

dynamic institution that will continue to benefit the region. I am still very proud of what we did in Saint-Jean, despite the Parti Québécois government and its ideology.

• (1055)

Third, I was asked if people in Hull agree. In fact, people in Hull think about what is happening in their community. They know how to evaluate the role of government, how to use it and how to enjoy one of the lowest unemployment rates and one of the highest rates of income in Quebec. They have voted Liberal for decades because they know which party has best served their economic, political and social interests.

[English]

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, during the last election the Reform Party ran in many ridings where civil servants would be affected by layoffs. The Reform Party was very honest and said we do have to downsize government. There will be some changes.

The Liberal Party ran against us in those ridings and said: "That brutal Reform Party. We would never do that. The poor civil servants. We would protect their jobs". The word that comes to mind is hypocrisy.

The minister is going to downsize his department. He is quoted in the Ottawa *Sun* this morning as saying that job cuts based on race or sex are illegal according to the charter of rights.

He says that the department recognizes the need for employment equity, respecting the various proportions that exist now and if possible will increase them.

Is the minister going to use this downsizing of the government to try and bring in some form of equity balancing, or is he going to do it by merit the way the laws of the land say he has to do it?

The article suggests that he is asking the department how it is going to do it. Who is in charge? Is it the minister or is it the bureaucrats? I would like to hear his answer.

Mr. Massé: Mr. Speaker, once again these are questions I am glad to answer. In my own campaign in Hull and Aylmer I indicated—the speeches and the transcripts are there for you see—the government would have to be downsized.

I was criticized by part of the electorate but in the end this was not hypocritical, this was the truth. It was told government had to downsize. Knowing the truth, it elected me with more than 53 per cent of the vote in the area. It knew what it was facing and agreed this had to be done.

On the second question, we have here two objectives that have to be realized. The first one is that equity in its largest sense has to be satisfied. There is no doubt that we have to apply equity

when we do any move in government, including restructuring government.

However, it is quite clear, and this is what I indicated to the *Sun* yesterday, when we make an exercise like that in a government, the managers who have the responsibility to manage that department will make the choices according to merit and ability that will keep with them the best civil servants.

There is no doubt also that whatever the categories of people, by sex or creed or colour, merit is distributed very equally in the population and that heads of personnel will come to a result that I am sure will conform to the principles of equity.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): It being 11.00 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(5), the House will now proceed to Statements by Members pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Harold Culbert (Carleton—Charlotte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a safe and efficient transportation system is extremely important to all Canadians regardless of the mode of travel.

A proper transportation system will allow our citizens to travel safely and efficiently while providing the tools to enable our goods to reach our various markets.

As our markets become increasingly global, we will depend more and more on transportation systems to stay competitive both in price and delivery. In Atlantic Canada particularly we need a modern highway system that is both safe and efficient in order to compete in the North American market.

I encourage the hon. Minister of Transport and our government to continue to work with the provincial transport ministers to develop a transportation policy that will meet the needs of Canadians today and for the future.

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• (1100)

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last February the member for Longueuil reported on an advertisement by the Canadian embassy in Poland for potential immigrants from that country to Canada. The ad stated that Polish people would only be required to know English to immigrate to Canada.