

On the other hand, I submit that Canada is lucky to have a vigorous leader and strong leadership. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) is one of our most respected leaders by the international community. The unfortunate thing is that no man is a prophet in his own country and when he returns here all kinds of charges are made against him.

Allow me now to deal with a more interesting matter, the development of the central area of Montreal. I would like to say first that the federal government should increasingly intervene in development and rationalization, especially in the development of the Montreal central area. Why do I say that the federal government should intervene when we know quite well that the development of a city comes under the jurisdiction of the city council and the provincial government which created the municipality? Because when we consider the situation, we easily realize that between 15 and 20 per cent of the urban land in the central area of Montreal belongs to or is under the control of the federal government.

It is therefore impossible to consider the restoration of the urban fabric of Montreal without recognizing the part the federal government must inevitably play in the process. In addition, it is as striking as it is regrettable, when one looks at a map of the downtown area of Montreal, to notice that about 40 per cent of the area is now vacant because the buildings which were there have been demolished or that space is being used as parking lots. I hope that there will be as soon as possible greater intervention by the federal government through its Urban Affairs department, in an effort to remedy that absolutely inconceivable situation where almost half the space in downtown Montreal is standing bare in an area where there is such an urgent and increasing need for housing.

To my mind, one of the things the federal government should watch closely is to limit the commercial zone to the core of Montreal. I feel that highrise buildings, in that part of Montreal, should not extend beyond the quadrilateral bound on the east side by St. Laurent and on the west side by Peel. That district is already studded with skyscrapers surrounded by numerous vacant lots. I am pleased to see more skyscrapers go up in that area, but I would regret it if the business district in the financial centre of Montreal were to extend way beyond that area and if apartment buildings which though old, could be restored, continued to be demolished. In short, why demolish when funds are available, to both promoters and owners in downtown Montreal, for the renovation of those units?

If I were asked what are my priorities, my main objectives for the development of the core of Montreal, I would summarize them in indicating the three following objectives which to my mind are pressing: First the Ville-Marie expressway which extends for almost one quarter of a mile, going downhill, in the vicinity of Vitre street has created a gap which must be filled and that incredible wound must be healed. That gaping void constitutes an almost impassable barrier between the residential part of Montreal and historic Old Montreal; that should be patched up without delay.

On the other hand, it seems essential to me that we continue to reinforce the cultural, economic and historical axis which is

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being developed, starting at Place des Arts, descending toward Place d'Armes. Those who know downtown Montreal are aware that south of Place des Arts is Place du Complexe Desjardins; further south, the federal government has undertaken to erect a number of buildings—Place Guy Favreau—scheduled to begin this fall and further south again is our famous sear, the Ville-Marie highway; right next to it is Old Montreal. Therefore it is essential that this axis be reinforced. In a minute I shall outline the various projects that would enable us to complete this axis which is extremely important for the development of downtown Montreal.

The other important and urgent objective is the vista on the river. We all know that the federal government owns the harbour facilities. As such, it can easily decide to move some harbour activities to Montreal's east end and tear down some grain elevators and thus open a vista on the river which would give Montrealers a very nice view. Those are projects, Mr. Speaker, which I will make every effort to "plug" in the coming months.

I would like to go back to the Place des Arts-Place d'Armes axis I mentioned earlier and it seems to me that in addition to the Guy Favreau Complex which will soon be built there and which will contribute to give back to downtown Montreal its residential look, the key to the development of that Montreal district will be the construction of the Convention Centre. And that Centre could not in my view be in a better location than just above the Ville-Marie expressway, in the very Place des Arts-Place d'Armes axis I referred to earlier. That would enable conventioners and tourists to have a ready access to Old Montreal and also to the federal government services nearby in the Guy Favreau Complex.

Since my time is almost up, I would simply like to add that the ideas I put forward can be translated into reality. The subject has been discussed for several years, but if I put these ideas to the House, even though they are of rather local interest, it is because I think it is urgent that we act now. And I urge my fellow Montrealers not to worry because even though I am suggesting to the federal government that they become more involved in the development of Montreal, I am not suggesting that they do so unilaterally without consulting the municipal authorities. On the contrary, the recently announced Place Guy Favreau is one of the finest examples of the consultation process which will result in a project satisfactory to all parties, and that is the light in which I see federal participation in downtown Montreal.

• (1512)

[English]

**Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to join with my colleagues in congratulating the mover, the hon. member for Louis-Hébert (Mr. Dawson), and the seconder, the hon. member for Malpeque (Mr. Wood) of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. Both hon. members did an admirable job in a difficult situation. Their situations were all the more difficult because they were attempting to speak