

Table 9

ATTITUDES ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT AND FREE TRADE

	<u>AGREEMENT</u>		<u>GAMMA*</u>
	June 1987 %	August 1987 %	
The federal government has provided the Canadian people with enough information about what it wants to gain in the trade talks	--	27	.364
I believe that the federal government has a pretty clear sense of what it wants to gain and what it's prepared to give up in the trade talks	56	52	.395
I see the government's attempt to reach a free trade deal with the Americans as part of a general effort to improve Canada's trade situation with countries around the world	67	68	.602
I think the government has a good idea of how to deal with the changes a free trade agreement would bring in Canada	54	49	.613

* Each issue statement was correlated with overall support for free trade (Question 4). The larger the gamma statistic, the more closely associated the two attitudes.

The gamma statistic in the third column of Table 9 indicates that while public opinion on all of these issues bears some relationship to overall assessments of whether free trade is a good idea, the issue which would seem to matter the most is whether the public believe the government has a good idea of how to deal with the changes that a free trade agreement would bring to Canada.

Another aspect of the government's role in the trade negotiations which was probed concerns its ability to effectively bargain with the Americans. On this point, Canadian apprehensions appear to be growing; 55% indicate that they are nervous about entering into a free trade agreement with the United States because they feel the Americans are the better bargainers, up from 51% in June. Only in Quebec is public opinion more optimistic, as 59% (48% nationally) believe we are as effective bargainers as are the Americans.