

The groups did not perceive increasing protectionism in the United States as an immediate or alarming issue. The participants were firm in their beliefs, however, that greater protectionism in the U.S. would seriously affect Canada and that if this occurred, real sacrifices would have to be made on our part to lessen the impact of greater U.S. protectionist barriers.

As noted earlier, the participants feel a strong relationship between Prime Minister Mulroney and President Reagan helps in our dealings with the U.S. The groups did not, however, perceive a serious deterioration of relations prior to the change in our government. The specific issues that were discussed were considered to be the type of irritant that commonly arises between the two countries, and consequently the relationship between Prime Minister Mulroney and President Reagan was not perceived to be of paramount importance in dealing with these issues. From the discussions, therefore, it is not clear to what extent success in dealing with an issue perceived as a major problem between the two countries would be contingent upon the relationship between the two leaders.