick only to the qualifications and competence, and to the duties and her ability to fulfill those duties.

So begin, Ms. Simson.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

And thank you, Ms. Clément, for returning. You were here earlier, but we didn't get a chance to talk to you at that time.

I'll get right down to it. I visited the Status of Women's website—and that outlines the mandate of the agency quite beautifully—but neither I nor my staff have been able to access any type of job description for the position of coordinator.

Your opening statement went a long way towards letting us know what you wanted to do with the job. On the other hand, is there a formal job description? If so, could you provide the committee with a brief overview of what the coordinator role entails, and of any particular skill set you will be bringing to the role that will enhance the agency?

● (1540)

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** The selection process for this position is not the traditional process whereby a position is advertised with a profile, but I can tell you what I know are the responsibilities and the roles of the position. There is certainly the responsibility of meeting the government's objective in the delivery of the grants and contributions programs. It's delivering on the results of the programs but also ensuring that all the accountability measures and all the requirements under the Financial Administration Act are respected in the delivery of that program. There is also the responsibility of ensuring you are the accounting officer for the full budgetary allocation of Status of Women Canada, so the full amount of \$30 million approximately. For the agency, I have to ensure I have the proper financial systems in place to be able to respond to the use of those funds and the properties.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** Ultimately you are held accountable.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Absolutely.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** For that \$30 million budget?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Yes, absolutely.

Another area of responsibility is the implementation of gender-based analysis across the federal government. A third area of responsibility is to gather information that will allow us to make informed decisions to assist our colleagues across federal departments and agencies and other organizations and institutions in Canada to make informed decisions about the situation.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** And that's across the country?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Yes, that's right.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** So pretty much like a little CEO, as it were, for the agency?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** It is, yes.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** With respect to carrying out that mandate, how effective do you believe the agency is going to be now as we go forward fulfilling the mandate and doing what it is that you want to get done, that you see as a goal, in light of the government's decision to close 12 out of the 16 regional offices? If it's a cross-country effort, 12 out of 16 is a fairly high percentage, wouldn't you say?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** The answer to that would be on how effective the 16 are to begin with, and I'm not going to try to evaluate or answer to a decision the government has made. But I know that having an office—

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** Excuse me just one second. You had absolutely no input into that decision?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** No.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** None at all? So you're not consulted. Okay.

Would that normally be a part of the role of the coordinator, to give some feedback on a decision?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Possibly, if it's requested. But I wasn't there at the time, so I wouldn't be able to respond to that.

But to respond generally about regional offices, because I've managed many regional grants and contribution programs and other types of programs, when I was secretary general of the National Transportation Agency, we were responsible for the delivery of all the subsidies across the country.

If you don't have a critical mass within an office, enough personnel, you're not providing a better service because of proximity. You need to be able to have enough people working together in an office to ensure you have an expertise, that you have training opportunities and a transfer of knowledge.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** But this represents 75% of the offices, which I would suggest is a fairly high percentage.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** But I've looked into the historical information, and I think some of those offices were down to one person. So to have one person in a location wouldn't necessarily create a better service.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** When you say "some", how many? You said some maybe have one person.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** I think there were two offices. I don't have the specific information. I'm sure we can get that.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** Would you be able to provide that at some point?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Certainly, the numbers. Yes.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** That would be great.

We've heard testimony from the...and maybe this is something you're not involved in, but I would suggest you probably are. It's something the minister has been working on, promising an action plan for Canadian women, and she announced the three pillars of what would be an action plan over a year ago. Are you currently involved in that process of developing the action plan, and if so, can you tell the committee when we might expect the actual plan?

● (1545)

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** There is a plan. On my arrival, I was informed that the action plan is moving forward and making progress on the three pillars in helping women achieve—

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** But is there a plan, a written plan, like the economic action plan? You could read it. Is there anything in writing that this committee could look at to see if perhaps—

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Well, the RPPs, the report on plans and priorities, of the organization focus the priorities on three pillars, which are the achievement of economic security for women—

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** But pillars aren't a plan. By definition, they're a firm, upright support for a structure. The structure in this case, I would think, would be the plan. She announced that they already had the three pillars and then was going to produce a plan. I was just curious if there was a plan in progress.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Well, the plan is always focusing the actions of the government in the three pillars of action, if you prefer.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** Is there a plan, like a written plan?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** I think if you look at the recent budget there were some very concrete measures on violence against aboriginal women, and that certainly is an outcome of the work that was done in the action area of reducing violence for women. So it is informing actions of the government as we move forward.

**The Chair:** Ms. Simson, your time is up.

I will go to Madam Demers.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Clément, ladies, thank you very much for being here today.

Ms. Clément, I do not have any doubt as to your skills or the job you have done so far. I am more interested in your convictions. Everyone knows that I tend to be quite frank and honest in our discussions here. I want to know whether we will find an ally in you or whether you stand behind most of the ideas expressed by the government.

I do not want to rehash things that have already been decided, but I would like to know what you think about the Canadian firearms registry. I want to know what you think about family planning, women's right to choose, as someone who has studied international development. I am interested in hearing your thoughts. Could you give me an answer, please?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** It would not be appropriate for me to comment on a government policy or to state my position. Senior officials are called upon to give advice and to implement government priorities in concrete terms.

I can, however, speak to the issue of maternal health and initiatives that the government is going to undertake. NGOs and officials from a number of countries, who met recently in New York, reacted very favourably to Canada's announcement that it would make maternal health a priority at the G8 and would increase funding in that area.

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** The response was positive until these organizations found out that family planning and women's right to choose were not part of the initiative. That was when their reaction changed.

I respect your decision not to state your position on these issues. But you are well aware that Status of Women Canada no longer provides funding for core research, advocacy or lobbying for women's groups that used to receive funding from you.

Given those excluded areas, how do you plan to gather the information you talked about earlier, to ensure that gender-based analysis and gender budgeting are carried out, while ensuring that we have not come this far for nothing and that progress continues to be made? Right now, we are taking steps backwards on all fronts, whether in terms of international or global organizations or the UN. So how do you expect to make progress if these organizations are not doing the core research, which can give us the tools to go farther.

• (1550)

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** A number of organizations do research. Within the federal public service, Statistics Canada is constantly doing research. We have a number of organizations...

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** I am sorry to interrupt you, Ms. Clément, but Statistics Canada does not do research for Status of Women Canada unless Status of Women Canada asks it to. No research has been done in the past ten years because Status of Women Canada has not asked for any. I hope that you will take a different approach and that you will ask for research to be done. Regardless, it has to be done in cooperation with another department. Do not rely on Statistics Canada: it does not do core research that specifically targets women.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** It does the research with financial support from the departments. I have just started meeting with people from certain departments in Ottawa in order to round up the funds needed to update the *Women in Canada* publication. The last version is from 2005. I looked through it and was impressed.

It is really important to have sets of data that are comparable. Currently, it is difficult to discuss issues related to women because, for one thing, the data are from various researchers, various sources. And that makes it difficult to do a comparative analysis. We want to be able to publish an updated version within the next year. The response I got from the departments was favourable. They see it as a worthwhile tool, which will be instrumental in the gender-based analysis of the departments.

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** I am very happy to hear that. Thank you, Ms. Clément, for making that effort. It is very important.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Ms. Demers, there is also the matter of information sharing. Once we have the information, it is important to share it, to make it accessible. That is one of our priorities.

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** I want to know whether you will be a little more efficient in responding to funding requests. Some groups submitted their application two or two-and-a-half years ago and have still not received a response. There is now only one office for Quebec, and obviously, there is no more staff to meet all the needs out there. People are not getting a response.

I would like to know whether they will get responses soon, whether groups will be able to find out what they have to work with. Can you ensure that once the responses are ready, they will be sent out quickly? That is not the case now.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Ms. Demers, there are two types of funding requests: one is through the Women's Partnership Fund and the other is through the Women's Community Fund. I am truly not aware of any projects where the application was submitted more than two years ago and no response was sent out. If that is the case, I will definitely follow up on that.

Usually, when any project is submitted under a call for proposals, a response is sent to the group as soon as the process is over and projects have been selected. Projects are chosen based on merit, not the applicant.

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** But that seems to play a role in some cases.

[English]

**The Chair:** The time is up.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

[English]

**The Chair:** Ms. McLeod.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Madam Clément, for joining us today, and also for sharing with us your experiences and your résumé for this position.

