

Some of the verbatim responses offered by those identifying free trade are illustrative of some basic themes which emerged in the other survey findings. Concern over U.S. protectionism and loss of control by Canadians over aspects of their economic or political sovereignty are evident in several statements pointing to free trade and Canada-U.S. relations as the most important problem facing Canada today, such as the following:

- o "I don't think it's a good idea because the Americans want too much from us. They don't want to give anything up";
- o "I don't think it will work because of U.S. protectionism";
- o "I don't think it's a good idea because the U.S. has taken too much of a protectionist attitude";
- o "If they do get free trade the Americans will take over"; and
- o "Free trade. I'm worried about its effects on Canada."

The nature of these mentions does suggest that those who identify it as a top issue are speaking from a personal concern about the importance of questions of control and domination by the United States.

B. Awareness and Understanding of Free Trade and Canada-U.S. Trade Relations

1. Awareness and understanding of free trade discussions

A rare anomaly is apparent in the survey findings regarding "attentiveness" to and understanding of the Canada-U.S. free trade discussions. As evidence of the complexity of the issue as perceived by the Canadian public and consequent difficulties in Canadians' understanding the issue, the survey results in Table 2 reveal that more people claim to have been closely following discussions about free trade than claim to understand the issue as well as they would like.