

I. INTRODUCTION

Decima Research is pleased to present this report to the Department of External Affairs (DEA)) on the results of a nation-wide survey conducted between August 25 and August 29, 1988. The survey probed attitudes and perceptions regarding the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) among a disproportionate, randomly selected sample of 1,500 Canadian adults. The disproportionate sample was used so that a minimum of 100 interviews would be conducted in each province of the country. This would facilitate interprovincial comparisons of Canadians' attitudes on the various issues relating to Canada-U.S. free trade explored in the survey.

The report is structured in the following manner. Following the Introduction, Chapters II and III present a discussion on Canadians' overall levels of awareness, understanding and familiarity with the Agreement, together with an analysis of the current levels of support and opposition to the Agreement. Sections IV and V discuss Canadians' perceptions of various economic and socio-political effects of the FTA. The next section explores the opinions of how the federal government is perceived to have handled the issue of free trade.

Section VII analyses views on which opinion leaders people are relying on most with respect to free trade. This is followed by a discussion of Canadians' attitudes toward the effects of the Free Trade Agreement on Canada's fresh water resources. Preceding the "Summary and Conclusions" segment of the report, Chapter IX presents an overview of the major demographic differences in opinion regarding each of the issues explored in the survey.

A regional analysis of the data has been completed and the significant differences are noted where appropriate.

Reference is made throughout the report to results from previous surveys of Canadians' attitudes toward the FTA conducted for the Department by Decima Research. This structure permits the identification and analysis of the differences of opinion in the most recent survey results.