First of all, and importantly for the record, Madam Simson was talking about the restructuring of the regional offices, and I think it's important to recognize that this was many years prior to your time. It wasn't imminent around the time you came here; it was many years prior.

Also, of course, we all recognize that the minister is ultimately responsible for the \$30 million. Of course, you have a role—

• (1555)

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** As accounting officer, yes.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** —as chief accounting officer, but it is the minister. I think for the record it was important to put that clarification in place.

I would like to focus on a couple of areas. You've held numerous positions within the federal public service. First of all, if you look at your previous experience and the short three months you've had in this new role, can you tell me about the connections you're making in how that experience is going to help you with the job you've taken on?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Certainly.

Yes, I have held quite a few positions in the federal public service, and almost every opportunity brought on something new. With the accumulation of experience from one position to the next, you always realize the extraordinary learning you made in the previous assignment and how it becomes beneficial in the position you are holding now.

When I look at the Status of Women Canada and see the foundations that will allow me to hopefully progress on our mandate of achieving equality for women, I would say first that I arrive with a very solid knowledge of how government works, how decisions are made in organizations, and how all of my colleagues in different departments work and prepare for providing advice to their leaders and how they work with organizations. That certainly facilitates our ability to be able to determine at what point and where we need to work with them, to possibly influence them or challenge them in how they look at new policies or new programs.

I've delivered a number of national grants and contributions programs, so that's not a learning curve for me in arriving in this position. That helps.

I've had to manage regional offices.

For the youth employment strategy at HRSDC, I was hired at a time when the youth employment sector had a very small staff, with about a \$20 million program at the time, essentially managing the stay-in-school strategy with the provincial governments, which was coming to an end. At that time there was a 20% unemployment rate for youth, so there was definitely a need to act and act quickly. In doing so, HRSDC did not attempt to deal with the situation on its own. We went to all of the federal organizations and said that governments working in communities were part of the solution. We created a horizontal table. It was probably one of the first horizontal program initiatives in government. I created a network across departments; we developed horizontal objectives. I make it sound easy; it wasn't easy. I think it was a major success in delivering what ended up being a more than \$300 million program two years later, in the grants and contributions.

I have a very strong financial background, so the learning curve there is a lot less. I have worked with NGOs, probably for the better part of the last twenty years, in government. Knowing the NGO community, knowing how communities function, and knowing how important communities are in achieving any of the objectives we want to achieve as a government is crucial in advancing the work of Status of Women Canada.

Then there is just learning, with experience, how to recognize and to seize opportunities. We know that the policy development process is not a perfect, theoretical process; there are many sources and initiatives and ideas that come together, and at some point an opportunity opens, and if you are ready to move forward with it, you usually are able to build successes. That's how I hope to be able to prepare my colleagues in various departments to get to understand what impact they are having on women in Canada, and with what initiatives, and how they can change those initiatives to have a greater impact and a greater understanding.

• (1600)

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** So there is work experience that you bring to this table, but sometimes what we do outside of work also

provides opportunities and skills and knowledge. I was noting that you were with the Montfort Hospital as a member of the quality assurance committee. Are there connections in learning and skills that are transferrable to this role?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** I started doing community volunteer work when I was about 12. I come from a small rural area, and I was the first youth who decided to organize my colleagues in the town to try to get some recreational facilities because we had nothing except for the corner store as a place to meet.

I've always continued to participate on a voluntary basis with communities. I think people have to take ownership of solutions, and I think most communities are quite good at doing that. My current work at Montfort Hospital is in the context of a member of the quality assurance committee. This is a new approach, that hospitals in Ontario have to have committees that provide advice to the board of directors and the management of the hospital on the initiatives they are undertaking to ensure the quality of their patients' care.

So yes, I get to see the functioning of an organization that is very different. Running a hospital is very different from running a federal department. But at the same time I'm seeing that a lot of the learnings I have gained in the public service are also beneficial to bring to the hospital environment. So there is always learning across organizations. You see things in a very different perspective when you sit around a different table.

**The Chair:** Irene Mathyssen.

**Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you so much for coming back and sharing this time with us. I think it's very important for us to get to know you, and I'm very pleased that you have afforded us that opportunity.

I have a couple of questions. I wanted to pick up on some of the things you said in your presentation. You said, "I see our organization help to bring the right players to the same table." While I realize it's Foreign Affairs that is in charge of the constructing of the maternal and child welfare piece, we haven't heard very much from that in terms of detail. I wonder if Status of Women Canada will have a voice in the development of whatever policy or whatever the Government of Canada brings to the table, because it is women and children, and SWC has the expertise. So what role...or have you heard anything in regard to a role for SWC?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Yes, absolutely. I think there are two levels of input that would come from Status of Women Canada. Our minister has already been in discussion with her colleagues on a policy level on this question. As far as the officials are concerned, as soon as the announcement was made we immediately made contact with our counterparts at CIDA and DFAIT to offer our help and demonstrate our interest in being part of the work in developing the government's objective and initiative on that front.

At this stage we've been providing and sharing information with them. The working group has not yet been embarked upon. Once the policy specifics are announced we will be at the interdepartmental working table with them to provide information and advice and to gain an understanding of what the initiative will be.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Thank you.

Have you had the opportunity to meet with some of the women's organizations and the NGOs that Status deals with? There are lots of them, and I wondered if you had those discussions. What kind of relationship do you have? What kind of relationship would you like to have? What are you working toward?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Having been there for only a couple of months, I've had to spend a lot of time on understanding what the organization does and what its inner workings are, as well as learning our initiatives as much as possible, but I have had an opportunity to meet with many of the NGOs that are delivering national projects for us, particularly the partnership projects.

When I was in New York at the UNCSW, I did have an opportunity to meet with 15 or so of the organizations representing the labour sector, and we had a very good conversation. We mutually agreed that we would continue to have meetings and periodic get-togethers to exchange information.

I am planning on visiting the three regional offices, and I've asked them to set up meetings with NGOs and influential organizations on women's issues within their regions so that I can meet with them as well to discuss their issues and learn from that process.

In my view, probably the key source of information that will be coming in to Status of Women Canada is to learn the issues that people are facing when they're working directly with women in the communities.

•(1605)

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Thank you.

You expressed concern, and we've all felt concern, in regard to the Auditor General's spring report about GBA and how it was unevenly implemented across government. I think that report clearly revealed the work that needs to be done.

You say you intend to widely promote the use of GBA and its integration into institutional processes, and that the work is under way. Could you describe your part of that work, what's been achieved to date, and what plans you have in that regard?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** As you know, six departments were audited by the Auditor General, and those six departments have an action plan that they must be implementing in a period of one year. The three central agencies are also part of that implementation plan.

A positive surprise was that five departments contacted Status of Women Canada and said that they would like to do this too. Even though they were not forced to through the audit, they wanted to embark on it as part of the first year, so quite a large number of departments are now part of the implementation of the action plan.

The immediate deliverables are that by June 2010, this coming June, all departments will have established their frameworks for gender-based analysis, meaning that they will have identified and

staffed institutional mechanisms within their departments that will ensure GBA is fully integrated into the decision-making process at the various levels of the organization. By June 2010 these departments will also have to identify one initiative within their organization that will be used as a measure to see how well this new framework functions and to identify whether there are areas that need improvement.

A self-assessment process goes on throughout this implementation. Within the next two months we at Status of Women Canada will develop an evaluation framework for them to use to evaluate themselves as they progress on the implementation of GBA. They will also have identified a champion at a very senior level within their department. That champion will form part of a committee across government, which I will chair, and we will meet on a regular basis to make sure that the implementation of GBA remains a top priority at a senior level within departments.

I will have continuing and regular discussions with my colleagues at central agencies. Last Friday I was in a meeting with the GBA champion at Treasury Board Secretariat, and we're reviewing the progress both in departments and at the central agency. I was very pleased to see that there is a challenge role that certainly has been played on a few occasions by the central agencies. I know for a fact that there were submissions that were asked to go back to the drawing board before they got on the agenda, and it was the central agency playing that challenge role.

•(1610)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madam Clément.

We will move on now to the second round. The second round is a five-minute round, again, for question and answer.

I'll begin with Kirsty Duncan.

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to all of you for coming.

Madam Clément, could you share with us the process to your being appointed? Is it to make people aware you're interested? Is it an open competition? How does this take place?

**The Chair:** I'm afraid that question is out of order, Madam Duncan.

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Sorry. Okay, I apologize.

