

integration and free trade to counter opposing world regional trading blocks-- principally the European Economic Community, Asia, and Japan. The notion that Canada and Mexico were the prime proponents of bilateral trade is incorrect. Problems of labour dislocation, protection of culture, access to resources such as water were issues at the time that the original negotiations toward the NAFTA agreement took shape. However, the best assessment is that there was a similar coincidence of interest in free trade and economic integration in both Canada and Mexico. Subsequently, the U.S. Congress began to exhibit almost schizophrenic behavior which has resulted in a return to more protectionist positions. The Fast Track Authority requested by the Clinton administration to extend NAFTA has not been granted and the pace of economic integration has slowed. Some of the goals sought at the Miami Summit for the year 2005 now appear unrealistic. Nevertheless, the existing free trade agreement remains controversial in some sectors and the ramifications for labour, manufacturing, and investment patterns are still unclear. Randall agreed with a statement made by Joel Prager during the present workshop that we need to know more about cause and effect concerning economic integration. Despite growth in trade, Canada's exports to Latin America remain insignificant compared to some other markets. Randall concluded his introduction with questions for the workshop. Are Canadian interests served by Hemispheric economic integration? Would Canada be better advised to consolidate its trade relationships with industrialized nations? Is Latin America a priority for Canada and should it be?

As might be expected, members of the Edmonton Consultation expressed a variety of opinions reflecting the positions of business, labour, NGOs, and academics of different disciplines. William Jaschke, a senior business consultant recently returned from contract work for Norcen in Venezuela