

- o On a more positive note, the inward looking tendencies of participants allowed them to view future trading opportunities and relationships with considerable objectivity. Most felt no innate allegiances in terms of historical trading patterns or were more than willing to endorse government.
  
- o Participants tended to exhibit a narrow and relatively uniformed view of how Canada is positioned with respect to the rest of the world. Underlying this problem, as research from **The Decima Quarterly Report on Public Affairs Trends** has shown, may be the facts that an overwhelming majority (more than 80%) believe that Canada is the best country in which to live at the present time, and that there are very high rates of reported optimism about prospects of the future. This contentedness may be producing in the group participants a nonchalant about the country's challenges which would tend to frustrate efforts to stimulate desired responses.
  
- o Three obvious points emerge from the discussion where group participants indicated a fair amount of divergence with possible federal objectives:
  - . Only limited and skeptical support was found in response to suggestions that Canadians should be prepared to respond to a call for national sacrifices to improve productivity and competitiveness. People seemed aware of these goals and supportive of the principle of striving to achieve them, but a "you-first" or at least a "not-me-first" attitude tended to colour their comments. Carefully designed quantitative research should be capable of finding the attitudinal triggers capable of beginning the process of changing this attitude.
  - . Participants were lukewarm to the idea of major reinvestments in our Armed Forces. The mood was generally supportive but this support seemed more based on the view that economic stimulus and job creation would result, rather than the argument that we were not living up to our commitments to Allies or that we need the restoration of pride that a strong military would bring. Obviously, if this view were substantiated quantitatively, it would pose serious questions in terms of the current strategy of communicating this action.