Am I allowed to ask if there was an interview or is that...?

**The Chair:** No. You're not allowed to ask about the process of how that appointment occurred.

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Okay, then I will skip all of that.

I apologize.

Since you will be heading this agency, it's important for you to understand the recent history, and indeed the history, of it. So I will come back to the 12 out of the 16 sites. What is the average size of the regional office in terms of people and funding?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Currently, the four offices? It's four or five employees per office, depending on the vastness of the region they're covering.



**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Prior to the cut, what was the average size of the office? Was it the same?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** I think there might have been one or two offices that were larger. Do you mind if I defer the question to someone who might have been there?

Havelin.

**Ms. Havelin Anand (Director General, Women's Program and Regional Operations Directorate, Status of Women Canada):** I wasn't quite there when the cuts took place as well, but I think there were a number of regions that I would call service stations where, in addition to the regional office, for example, there might have been a bigger office in a place like Moncton. But in Halifax, say, they might have hired one or two people, or in St. John's they might have hired one or two people. So in that way the region, as a whole, had more people to service the population in the region as opposed to the numbers or the complements in individual offices.

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** I'd like to know what the rationale was for the cuts? How many people did we lose? What programs were lost?

Do we have adequate coverage now? Or is this something we need to look at going forward?

It's about the number of people, the programs lost, and how you feel about this.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** I wouldn't be able to answer questions on the rationale. Firstly, I wasn't there, and it was a decision of the government of the day, so it's a policy decision.

But what was lost? There were no programs lost. The reduction in the regional offices came at the same time as a reconfiguration of the terms and conditions. The government's objective was to reach out and help women directly in the communities. So there was training of the employees that took place simultaneously on the new terms and conditions that had been developed.

With the reduction in the office locations, the office developed, at the time, very proactive training information sessions across the country to be able to go to different locations, more so than the 16 that would have been covered by the region.

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** I guess I'm struggling with...there was a 75% cut and no programs were lost.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** There was no 75% cut.

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Well, 16 sites down—

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Offices, sorry.

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Yes. There seems to be—

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** No, the programs were not lost. What we're talking about are points of service. So all of these points of service would be asked to provide the same service. They were all delivering the same program. They were then centralized.

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Okay, with this drop of 75% in employees, they were asked to carry the same services and nothing was lost?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** It's not a 75% reduction of employees. It would be 16—

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Sorry, sites.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Yes. So when you close a site, you reinforce another site to be able to deliver the services of that region.

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** And you will be able to tell us how many people were in fact shifted. Is that...?

• (1615)

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** I can certainly provide the committee with how the staffing—

**The Chair:** I'm going to intervene here.

Because we heard that neither Madam Clément or Madam Anand were there before that, it would be interesting, because I think it's a very valid and pertinent question, if we could perhaps get something sent from the office, Madam Clément, that tells us how, with the loss of three-quarters of the sites, one is able to provide programs, which is what I think Ms. Duncan is asking. So if you can provide us with this information, we can then distribute it so that everyone can see it. It's pretty difficult for you to answer it not having been there.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** No, but I do know that some of the measures...because of course I looked at that when I arrived, to try to understand the dynamics of the offices and that.

I think the other important point to remember is that the use of the website was not adequate at the time. A person could not go on the website and find all of the information to apply to Status of Women Canada. So the creation of the website and the investment in putting all that information on the web, in fact, has made the program more accessible to those who are not in those larger centres where you would have regional offices.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Duncan. I think we've exhausted your time.

Ms. Wong.

**Mrs. Alice Wong (Richmond, CPC):** Thank you for coming.

I'd like to have Sylvie to steer the first minute first.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC):** This will take only a minute. I will then give my time to Ms. Wong.

[English]

**The Chair:** It's up to you. You have five minutes. You can divide it whichever way you like.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I apologize for being late. I just came from Trois-Rivières, where I met with women from the women – citizens, in action project. They were giving a progress report midway through the project. Status of Women Canada supported the project. I was pleasantly surprised to see just how much it has helped women on the ground. They are underprivileged women who come from extreme poverty and who were given the tools they need to better their situations.

I would like to hear about Status of Women Canada's relationship with community agencies on the ground. Are things going well? How many women have received help?

[English]

**The Chair:** Madam Boucher, that is not actually within the scope of this discussion. The discussion today relates specifically to Madam Clément: her ability to do the job and the requirements that she has to do the job properly. So relating programs and how they detail really doesn't fit in here. That could be done at another time.

Currently it is about Madam Clément. She is the scope of this question again at the moment.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I pass to Madam Wong.

**Mrs. Alice Wong:** Again, I'd like to clarify the record. There are no cuts, but rather reconstructing. That was the reply to the question.

If our question is out of order, all the other questions should have been out of order. But rather than reconstructing, cuts—

**The Chair:** Ms. Wong, excuse me, that was a little bit of a shooting match you just threw at the chair here.

I have not allowed anything outside of the scope. I am sitting with the book open right here on every single piece of what is the scope of this meeting today, and it was not out of order.

So, please, unless you wish to challenge the chair, do not say you think the question was out of order.

If you have a question, please ask it.

**Mrs. Alice Wong:** No, no, what my question is, Chair—

**The Chair:** No, Madam Wong, I am speaking now.

Please continue to question Madam Clément.

Thank you.

**Mrs. Alice Wong:** I will, but just to—

**The Chair:** It's not up to you to tell other members what they should and should not ask. If they're out of order, the chair will tell them.

**Mrs. Alice Wong:** Yes. What I'm saying is, if anybody challenges me, or when we clarify certain points, it is out of order—

**The Chair:** When that happens I will deal with it, Madam Wong.

So, please, ask your question.

**Mrs. Alice Wong:** Okay. I hope you'll be fair.

We have, in the last few weeks—

**The Chair:** I am fair.

Are you challenging the chair, Ms. Wong?

**Mrs. Alice Wong:** I'm not.

**The Chair:** Well, then, continue to ask the question, please.

**Mrs. Alice Wong:** I just want to get the record straight.

**The Chair:** Well, I don't know what record you're straightening, unless you're challenging the chair.

**Mrs. Alice Wong:** Okay.

We have in the last few weeks studied women in non-traditional occupations and have spoken to numerous groups. Many of them have highlighted the difficulties for women and the barriers they've had not only getting in the door, but then remaining in their chosen field.

You have reached a very high-level position in what may have been considered a non-traditional occupation. Many of the women we have spoken to in the last few weeks have told us that the lack of role models and/or positive images of women in non-traditional occupations has a great influence.

Can you perhaps tell us of your own experience and how you think you can improve, and then what solutions the Status of Women Canada may bring to the problem?

• (1620)

**The Chair:** Excellent question, Ms. Wong.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Yes, I have been following some of the presentations you've been receiving. They're very interesting presentations and good witnesses.

Absolutely, having role models is extraordinarily important. My first appointment as an executive in the public service was as secretary-general of the National Transportation Agency. I was 29 years old and I was the first woman to be appointed in that role. It was quite an accomplishment, but at the same time a challenge.

I know that role models are important. I think the greatest contribution it brings is that it builds that level of confidence, the self-confidence, that an individual needs to be able to take on challenges, move forward, and have the courage to go into non-traditional areas.

I was very fortunate. I had a role model when I was very young. My mother was my first role model. I come from a family of entrepreneurs, and she and my father both equally owned our family businesses, which were varied, some of them in non-traditional areas. We had construction development companies and we had health services, so it was quite mixed. There was no hierarchy in their relationship. Both were workers, decision-makers, and leaders in the process. So I was raised in an environment where you never would have questioned whether you should do something because you're a woman or a man.

In terms of what we can do at Status of Women Canada in this field, I think there are quite a few things that we could embark on as an agency, and in fact I have begun some of that already.

I think we're starting to get a very good feel for the barriers. We've funded some very interesting projects at Status of Women Canada. Women Building Futures, for example, is having some great success, or CATA WIT, or the Hypatia Association. There's quite a series of projects that we're now funding to look at developing innovative ways or best approaches, best practices, to try to get more women interested in the jobs, into the jobs, and then staying in the jobs.

I think we have tools within the federal government that we can certainly improve on and work with. I think of the human resources sector councils, for example, at HRSDC. There's funding of over 30 sector councils there. When I worked there, I recall working with them very closely. They're usually very responsive to working with the government. I want to meet with them, particularly the ones that have shown a keen interest in working at improving the intake of women in their industries. The mining sector, the IT sector, the construction sector, and the environment sector are all sectors where they recognize that they need to be recruiting and retaining women within their organizations.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madam Clément. The time is up.

