

four Progressive Conservative pillars of economic growth: lower interest rates, technology, training, and trade.

First, I would like to discuss lower interest rates. If we want to revitalize the manufacturing sector and create jobs for our people, it is essential that we start to create the conditions which will allow interest rates to come down without destroying our currency or reigniting inflation. The Government says that lower interest rates are not possible. It says that Canada is totally dependent on American monetary policy and that it can do nothing. I disagree. Yes, American interest rates are a constraint; they always have been and they always will be. But no, we are not totally powerless. We can lessen our dependence on the United States interest rates over time without causing an exchange rate crisis, if we put upward pressure on the dollar through a strong export performance and then allow an inflow of job-creating capital. If lower interest rates is the first prerequisite for industrial growth and job creation, the second is a renewed commitment to technological innovation.

If we are to maintain our standard of living and create the wealth to finance desirable social and cultural programs, it is essential that we develop a nationally and internationally competitive industrial base. That means that we must produce, apply and diffuse modern technology throughout the economy in our factories, on our farms and in our offices. We must face the technological challenge and turn it to our advantage. But technology is not going to help us if Canadians are not trained and educated in its use. That is the third challenge facing us: To manage technological change and prepare Canadians who live in New Brunswick and the Atlantic provinces for the information age. We must make sure we are masters of technology, not its servants.

Managing technological change means ensuring that business and labour put in place effective in-house programs to train and retrain their employees in the new technologies. It means using the tax system to encourage such training prior to the introduction of new technology, and defining standards of labour-management consultation. It means working with the provinces to ensure that our education system prepares our youth for technological change.

Managing technological change means amending the Unemployment Insurance Act to allow recipients to upgrade their skills through retraining or experience in the voluntary sector. It means ensuring that women do not bear the brunt of technological change; that they are given the skills and the opportunity to secure true economic equality. What is most important perhaps, managing change means changing our attitude towards growth. It means ending our complacent reliance on natural resources, and shifting our efforts to human resources.

So far I have spoken about training, technology and interest rates. I would like to turn to the fourth pillar of our foundation for growth, that is, trade expansion. Access to foreign markets is an essential element of any realistic industrial strategy. We must pursue that goal vigorously by supporting efforts to begin a new round of GATT multilateral negotiations, by working to create an international framework for trade in services, and by

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continuing bilateral discussions with the United States of America in specific sectors. We must ensure that our industries have the opportunity to compete and the opportunity to grow. But opportunity is not enough. We must also help our companies to seize these opportunities. We must strengthen our export marketing support through the trade commissioner's service and better market intelligence. We must support exports by integrating the services of private and public sector financial institutions; ensure that our tax system encourages greater export trade; work with the provinces to develop regional export strategies; seek to establish export trade zones; use all available policy levers to encourage global product mandates for multinational subsidiaries; ensure better financing and marketing for agricultural and small business exports; and become a more competitive force in the new global environment of trading houses, export consortia, barter and countertrade.

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In short, our goal is to help Canadian industries and producers become first class national and world traders and reliable suppliers of quality goods and services at competitive prices. That is what productivity is all about. That is how permanent jobs will be created. That then is the framework of our strategy for the manufacturing sector, a strategy which puts first things first and a strategy which recognizes that specific policies for specific industries are diminished without a solid foundation for growth in a climate attractive to industrial development. It is a strategy that recognizes that the primary role of the federal Government in economic policy must be to support the efforts of the builders and workers in our society.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Any questions or comments? Debate. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of State for Economic and Regional Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology.

Mr. Rolland Dion (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State for Economic and Regional Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, that is quite a mouthful.

I am pleased to take the floor today, when the House is considering an Opposition motion concerning changes that have taken place and the new direction given by the Government to Departments with an economic mission.

Mr. Speaker, as the House is aware, on January 12, 1982, the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) created the Economic Development Ministry which takes in all Departments with an economic mission. At the same time, a number of changes were made in the Department of Regional and Economic Expansion when the IRDP program was created.

I would like to start, Mr. Speaker, by giving a short history of what the situation was at the time, and I shall then explain why the Government made these changes. In 1974, the federal