

circle of decline, the Government of Canada absolutely had to learn to trust Montreal's resources, to be open to initiatives based on regional consensus and to see its role as a partner acting in concert with those involved in the region.

The coming into office of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and his team in 1984 was to set the scene for a climate of dialogue. The Progressive Conservative Government quickly proceeded to implement in Montreal key management principles it proposed for the whole of Canada. Essentially, these principles sought to replace arrogance with openness, systematic confrontation with the search for consensus, *fait accompli* tactics with new forms of partnership.

The men and women of Montreal, who for years had carefully been kept out of all major decisions concerning them, were somewhat skeptical at first.

Gradually, they began to realize that the principles put forth by Conservative Party candidates during the election campaign were being translated into concrete action, a new approach to Montreal's problems and an in-depth review of the Government's role in regional development.

Thus, in 1985, the Government simultaneously struck a Ministerial Committee and an Advisory Committee on the development of the Montreal area. The Advisory Committee, chaired by Professor Laurent Picard, was given the mandate to consult the local population at length to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the area as well as key directions development should take.

The report of the advisory committee was made public in the fall of 1986. For the first time in the economic history of Montreal it made it possible to set the basis of a genuine mid- and long-term regional development strategy. In its response to the report a few months later the federal Government indicated its decision to establish seven major areas of development for the Montreal region. These seven areas of development are the basis of a strategy aimed at launching the real economic recovery of the region. The strategy is the result of close co-operation by the various partners involved in the economic development of the region. This is definitely not some kind of magic formula imposed from above, but the expressed will of a community which has the full support of the federal Government.

This consensus has now been confirmed in the recent federal-provincial regional development agreement with the Government of Quebec. For the first time, Madam

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

Speaker, a development strategy for the Montreal region has been endorsed by socio-economic development agents as well as by municipal, provincial and federal authorities.

Yesterday the Hon. Member for LaSalle—Emard (Mr. Martin) said:

• (1740)

[English]

"I will keep watching the Government. I will keep watching on regional development. I will keep watching on sectoral development. I will keep watching on social programs". I can tell you that he will keep watching for the next 20 years because the Liberal Party has no strategy except watching. Watching others doing their best for the development of Montreal, and their best for the development of Canada.

[Translation]

Madam Chairman, Montreal is unique in the world. The moment it was founded—nearly 350 years ago—it became obvious that this exceptional site was bound to have a promising future. This archipelago at the confluence of four major waterways was the natural entrance to the continent and one of the main transit ports for trade between the old and the new world. For over two centuries, as a result of such a privileged situation, the region was the metropolis of Canada and its main window on the rest of the world. Eventually Montreal had to adjust to a period of relative decline which radically changed its development prospects. Today, as this period has just ended and Montrealers turned a page, the major challenge is to adjust to a new economic environment and prepare to enter outright into the 21st Century.

Today, we have already taken a historic turn. The spirit now prevailing has nothing to do with the general defeatism that was rampant hardly five years ago. The open attitude, the commitment to consensus, the promotion of new forms of partnership that characterize this Government's management philosophy have been exceptional stimuli for the region.

The 21st Century is around the corner, Madam Chairman. Let us think about this: The number of years to run until the year 2000 is exactly the same as the number of years since the Montreal Olympic Games in 1976.

The decisions made today will determine the status of our resources in the year 2000. Modernizing our industries, developing high technologies, realizing our