I will now go to Monsieur Desnoyers.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Thank you, Madam Chair. Welcome, Ms. Clément.

I want to begin by asking how many employees Status of Women Canada has.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** There are 89.

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** How are they spread out throughout the country?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** There are five people in Edmonton, five in Moncton, five in Montreal, and the rest are here, at the Ottawa office, where four or five people work solely on the Ontario region.

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** I looked at your résumé and noticed that you were often involved in restructuring, reorganization and major budget cutbacks. You seem to have done quite well in all of those areas. Since you are familiar with the policy of the current Conservative government, I would like to know how you see the next two or three years at Status of Women Canada with respect to restructuring.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** For the time being, Mr. Desnoyers, I have no restructuring plans. Internally, we are looking at current priorities and ensuring...

• (1625)

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** The current minister has not asked you to do any restructuring, is that right?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** I was not given a mandate to restructure.

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** Okay, excellent.

Given your role, I would like to hear what you consider pay equity.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** It is ensuring that people who engage in work of similar or equal value receive similar or equal pay.

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** Is that a priority for you in the years ahead?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** It will certainly be a priority for my colleague at the labour department. What I mean is that we support our colleagues who have policy mandates. I know that the labour department has been working on this issue for a number of years now.

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** The way I see it, Status of Women Canada should have an important role in that. After all, it is an area that has allowed women to make progress over the past 50 years. I would not

say that there was a major cut for federal employees, although we know there are two systems. One has been subject to cuts, and the other has not.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** It is definitely an important issue for Status of Women Canada. Since there is a greater representation of women in Canada's population, there are few issues that Status of Women Canada would not consider important.

What I am saying is that Status of Women Canada's role is the same on this front as on a number of others. We will no doubt be there to ensure that our colleagues in other departments use the tools available to them to take inequities into account when making recommendations.

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** Earlier, you said that you had met with labour groups. You mentioned a dozen or so. What did they say to you?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** They talked mostly about their relationship with Status of Women Canada in previous years. The discussion was very positive. It was in relation to the meeting in New York, and we met in a cafeteria. The conditions that year were not the best because of renovations.

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** Did they express their demands?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** No.

We agreed that we would meet soon to discuss things of a slightly more serious nature. The purpose of the meeting was to get to know one another. Everyone introduced themselves and talked about their role and their experience with Status of Women Canada in recent years.

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** Do you plan to do the same with other types of organizations, ones that advocate for women in the community with respect to access to employment, daycare, access to non-traditional jobs, violence against women, training and so forth?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Yes, absolutely.

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** You did not mention it. That is why I was wondering.

Lastly, how do you plan to do that?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** In our work...

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** What I mean is, there have been...

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Monsieur Desnoyers, can we wrap up this last question, please?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** Go ahead.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Yes, absolutely.

In our work, we, and especially me, are often in the public arena, taking part in meetings and forums. I intend to be very active throughout the country.

So I will certainly have the chance to meet with these groups. My door is not closed to anyone. On the contrary, I want to learn from every stakeholder.

[English]

**The Chair:** Ms. Mathysen.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to come back to your presentation. You said you want to be sure that SWC is effective in achieving the objectives for the grants and contributions under the Women's Community Fund and the partnership fund. As you know, there has been some issue with the changes that have been made in how funding is provided and what it is dedicated to. We've certainly heard from women's organizations and groups in that regard. I have to be frank that I have some real concerns about that shift.

What is your understanding of the objectives of the Women's Community Fund and the Women's Partnership Fund? Do you foresee any changes to these objectives? I'm thinking of changes connected to the kinds of discussions you've had with NGOs and women's advocates. I'm sure they've made their cases, or will make their cases. Is there a possibility that we'll see a shift?

• (1630)

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** In terms of the objectives of the program, it's definitely about helping women directly. It's about working with communities to address the barriers and the obstacles that are keeping women from achieving economic security, about helping women get out of situations that are violent or that may present a situation of violence. And it's about trying to increase the level of women in leadership and democratic positions in all facets of society.

No, at this point I have no intention of revisiting the objective. I certainly did not receive a mandate to do that, and I wouldn't have any reason to want to do that at this point. I've seen a lot of the projects that have come in. There are many, many community organizations that have interesting and fascinating ideas and innovative ways of trying to remove those barriers and obstacles. In particular, we can share that learning and the good experiences and the good practices with other organizations across the country. I think there's still a lot we can achieve and learn from the approach that we're using now.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** One of the issues that we've heard back from women's organizations is that these projects, as worthwhile as they are, are very short term. They're funded for a year, or perhaps a bit longer, but just about the time that the project seems to be showing some positives, the funding ends. Organizations have to go back to the drawing board and come back with something else or resubmit. They find it very stressful and time-consuming, because they're in the business of helping women and are not particularly adept at constantly having to generate proposals. Is that something you'd be willing to take a look at in terms of the problems of short-term projects?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Well, I'm very pleased to say that the program that I've just taken on has a 36-month horizon for projects. It's one of the few terms and conditions in the government that is allowing us to do multi-year projects. Unless the group has specifically identified one year as being the period within which it wants to undertake a project, there would be no reason for us to be limiting it to that period. We have quite a number of projects that are two and three years in length.

To go beyond three years would be outside of the transfer payment policy that is now in place with the Government of Canada. We're hoping that the blue ribbon panel recommendations may provide even more flexibility on that to make them even longer, but certainly within our program, groups can receive funding over a three-year period.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Monsieur Desnoyers—

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** All right. Very quickly, with the action plan, we've heard about the three pillars, and it seems that it was full-blown when you arrived. It sort of emerged from the head of Zeus fully alive when you arrived. I wonder if you could put some flesh on those pillars in terms of what we can expect—any ideas.

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Of what's not already out there, you mean?

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Yes, it seems very bare bones. Identifying three things you want to do doesn't say how you're going to get there.

I know, I probably have no time left for the answer.

**The Chair:** I would suggest that you have no time for that answer because it's now 18 minutes over the 5 minutes. Perhaps Ms. Clément might find a way to sort of work that into some other opportunity she has to speak.

Ms. Brown.

**Ms. Lois Brown:** Perhaps we can wrap that into the question that I have for you, Madam Clément.

I come from a business background. I work with business plans. So often when a business plan is presented it gets so complex that people lose sight of what the business plan is really all about. The message has always been to keep it simple. For many of the business organizations with which I have worked, that's always what they stress: keep your plan simple and focused.

What we've seen here is a business plan that's come out of Status of Women. We've got the three pillars, such as economic security, but a program underneath that would be Women Building Futures. Under Ending Violence Against Women, we see \$10 million being contributed. So these programs are in place.

What I heard from you earlier—and I think you used this statement—is networking across departments. First of all, what we see is a fundamental overarching direction from the government in all areas where it wants to move forward. We're going to have to work with health, women's issues in health, women's issues in labour, women's issues in Indian and northern affairs. People look on them as silos, but this philosophy has to go forward in each one of those areas. So my question to you is, do you believe that your past experience in working intergovernmentally or interdepartmentally is going to have an impact on how you move this plan forward, and if so, how?

•(1635)

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** Yes, absolutely. Having some experience in working horizontally in the federal government will certainly serve in trying to do it in Status of Women Canada. You learn how to attract people to the table and how to present issues to be able to get the best response and the best participation.

As you say, the action plan—and I will weave in part of the answer to the previous question in the response—provides us with a very clear focus, so when I meet with a department to talk about what they're doing, I can bring the focus to violence against women and what they are doing to address that situation.

When we develop partnership initiatives, and these are quite extensive partnerships that come together, we're able to say—in economic security, for example, or women in non-traditional work—that this is the area we want to work with, this is what we want to try to address. We know retention is a major issue. One of the pieces under the action plan on economic security—a key element—for us would be the retention in non-traditional work. So it allows us to say no to things that are less responsive to that focus.

And it's true in the programs and in the research. No organization has enough resources to excel in every possible area of its mandate, but what it does for us is say that we need to be doing more work, we need to be doing our own research, gathering information that already exists in those three areas. In my view, if we can achieve success in those three targeted action areas, we're going to be progressing considerably on achieving equality for women.

So yes, the past work will help in convening tables across government.

