

The real question isn't about what other countries are going to do to us. The real question is about what Canada can do for itself. This debate is a test of Canadian self-confidence. It is a test of Canadian maturity.

This is a strong, accomplished, confident country and we should act that way, because if we don't we put at risk the economic strength which will allow us to pursue distinctive Canadian goals and interests.

There is no question at all but that these initiatives involve a major step in Canada's growth as a nation. There is going to be controversy, but there is always controversy as a nation moves forward. Every reform is going to meet resistance from people who are comfortable with things as they were, or resistance from people who doubt the ability of Canada to stand on its own.

When Sir John A. MacDonalld wanted to build a large nation from sea unto sea he faced resistance, but now that large nation is a fact. When social programs were introduced into the Canadian Parliament in the 1940s there was resistance, but those reforms are now part of the permanent fabric of Canada.

What we are proposing is to build upon those strengths and not to have them put at risk as they would be if we continued to fall behind in the changing world of trade.

Ladies and gentlemen, the country has come a long way. We have built our skills and our identity and our confidence. We live in the world, indeed we thrive in the world and the new opportunities in trade give us the chance to achieve new growth, create new jobs and continue to fortify and assert our distinctive identity. That is what we are here to do.