

B. Attitudes Toward the United States

As previous tracking of attitudes toward free trade has revealed, the central Canadian fact is recognition of the pervasive influence the United States has on most aspects of Canadian life. For most Canadians, this is not a source of disquiet. It is quite simply a fact -- one which conditions the way Canadians view the world.

Not surprisingly when asked what form Canadian residents would like bilateral relations to take, preference splits virtually evenly between friendly/close and cool/independent measures. But what is notable is the reluctance to adopt extreme positions. Just one in 10 Canadians, for example, would advocate that Canada be "the warmest and closest of friends" with the United States. The jury favours a businesslike but neighbourly tone (43%) over any more moderate characterization as close friends and trading partners (37%).

There have been few net changes either in this personal preference or in perceptions of the federal government's ideal model for bilateral relations in the period from April to July of 1986. Portrayal of the current relationship indicates that it has cooled somewhat in the intervening period. Table 3 details these perceptions of Canada-U.S. relations.

Table 3

BILATERAL RELATIONS

KEY: (1) Wave II (2) Net Change from Wave I

	<u>PERSONAL PREFERENCE</u>		<u>CANADIAN GOVERNMENT'S IDEAL</u>		<u>CURRENT RELATIONS</u>	
	<u>(1)</u> %	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(1)</u> %	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(1)</u> %	<u>(2)</u>
Cool and Independent	7	+1	7	+2	24	+9
Businesslike but Neighbourly	43	-3	29	-4	42	-2
Close Friends and Trading Partners	37	+1	41	+1	24	-9
Warmest and Closest of Friends	12	-1	21	±0	8	-4