The other thing that will be extremely useful is that, having moved around in about 12 different organizations in government, I know what kinds of programs they're dealing with; I know what they're working on. I was involved in the social security reform at HRSDC in the early nineties, so I'm very familiar with the LMDAs, the labour market development agreements, that are transferred to the provinces. Work needs to be done there. I know they're doing a lot for women, and a part of their clientele is women, but I think we need to bring out the information more visibly. We need to gather aggregated data from there and understand it better to see what changes might be needed—even delivery of those funds at the provincial level.

So all of that together will certainly help in better responding and advancing the work of Status of Women.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

That's it. You still have 10 seconds, unless you think you can get something in, in that time. Thank you.

Before we close, normally the chair asks a question if the chair feels there is something compelling she wants to ask. And I do have one small question. You did mention—and I agree with you completely—that you need to do your own research to be able to understand and to set some sort of indicators as to how you are getting where you are going and how to understand those areas.

How do you believe you can do that, given that the research arm, which is a substantive one at Status of Women Canada, has been completely demolished? Status of Women Canada used to do its own research and now it doesn't any more. So how can you achieve that goal of doing your own research if you no longer have a research arm and since you don't have regional offices to give you the information on the ground? We know that women in different provinces face completely different barriers and challenges. How do you see yourself being able to get a handle on that plan? Are you getting where you're going? Are you doing the right things? Those are some of the things I wonder if you could comment on. I know you're not allowed to say you want a research arm, or you want this, so I'm not going to put you into that box, but how do you see yourself creatively achieving those things without those two major tools? Do you have an idea of how you can do that?

•(1640)

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** My understanding of the discontinuation of the research arm that you referred to, Madam Chair, is that it was a funding program that funded initiatives of research outside of Status of Women Canada. Internally to Status of Women Canada, as part of the strategic policy function and strategic policy group we have, I do have some research funds that we and all federal departments use to ensure we can get information, access to Statistics Canada studies, or we can ask them for specific questions within surveys that are being done. That's how I hope to be able to advance the use of that money more so in the future. We can partner with other research activities that are going on for a very minimal amount by adding a women's focus. So if HRSDC is undertaking a research—

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Madame Clément. I'm not cutting you off; I didn't want to take five minutes, as I only wanted to get that quick question.

I think Ms. Demers would like to remind you about something you said you would provide at the beginning.

Nicole.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** If possible, I would like a copy of the gender budgeting document that you are going to prepare.

You said that you were in the process of preparing a discussion paper to evaluate what is being done. Could we get a copy?

**Ms. Suzanne Clément:** You mean the evaluation document, right?

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Yes, thank you very much.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Madam Demers.

I want to thank Madam Clément, Madam Anand, and Madam Paquette for coming along today.

We have only 45 minutes left, so I really want to move quickly on this one. We're going back to our study, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), on increasing the participation of women in non-traditional occupations.

We have two witnesses today. Theresa Weymouth is the national coordinator of the education program from the Canadian Auto Workers Union, and Professor Kathleen Lahey, faculty of law, Queen's University, is a frequent guest here.

We have 10 minutes for presentations. We'll have to stick to the time, otherwise we won't have enough time. Probably one round is all we can do in terms of questions.

Ms. Weymouth, you can begin ASAP. Thank you.

• (1645)

**Ms. Theresa Weymouth (National Coordinator, Education Program, Canadian Auto Workers Union):** Thank you, Madam Chairman, and good afternoon, members of the committee and fellow witnesses.

Thank you for inviting the Canadian Auto Workers Union to this study on increasing the participation of women in non-traditional occupations. My name is Teresa Weymouth, and I am an electrician. I hold a construction and maintenance 309A licence. I am also the CAW national skilled trades education coordinator. This part of my job requires me not only to be aware of barriers to women entering non-traditional occupations but to influence change and retention through education.

I thought I would start with my journey as a woman to become a licensed electrician. I had worked for several years as a production sewer at one of our big three automotive plants, and while I was expected to stay in this well-paying position, as my mother had before me, I really wanted something more challenging and fulfilling. But before I could even start an apprenticeship, I needed to look at my education. I was in the same position as many women are today: I lacked the senior-level maths and sciences from high school. So in 1985 I took a leave of absence from General Motors' trim plant and upgraded. This gave me not only the requirements I needed to enter into an apprenticeship but the confidence to know I could succeed.

In 1986 I started my electrical apprenticeship, six weeks after my second daughter was born. My father-in-law reluctantly gave me an apprenticeship when I quit my job with General Motors. As an electrician the job pays well and is portable, I can work in many different sectors of industry or provinces, and I get to use my mind as well as my hands. All these are great factors for becoming an electrician. But the reality is, I was lucky. I was given the opportunity. If my father-in-law had been a carpenter, I probably

would have been one too. After years of being told I couldn't, shouldn't, or would not like it, I now hold a construction and maintenance 309A licence. This was a 9,000-hour apprenticeship, requiring three intakes of schooling: basic, intermediate, and advanced. I worked in the construction field in a small non-unionized shop on residential and commercial properties. I was the only woman there, let alone female electrician.

In 1993 I was hired at Chrysler's Windsor assembly plant as a maintenance electrician. This was my second opportunity. The CAW negotiated a third shift at the minivan plant, requiring several hundred new hires. At Chrysler I worked with new technology such as robotics, plcs, assembly lines, and diagnostics. Again, education was a key part, with each new application or system requiring additional training. I was one of five women in skilled trades in the plant, out of 580 men total.

My third opportunity came in 2005. I was appointed to the position of the CAW national skilled trades education coordinator. In this role I have been able to develop several initiatives directed at skilled trades and technology awareness for women. Take our CAW 40-hour women's skilled trades and technology awareness program, launched in 2001, which has been introduced to over 500 women from our automotive production lines. This course includes an overview of the apprenticeship process in Ontario, an introduction to mechanical, numerical, spatial relations, verbal comprehension, and reasoning. Throughout our workshops the woman are asked to assemble and program robots, are introduced to the basics of electrical wiring, and health and safety, are given an overview of trade classifications, and participate in mock interviews, all delivered by women journeypersons and mentors who network and share their challenges and solutions to overcoming barriers. Women are absolutely changed by this program. We begin to hear "I can do this" as they move through the program.

Suddenly women are aware that they have, or should have had, options. Choice: it is one thing to choose not to go into a particular field; it is a whole other situation not to have even been given the option. I have just arrived from our first ever Saugeen First Nations women skilled trades awareness conference, which partnered with the CAW. This three-day program was adapted from the CAW 40-hour women's skilled trades and technology awareness program, with one major difference: this was a mother and daughter conference. Through the years of delivering the CAW program, we have repeatedly heard participants state that they wished they had been aware of the career opportunities in skilled trades long ago. It was wonderful to watch mothers and daughters explore and attain new skills, options, and choices.

•(1650)

As you know, the economic downturn has affected the automotive industry. Even though we have negotiated numbers for apprenticeship, we have very few members actively in apprenticeship today. This has not stopped the CAW from continuing to offer different initiatives to skilled trades awareness.

There are still barriers today, and I'll name a few. There is very little structured encouragement for women working in a non-traditional occupation; the title has a negative connotation in itself. There's a lack of information that is readily available, and a lack of women mentors and networks. There's a negative attitude to skilled trades as being a dirty and labour intensive job. There's the lack of opportunity. Too many employers are not establishing apprenticeships any more, and that needs to change. There's still an attitude that women need to have a thicker skin to work in skilled trades, instead of better legislation and implementation that will allow every Canadian the right to work in a harassment-free environment.

The CAW has initiatives for all these barriers: the CAW women's skilled trades program, inclusive language, high school presentations, networking, mentors, education, harassment-free environments, equity reps, and women's advocates.

Take a moment to look around this room, this building, your home, malls, our schools. Every building has been built by skilled trades—every road and highway. Our whole infrastructure is built by skilled trades. And women are not a part of it. Why?

The question is not whether there are barriers for women trying to enter into non-traditional occupations. That question has been asked and answered many, many times. Yes, there are barriers. The real question is, how will we increase the participation of women into non-traditional occupations?

We give them opportunities and choice by providing supports. Provincially, we can make women aware, but federally we have to support them. In my career I was given opportunities and choice, and look where I stand today. We can do great things if we encourage the women around us.

What can the federal government do? We see four things that the federal government could do to increase participation of women in non-traditional occupations.

