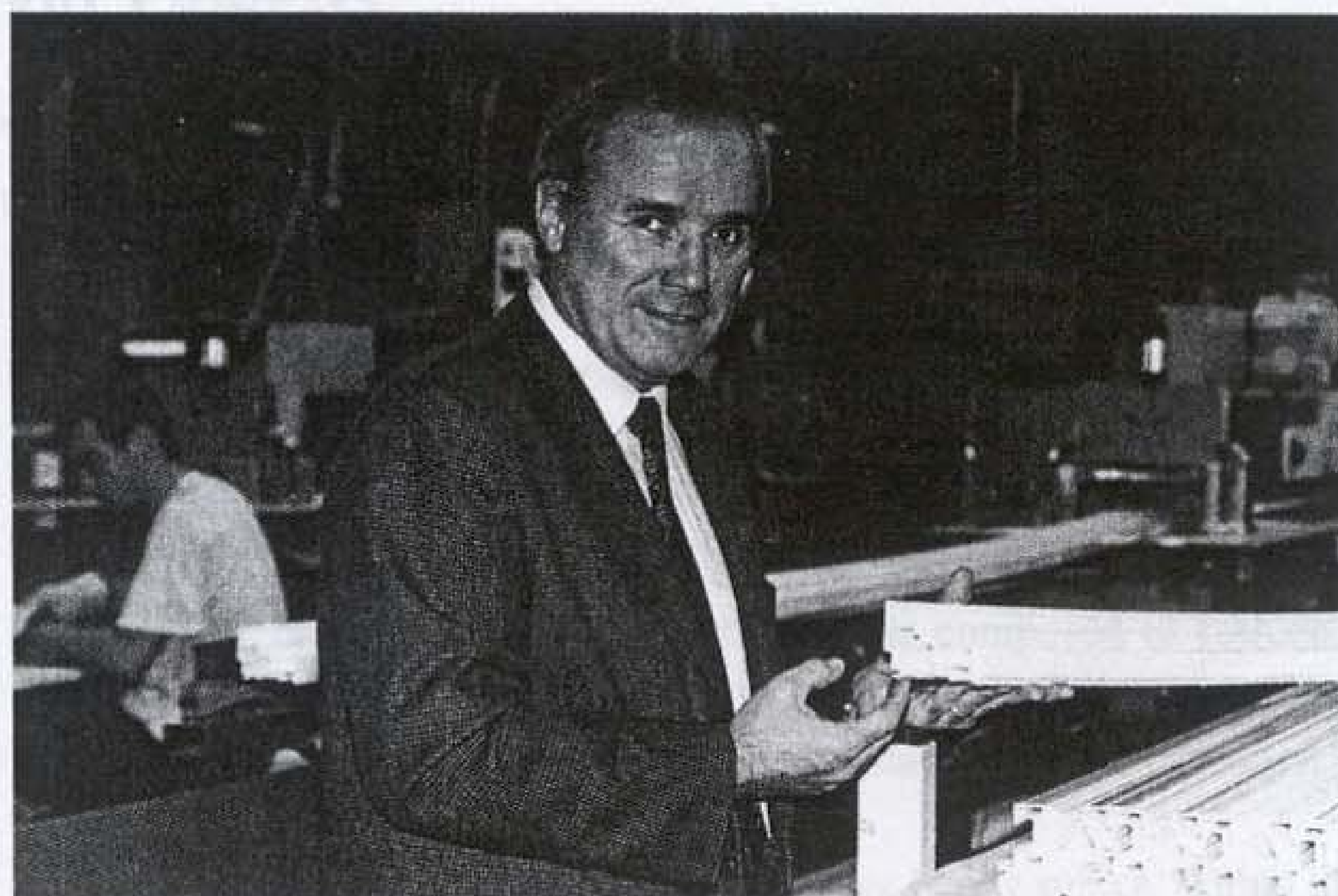


► THERMOPLAST BUILDS DOORS AND WINDOWS WITH A VIEW TOWARD THE U.S. MARKET

Thermoplast, the leading Canadian manufacturer of extruded PVC profiles for window and door systems, will invest more than \$12 million in three years to purchase, upgrade and expand the 9,000 square-metre building that it now occupies, bringing its total area to 15,000 square metres. The Laval company will increase its production capacity by nearly 35%, opening all its doors to the U.S. market.

This major project will lead to the creation of sixty permanent positions and consolidation of 160 existing positions, and will benefit from \$775,000 in financial assistance granted by *Investissement Québec*. The total \$12.3 million investment will be divided in two parts: nearly \$5.5 million is slated for fixed assets, and \$7 million paid out over two years will serve to increase production capacity and services. The project should be completed by next spring. The company will invest in specialized manufacturing and plastic transformation equipment, and will need to hire technicians and operators with knowledge in those sectors.

Currently, PVC windows represent nearly 65% of the Québec market. In certain Maritime regions, the proportion reaches over 90%. Thermoplast currently sells 85% of its products in Canada. It is now developing the U.S. mar-



In Québec, as in the rest of Canada, Thermoplast has become an essential part of the extruded PVC industry. Pierre Grand'Maison, President and General Manager, plans to conquer the U.S. market.

ket, which should represent nearly 15% of its sales by next year. "These investments enable us to better satisfy our clientele and support our market development program, especially for the United States," said Pierre Grand'Maison, President and General Manager of Thermoplast.

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Established in Laval's Industrial Park Centre since 1966, Thermoplast's annual volume is \$35 million dollars. In 1999, the company associated with the Royal Technologies Group in Toronto, the largest PVC extruder in North America. This strategic association was the kick-off to the announced investments, and it ensured Thermoplast support in its growth and development. "The essential part of this transaction was to ensure the long term survival of jobs in the company and continue our growth," indicated Mr. Grand'Maison. The President of Thermoplast says that with the new investments and expected results in the United States, the company can foresee annual growth at around 10% for the coming years.

Thermoplast's success is based on two major areas of expertise: plastic transformation through extrusion processes, and the design and manufacture of PVC doors, windows and patio doors. The enterprise produces 500 models with different profiles, which once combined can create sliding, hung or moveable sash doors and windows. These unique models are the result of research and development performed by a team of specialists that are attentive to the needs of the clientele and always on the lookout for new trends in the construction sector.

For more information on Thermoplast, contact Pierre Grand'Maison, President and General Manager, at 450-687-5115, or by e-mail at pgm@thermoplast.com, or Jacques L'Estage, Director of Communications and Marketing, at 450-687-5115, or by e-mail at jlestage@thermoplast.com