

X. SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

- o For many participants the country's natural resources and geographic, linguistic and cultural features were those national attributes most readily brought to mind when asked what made Canada different from other nations. These tended to overshadow mention of political, governmental, or economic differences with which people were evidently much less familiar.
- o Most group members felt that threats to national unity had abated of late, tending to cite a new mood of national reconciliation emerging in part from the recessionary experience, and a weariness with past federal-provincial struggles and fostered by a popular new government with a national mandate. Many added the caution, however, that many of these tensions could quickly re-emerge given the proper circumstances.
- o While participants generally endorsed what they perceived to be a warming of relations with the United States, they did not appear to believe that those relations had reached a serious state of deterioration. Perhaps more striking was the fact that many people were at pains to stress their feeling that Canada must always exercise considerable caution in its dealings with the United States.
- o Most people who took part in the groups agreed that Canada had to become more productive, and more competitive internationally if the kind of economic growth seen in the last 15 or 20 years was to continue. However, they did not apparently believe that decline would result if these goals were not achieved, allowing a certain measure of complacency to exist. This complacency, bred of a belief that things are relatively pretty good in Canada, was occasionally obscured by the lip service which was paid to