One is to fix the EI Act. The EI Act should be amended to provide income replacement benefits for the full duration of upgrading and training programs, as it used to be in the 1980s. The current EEITI and SITI EI pilot projects provide such benefits, but they are scheduled to end for claims after May 29. They have too many restrictions and provide benefits to a very limited number of so-called long-tenured workers and a small number of potential trainees. These pilots must be extended beyond May. They must be expanded for access to others, including women who are entering, upgrading, and training for non-traditional occupations, until such time as the EI Act can be amended to make this pilot project for continued EI income benefits while in training a permanent program.

Two is to set conditions for the next round of infrastructure spending. A lot of money is being allocated for infrastructure as an answer to the economic crisis and action plans. The program should

make sure that provinces and employers accessing these funds meet targets for hiring and training women in non-traditional occupations.

Three is to set conditions in the labour market agreement between the federal, provincial, and territorial governments. In the coming years the federal, provincial, and territorial governments will be renegotiating the terms of the labour market development agreements for the unemployed who are eligible for EI and the labour market agreement for the non-eligible, including employed workers not in receipt of EI. The federal government should set targets and monitor the use of these EI and general revenue funds to support higher entrance and completion rates for women in non-traditional occupations.

Last, but not least, is to initiate special projects for women to enter non-traditional occupations within the first nations and aboriginal programs.

Thank you.

•(1655)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Weymouth.

Now, Professor Lahey.

**Professor Kathleen Lahey (Faculty of Law, Queen's University, As an Individual):** Thank you.

I would like to slightly change the focus of the discussion that I gather has been going on in this study project.

I have heard the Status of Women Canada officers speak about the three pillars that will, if properly constructed, lead to equality for women in Canada. I have read the evidence of the Statistics Canada labour market experts giving data on a 20-year frame and how the great progress that has been registered over the last 20 years surely will lead to elimination of discrimination against women. However, I would like to remind people in this room that Canada, as a signatory to the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, has made a very solemn undertaking to eliminate all forms of discrimination on the basis that for decades now it has been internationally and globally agreed that women's disadvantaged status is not caused by one or two or three factors, and it didn't arise just in the last 20 years. It's historically embedded. It's structural. It is long-standing. It is the most intractable form of discrimination that the human race has struggled with, and with so little effect.

I would like to begin my submission to this committee by pointing out that this is a structural issue, and it's a structural issue that predates the industrial period. When industrial workforces were first constituted, as people left the unpaid work of homes and farms and so on, women's work had already been defined for centuries, and it was women's work that followed women into the first factories to do women's work in a place that was economically more efficient for the commercial sector that was arising.

I would like to share with you information that reflects a 100-year frame. The top 10 jobs for women in 1891 were, in order of priority, servant, dressmaker, teacher, farmer, seamstress, tailoress, sales-woman, housekeeper, laundress, and milliner. In 2001 the top ten occupations for women in Canada were clerical worker, secretary, sales clerk, teacher, child care and/or domestic worker, nurse, food and beverage server, cashier, retail food and accommodation manager, and, as a sign of the times, machine operator, in tenth place.

This is not a picture of change; this is a picture of deeply embedded discrimination, which is continually reflected in every statistical account assembled either by Statistics Canada or by other countries in the rest of the world. This is a pattern that has not ever changed anywhere.

Canada used to be at the forefront of leading the way out of structural discrimination, but now, as we know and as is even broadcast in Switzerland and Austria on the radio, Canada has fallen behind, because it's forgotten how to do it.

How do I know what I say is correct? There are four basic indicators that will always surface when you look at the structure of women's work.

Number one is the quality of work. Since 1976, when statistics on this issue were first collected by Statistics Canada, women have had either 69% or 70% of all part-time jobs in the country. A change over the last 35 years over a range of 1% is not change. It's incredible stability, and that's not choice, that's history. It's locking people's feet in cement, I suggest.

The second indicator is incomes. Women still receive only 36% of all market incomes earned in Canada. The private sector is still women's greatest barrier to economic equality. Between 1986, right after the charter came into effect, and 1991, there was rapid growth in that sector: women's share of incomes increased by 3.2%.

● (1700)

Since 1991, however, women's share of incomes has increased by exactly 0.9%—in the last 20 years only a 0.9% increase, from 35.1% to 36% of all market incomes.

Third, there's women's share of unpaid work. Now, that shows real progress. Women started with 70% of the unpaid work in Canada back in 1970, when the Royal Commission on the Status of Women reported. The percentage is now down to 65% or 63%, depending on which report you look at. But it's not going any lower, and it appears to be reversing.

And last, lack of access to non-traditional work is as entrenched as ever and is becoming more entrenched. There is regress going on here, not progress, with the result that it is I think unlikely that

women will ever achieve even a good 22% of all non-traditional jobs.

One of the leading indicators is women's cohort gender wage gap, which, when applied to analyzing the incomes of women graduating from universities, shows that as of 2001, women's wage gap, when women are compared with men graduating from university with them, was higher than it was in 1981. In 1981, the wage gap was 15.6%; in 2001 it had already risen to 18.4%, and it is growing wider. The only question is how much wider it is going to get.

This brings me to the point that was just made, and that is that in the face of all of this overwhelming evidence of the deeply seated structural economic disempowerment of women in Canada—doing close to two-thirds of all of the unpaid work, doing a huge number of hours of paid work to little effect, and receiving just barely more than one-third of all market incomes—the federal government does not have in place a single national labour market adjustment program on the basis of gender, nor does it appear to even believe that such a thing could be conceptualized.

I draw your attention to the list of items that have been dedicated to the current iteration of the economic action plan, the \$41.9 billion for fiscal year 2010-11. The infrastructure spending alone is heavily, overwhelmingly, aimed at the construction, engineering, heavy manufacturing, primary industry sector of the economy. The corporate income tax cuts send an even larger subsidy off to the corporate sector. And if a demographic analysis is done of who's going to receive that money, it's very clear that at the very best, women will get 22% of the infrastructure funding, a percentage allocation that will paradoxically actually increase wage gaps between women and men, because if you give women who right now have a 36% share only 22% of \$9.6 billion, that's a very large number, and it will drag that 36% down. The same will happen with corporate income cuts.

I have put the single-parent UCCB tax cut item in this presentation to help put into perspective how to look at budgets, if you really care about the structural, deliberate, systemic inequality of women in Canada. Increasing, for the lowest-income single-parent UCCB recipient, by a maximum of \$168 per child beginning in this fiscal year will cost the government \$5 million, which is 0.0006% of one percentage point of total budgetary dedication, of this \$41.9 billion. Statistically, even though 81% of that money will indeed go to women, it cannot possibly even shift so much as a single grain of sand on the big beach that is statistical analysis.

● (1705)

Those are my main submissions. Other points may come up in discussion, but thank you for listening.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Professor Lahey. You're right on time. Now we'll begin the questions.

This is a seven-minute question round. This means seven minutes, as you all know, for questions and answers. If we can keep them short, we can actually get through the round.

The first one is Ms. Simson.



**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you both, Ms. Weymouth and Ms. Lahey. Both of you had stunning revelations in your presentations, and I want to thank you for that. It was very enlightening and in some cases very depressing.

I want to start with Ms. Lahey. This committee has heard testimony from various witnesses and organizations, and we've been going through the obstacles and the challenges that women face in non-traditional occupations. What specifically do you see as the role of government in effectively addressing them?

We have a pretty good idea of what's happening—certainly, I have gotten more of an education today, based on what you had to say. What should we be doing to support and increase the number of women entering non-traditional career paths? If there's any way, I hope you can be specific; there are a lot of generalities.

**Prof. Kathleen Lahey:** I can be, I think not surprisingly, specific, because the big barrier here is the most invisible one, and that is the unpaid work that is still assigned to women by virtue of their gender. I agree that the pillar of domestic violence relates directly to it, because domestic violence is one of the biggest factors that keeps women in a situation in which they may spend more time than they'd prefer on unpaid work responsibilities, and their very identity may end up becoming beyond their control to shape it.

But the universally proven way to deal with this is to lift the burden of unpaid work from women's shoulders. It would actually take only an increase in the degree of sharing with men and with society to change that burden completely, and it could be done for less money than is being spent for an awful lot of other things right now.

I will give you a quotation from a very recent Statistics Canada study that looked directly at the very question you're considering, and that is this. The report said:

Mothers in the labour force in Quebec multiplied rapidly after its \$5 [a] day universal care system was introduced in 1997.

