

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. When the House took recess at one o'clock, the Hon. Member for Louis-Hébert (Mrs. Duplessis) had the floor.

[English]

**Mrs. Suzanne Duplessis (Louis-Hébert):** Mr. Speaker, please permit me to congratulate you on your recent election as Speaker of the House of Commons and to wish you good luck in your new function. Many responsibilities are given to you, but I am certain that you will respond to them with much dignity and reassurance. Personally, I assure you of my entire co-operation.

• (1510)

[Translation]

It is with great pleasure that I rise in the House this afternoon to make a few comments on the Speech from the Throne opening the second session of the 33rd Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, I rejoice at the course which this Government intends to steer during the coming months. As Michel Roy wrote in *Le Devoir* of October 2: "It is a good speech. It spells both continuity and change." Continuity, because the major themes already featured in the 1984 legislative program remain a priority: national reconciliation and economic renewal; change and something new, because from here on in more emphasis will be put on social policies.

Now that economic recovery is definitely under way and considering that economic conditions are constantly improving, this Government, with its usual sense of fairness, is now endeavouring within its means to further improve on the existing social system, to the benefit of each and every Canadian man and woman.

The proposals in the Throne Speech reflect the realistic concern for justice shared by the Cabinet. Economic conditions now make it possible to address social measures, and this is what we are doing inasmuch as we can.

Mr. Speaker, when I decided to run for election in the riding of Louis-Hébert well over two years ago, my idea was to promote in particular four goals that were of special concern to me.

The first was to have Quebec sign the constitutional agreement and resume its rightful place in Canada, and to see that its rights are respected. The Mulroney Government had promised to work with all Canadians towards national reconciliation.

Within two years, tremendous progress has been made. The *Francophonie* Summit, which I had the opportunity of attending, is indisputable proof that this Government has succeeded in launching open and frank discussions. Before our Conservative Government, this summit which was so important to the French-speaking world never could have been held because federal Liberals would not agree with their Quebec counterparts to determine Quebec's participation. Thanks to the efforts made by our Prime Minister and the Cabinet, that

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first summit was organized and it met with tremendous success. Moreover, we are already planning the second one to be held in Quebec City in September, 1987. The practical results of such co-operation are a subject of no little pride to me as a Member from the Province of Quebec and the Quebec City area.

In that same line of thought, we see in the Throne Speech that this Government is committed to holding constitutional negotiations with Quebec, and that the consultations that have already begun are of utmost importance in the expectation that Quebec will take its rightful place as a full partner in the Canadian federation.

I am therefore highly confident, because past deeds speak for the future. Based on the improved relationship developed over these last two years, I feel certain the forthcoming months will be most promising.

I want now to tell every man and woman in Quebec that I will continue working arduously on that important matter. To me this has been and still is a high priority, and I want to spare neither time nor energy to ensure that our two levels of Government come to an agreement.

My second objective was to work toward helping Canada, as an industrialized nation, take on a leadership role on the world scene. To achieve this, it was necessary to ensure that the elected Government would bring the Canadian economy back on track, promote the expansion of modern and competitive industries, and make technological progress the engine of this modernization. This would be an essential component.

After two years in Government, our record is quite impressive.

Our government has created some 563,000 jobs in Canada since September 1984, a record that no other government has been able to achieve in the past two decades. As a matter of fact, jobs are created at a faster rate in Canada than in any other OECD country.

The unemployment level is lower than it has ever been over the past four years, interest rates are substantially down and the rise in consumer prices has also been held in check.

These results clearly demonstrate that we have kept our promises. Last Wednesday, however, our Government has indicated its firm commitment to promote even more strongly the economic recovery by continuing to stabilize our public finances, taking new trade initiatives and carrying out a reform of the tax system.

My third objective, which has always been and continues to be very important to me, was to ensure a promising future for our young people by creating new jobs. That is why I see in the pursuit of a free trade agreement with the United States a major challenge for Canada. The important negotiations in which we are involved now will make it possible for Canadian corporations to enter a market twelve times bigger than our own, making it necessary for them to become more competitive, again by updating and developing new technologies. We are