

## VII. SUMMARY

The major findings from the two focus groups held in Montreal can be summarized as follows.

- o There is presently very little awareness of the talks. As could be expected, those who were aware of the talks expressed concerns about them.
- o Perceptions and awareness of the likelihood of free trade benefiting Quebec's hydro-electric power industry had a strong effect on how supportive group participants were of free trade.
- o Of critical importance in convincing Quebecers of the advantages of free trade, therefore, is for them to perceive that their provincial hydro-electric power corporation, Hydro Quebec (HQ), will come out as a "winner." Many participants felt that, as with the Lavalin and Bombardier, HQ has established a high profile in various countries for its unique expertise, and symbolically represents the new economic nationalism growing in the province.
- o Premier Bourassa, "expert" analysts from the legal and economic fields, business leaders in the Quebec community and small entrepreneurs were among those whose opinions participants "would consider most in determining whether [they] felt a free trade deal was good or bad for the country." Other politicians, both federally and provincially, with the possible exception of Ed Broadbent, journalists and labour leaders were seen to be relatively less credible as spokespersons or spokesgroups on the merits or debits of a free trade deal.
- o There was also little knowledge of the present volume of Canadian exports into the U.S. and, conversely, American imports into Canada. A more complete understanding of the actual nature of the Canada-U.S. trade relationship could perhaps set the talks in a more realistic, less-threatening context, for many of these Canadians.