Between 2001 and 2004, about 60% of all day care spaces added in Canada were [added] in Quebec, which has 43% of all Canadian children registered in day care.

During the same period of time, young women's rates of participation in post-secondary education and paid work in Alberta fell, as the number of child care spaces there remained inadequate and their birth rates increased.

Now, I'm an advocate of women's choice, and I believe that solving our future demographic employment labour market problems by isolating women and saying “choose to have more children” is not the right choice. I think Quebec shows the way, and the choice should be between affordable, accessible child care, supporting both the education phases of life and the working phases of life, and the choice, if someone can afford it with or without the assistance of government, to stay at home and care for their children.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** Thank you.

We've also been examining—and this, again, is for you, Kathleen—and have included, I believe, CEOs, senior executives, and in the case of your profession of law partners as still being non-traditional occupations or careers for women.

Quite recently, I read in a series of articles with respect to women in law—I believe it was in the *Toronto Star*—about how so many of them who are striving for the brass ring of a partnership found themselves hiding illness. They take vacation time for cancer or other serious surgeries and they keep it a deep, dark secret. In other words, they're not comfortable coming clean to get ahead.

Is there any way, based on the fact that you come from that profession, that we could address things such as this? I'm sure it's not just in the law profession. I'm sure it happens with senior bank executives and with the bigger corporations. I'm sure that women feel that same way too, that they can't confide in their employers.

• (1710)

**Prof. Kathleen Lahey:** I think so, but the failure to feel free to confide in employers is very much a function of the fact that most of the young women in that age group have incurred school debt upwards of \$50,000, to get that law degree or that MBA while they're still in their twenties. They know, because they can see very clearly that Canada remains a deeply discriminatory society, that they have to incur that level of debt in order to safeguard their own personal futures and their own ability to choose.

The withering away of pay equity, the privatization of human rights commissions, and the lack of serious systemic gender-based analysis of all policies produced by governments directly implicate a woman's ability to go through school on any kind of an equal basis, to graduate with an equal amount of debt, or to earn an equal income.

Right now it looks as if there are more women than men in the schools. This is actually reversing, as we sit here and speak right now.

While the women are in school, they have to incur huge amounts of debt. They earn less during the summer. They come to school—all study programs—with less money to begin with. Then when they go to work they may earn exactly the same during the articling year, but the discrimination in terms of pay rate sets in quite quickly as well.

So they're paying back bigger loans with smaller incomes, and they're falling further and further behind. But they will hide the toll it is taking on them because it is better than what it was for many of their mothers.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. That's it, Ms. Simson.

From the Bloc Québécois, Monsieur Desnoyers.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am going to share my time with Nicole, of course.

My question is for Ms. Weymouth. I have to tell you that much of what you said impressed me. It is pretty well what we dream of hearing in this committee. I am thinking particularly of the implementation of apprenticeship training programs. Does that apply to all sectors: aerospace, hotels, fishing, CAW's trades program?

I would also like you to tell us how you went about breaking through the barriers of harassment and discrimination, whether through policies on employment equity or pay equity. Your apprenticeship training program, which seems to be at the heart of CAW's program, targets women, in particular, in order to give them access, if I understand correctly.

Furthermore, you make suggestions to the government on how it can solve some of these problems, so as to give women access to training, namely, through EI replacement benefits, when women have to take training courses.

If I understand correctly, you have managed to negotiate all this with employers. I would like you to elaborate a bit more on the various points I mentioned.

[English]

**Ms. Theresa Weymouth:** Initially this program was brought on in the 1990s. A study was done to address the barriers for women. As we know, in Ontario we lost equity, but we still said that's important. As the labour movement, that's still very important to the Canadian Auto Workers, who have women.... And remember, it's non-traditional to work in the automotive sector itself. We still aren't 50% of the population. It's like 25% of the population, just to work as a production worker.

Now even to have access to non-traditional occupations within the actual automotive industry, to allow us to have even higher pay.... The negotiated pay for the women on the production line is very good, a decent wage with benefits, but of course as a skilled tradesperson, there were other things that we were looking for and I was looking for. I was looking for portability of skills. I was looking forward to being able to use my mind and my hands versus the production where it was all physical. And of course the pay is increased because of it.

Through the CAW we have not only done the 40-hour women's skilled trades and technology awareness program, but we have evaluation at the end of every program. Through those programs we have evolved this program over the last nine years. Well, we actually have delivered it ten times, twice in one year.

We've evolved this program into what it is today, the hands-on workshops, the being able to—they're actually drilling and cutting and sawing and soldering. We have them actually physically going and doing things. Some people have never picked up a drill in their lives. We show them how to hold it. In the robotics, we wire a light switch and receptacle.

All of these hands-on projects certainly transfer to the women the idea that while they couldn't do it before, suddenly right there is instant gratification. We bring them step by step, which is acquired knowledge. The whole trade is acquired knowledge. We tell them this is acquired knowledge. Nobody knows how to be an electrician at the beginning of the process. That is why it takes 9,000 hours.

It's a step-by-step process that, given time, given some support system—which the CAW does provide—given the opportunity.... They negotiate for the actual numbers in the plants to actually put women in there and give opportunities, and then of course we have wage parity. That's huge. So there are lots of opportunities. It would

be very beneficial to work with more unions that are addressing equality rights for both men and women.

● (1715)

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Weymouth, some unions are still resistant to women taking up non-traditional jobs. I know you have done some outstanding work in terms of the auto trades, but some unions are still resisting. Some unions are very macho; they have a lot more men and very few women, and the women have a tough time integrating into these environments. I am thinking of the construction and electricity industries. In Quebec, Hydro-Québec has had some problems. Women were trying to get jobs, and they were totally squeezed out by men. It is very tough.

How do you explain your success in the auto trades? Can what you learned and what you did be transferred to other labour units? Are you in contact with them so you can share your information? I think what you have done is outstanding. It is critical to have women who do what you are doing and who offer training programs as you do.

[English]

**Ms. Theresa Weymouth:** The first thing I want to clarify is that the 309A licence I hold is a construction licence. I did get it in construction.

There were many barriers. One of the most common barriers is there are no washroom facilities. For some reason, you can't have a job because there isn't a washroom. The reason is because we're actually building the entity—a house or whatever—so there is obviously nothing there. I was just the volunteer to go and get the coffee, and I would use the facilities then. It was a very simple solution. It was not that I shouldn't work in a particular area. It was just that you had to adapt a little.

I had young children. It was six weeks after I had my second daughter that I found myself on a construction site. Yes, construction is inevitably very long. You may be working, by contract, so many hours, 14-hour days, or whatever, because you base your hours on whatever the contract stipulates. I did change my work environment. My children stayed up later at night—they were infants, of course, so I flipped their schedule around—so when I came in the door, I still had quality time with them. They slept when the babysitter was there, not when I was there, so I paid to have a babysitter. I paid a lot of my money to babysitters.

● (1720)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I'm sorry, Ms. Weymouth, but we're about a minute over time on that question. Perhaps you can continue in the next one.

Ms. Brown.

**Ms. Lois Brown:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you very much, ladies, for being here. There's a great deal of information that we can learn.

Ms. Weymouth, particularly, I've really enjoyed your presentation.

My first question is, do we have a value for men's unpaid work? If I were to look at the amount of work my husband does around our house—he probably does dishes more often than I do.... Is there a value that has also been put on the unpaid work that men do? I'd be interested to know that.

I just spent this past weekend with the Newmarket Chamber of Commerce. They had their home show, and I had a booth there. I met an extraordinary number of enterprising women who own their own businesses. I like to use the example of Ingrid, who started a chocolate company called Fraktals, and if any of you have not tasted Fraktals, you've not had chocolate, believe me. She started her own business out of her home, and knocked on doors to sell these chocolates. She has made a phenomenally successful business.

I know that 47% of the new businesses started today are started by women. In fact, I met with Mark Adler last week, who has the Economic Club of Toronto, and he commented on the number of very enterprising women who are now part of the economic club because they're just becoming so successful.

I think of two twins from Newmarket, Heather and Beth. Heather went into mechanical engineering, and actually graduated from Queen's University. She's now working as a quality control engineer for a company that provides parts for the nuclear industry. Her sister, Beth, who is a technician for pianos, has started her own business. She has worked for people in the past, but now has her own very successful business in Toronto.

Theresa, my question to you is, first of all, how many women who come out of these programs are starting their own businesses, because there are extraordinary opportunities for success and really good money when they finish? Or are they more risk-averse, so they look for jobs on the line where security is more the issue they have?

