

not get as full a commitment as some of us would have liked, there is a very strong statement -- a principle in support of the removal of these barriers and a process for them to be addressed at the First Ministers conference after the agreement is legislated.

The accord is based on a historic compromise -- one that we have not seen in this country for many, many years, if not in our history. You have the Prime Minister and 10 premiers representing four Liberal, four Conservative and three NDP governments. All three federal parties and their leaders and five Aboriginal leaders are supporting it, along with organized labour. That sort of coming together is unique in our history. And that is why I say the agreement is an extremely good agreement, one that I think is very, very important to the ongoing interests of people in this country and to the political stability of Canada.

But we still have a substantial portion of the population who either have decided to vote "no" or are uncertain about how they are going to vote. This is a big step, and it is one worthy of serious consideration.

As you consider your response to this question, I ask you to reflect on some of our achievements over the 125 years of Canada's existence. Our population is the 31st largest, yet we have built the eighth largest economy in the world, making Canada a tremendous economic success story. We have developed a social system that we all enjoy and take advantage of here, which is the envy of the world. We have the best health-care system of any country in the world.

Our role in the United Nations and other international institutions is one of leadership. We have been and are known throughout the world as one of the best participants in UN peacekeeping since Lester Pearson launched a new approach to peacekeeping in 1956. We have also developed a reputation as tolerant, peaceful people -- people who are highly respected throughout the world.

I see this time and time again with the trade missions that I have been leading to different countries of the world. Canadian business groups who participate are made up of people that other countries have confidence in, and this stands us in very good stead as we trade internationally. We are facing a major decision on October 26, which will have an important impact on our future as a nation and our role in the world.

Some would reject the Charlottetown accord. I disagree with them. I think we have got a good agreement here, and I encourage all of you read it with a view to seeing how well it preserves the best of our past while allowing Canada to evolve into an even