Professor Lahey, you talked about larger student debt for women. Can you provide the committee proof of this? In my experience, women pay the same for tuition as men do. Young women who go to university are paying exactly the same amount in tuition when choosing courses, so I don't understand why student debt is higher at the end. I've hired young women and I've hired young men, and for the same job I pay them the same amount as university students. So I'd like to see proof of that, if you can provide that to the committee.

If you could both comment, please....

**Ms. Theresa Weymouth:** The information that would actually get you into a skilled trade is usually not being provided in high schools. We have the Ontario youth apprenticeship program in co-ops, but it's very specific. It's a huge industry in itself, so the counsellors do not necessarily have all of the information readily available. There is nothing like a college or university having a brochure that identifies every trade classification.

The fact that women are now becoming aware of and learning about this information.... The program we put together is definitely transferrable to any other sector, or whatnot. However, the women who are taking this particular course are very excited about the idea. It's as if there's suddenly an awareness of the options available.

As for taking risks and developing and becoming entrepreneurs, my own daughter is online right now doing self-help for women. She is a second-year electrical apprentice in Fort McMurray, Alberta, right now. I have another daughter who is a welding inspector. We live and practise what we preach and are definitely risk takers, as it's a risk to be in a non-traditional occupation. Every skilled tradeswoman I know is driven by an awareness that this needs to get out so that more...because there is wage parity. Women wonder, what's the difference. If they are going to work 40 hours in a job, they want to get paid maximum benefits for it. It's as simple as that. We're at an economic stage right now where women are doing it for the money and the security.

• (1725)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Professor Lahey, there is a question on the value of unpaid work by men, so you may want to address that as well, because I think it would be right up your alley.

**Prof. Kathleen Lahey:** On the question of paid and unpaid work, it's not the valuation of the unpaid work that matters. There are some ways in which that figure is used but not in the context I am talking about, that being the structural barriers to women's paid work and their involvement in non-traditional work.

The problem is that there are only 24 hours in a day. I do believe that women and many men have worked hard to overcome that very concrete chronological barrier. Certainly I have wished for a duplicate 24 hours to run alongside my initial allotment.

Time-use budgets demonstrate very clearly, however, that when it comes to the unpaid work in family or family unit that has a disabled elderly person or child or other person needing some sort of care located, that work will be assigned to women. That's where the imbalance comes in.

There are certain irreducible minimums that Canadians expect human beings to meet in their relationships with each other, and the overwhelming burden falls on women's shoulders. Women, we could say, have to duke it out with their partners to make them assume that work. It has not been working out too well lately. There are numerous studies and reports on this by Statistics Canada and others, which I can provide to the chair if needed.

As to the question of how there could be discriminatory results in terms of debt or earnings or both, I think the easiest way for you to get a good overview of that would be to take a look at *Maclean's* magazine of March 8, 2010, and an article by Hans Rollman, where he outlines three or four publications by Status of Women Canada, some academic journals, as well as Statistics Canada demonstrating why economic discrimination against women begins at age 16. That's clearly statistically identified.

So as young women attempt to contribute to their own education, they already must deal with having less economic power than young men. I can't say why, and maybe it's just a Queen's thing, but I have seen that young men will often get higher levels of funding from their families, and young women will feel they have to go out and borrow more and take out insane lines of credit and credit cards with really high interest rates and other things. So the effects are compounded as every year goes by, and in four or five years, it's not hard to get to that 30% gap.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Professor Lahey.

Those seven minutes are up, so we now move to Irene Mathysen.

May I also refer to one piece of work? It's the indicators on unpaid work done by Status of Women Canada in 1997. The indicators were set as a way of measuring the minutes and hours in the day of unpaid work done by women, compared with that done by men. The set of indicators is pretty clear and won't change very much. There was a follow-up report on it in 2001.

Ms. Mathysen.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you very much for your presentations. It's good to see women in non-traditional fields like economics and as an electrician. I'm delighted that you're here.

I'm going to throw out some questions. I have so many and I know I'm not going to get to all of them.

The Employment Equity Act recognizes the principle that employment equity means more than just treating people the same way. Equity means that sometimes there have to be special measures and accommodations in order to make up for the barriers. I'm just wondering what special measures are needed to encourage women to consider non-traditional jobs in the auto sector, in any sector.

• (1730)

**Prof. Kathleen Lahey:** I'll just make one quick response. A very respected human rights officer in India, after holding that position for years, decided that actually the number one biggest thing that could be done in India to solve that problem, and not just in non-traditional employment but women's access to education, health care, etc., was more women's washrooms. She was perfectly serious about that.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** I understand that. I worked in a factory or two myself.

There's been some discussion about the reality of pay equity or no pay equity in Canada, and the fact that we don't have a national child care program, nor an affordable housing strategy. I found it interesting that the three pillars of Status of Women Canada included economic security for women. What part do those things that are missing play in terms of economic security for women and ultimately their ability to access non-traditional jobs?

**Ms. Theresa Weymouth:** Child care is a huge barrier for women entering non-traditional occupations. If we don't change our environment for women and start introducing and allowing them the opportunities without putting up huge barriers—and it's a huge barrier when they have to choose between quality child care and a job, or multiple jobs that would pay minimum wage—then everybody loses in that situation. If we had a good child care system, a good EI

system, we would be able to support people in making choices, getting quality jobs and sustaining them, and then in turn giving back to society.

**Prof. Kathleen Lahey:** Statistically it's absolutely clear. For about five years now the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the OECD, has repeatedly pointed out that Canada is the most efficient in the industrialized countries in terms of providing adequate levels of child care, and this pertains directly to a key driver of the economy as a whole. Canada is facing a demographic shortage of human workers who are trained and know how to do the work they're supposed to do. The problem is that women, who are so heavily concentrated in part-time and fragmented work, cannot literally find any more hours in the day if they still have that invisible unpaid work that they have to do, which consists of very large components of care work. A smart economic strategy would be to turn infrastructure and other emergency funding into the national creation of child care resources similar to those in Quebec, so that women can intensify their labour activity and increase productivity right here in Canada without having to put pressure on people to just give everything up and have babies.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** So that would connect with the infrastructure spending. If we had more social infrastructure, we wouldn't see this incredible imbalance.

Professor Lahey, you mentioned that women account for 69% to 70% of all part-time workers since 1976, and these are very insecure types of jobs, of course. Last week we had witnesses who suggested to the committee that this was by choice—women choose to work part-time. I'm wondering if you have a comment in that regard.

**Prof. Kathleen Lahey:** Certainly the concept of choice reflects an implicit assumption that other choices can be made and that the person making the choice is rational. I think it is rational to a certain extent in a country that has made it clear it has absolutely no concern for how women are going to survive. If women can't get on employment insurance, then let them go on social assistance payments and lose their life savings, lose their house, whatever. That level of disregard I think also underestimates the value of true choice. I think women's involvement in part-time work is purely adaptive, and it has been statistically demonstrated that when some of the barriers have been taken away from women, as in Quebec, they immediately move out of part-time work into more income-productive work. What's been happening is that women who work part time have been choosing to work two or more jobs to make ends meet because they just can't get the flexibility they may need in their work lives.

•(1735)

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** It's interesting that the government's recent report to the United Nations with regard to the status of women featured what was going on in Quebec very heavily, not the rest of the country but what Quebec was doing.

**The Chair:** Are you finished, Irene? You have about ten seconds more, which I don't know you can do anything with.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Okay.

Professor Lahey, you said very early that the private sector is the greatest barrier to women's advancement. Could you elaborate?

**Prof. Kathleen Lahey:** That's right. The less regulation there has been, the less equality has been mandated through legislation, the more pronounced these imbalances in hiring have become. That's why since 2001-02 wage disparities in the percentages of women in various employment sectors have been deteriorating, not improving.

**The Chair:** I want to thank Professor Lahey and Ms. Weymouth. But before we do, I think Monsieur Desnoyers wanted to request something.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** Very quickly, Madam Chair. I would like all the documentation that CAW uses to make non-traditional jobs more accessible to women. That would help the committee with its work.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Monsieur Desnoyers.

You will send us that, Ms. Weymouth?

**Ms. Teresa Weymouth:** Sure.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We also have to remind Professor Lahey to send any information she has on unpaid work. And I have asked Julie if she would send you the unpaid work indicators put out by Status of Women Canada in 1997.

The meeting is adjourned.

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