
In each opponent group, concerns were expressed about the size of the United States in comparison to Canada. Several respondents pointed out that we simply cannot compete with a nation such as the U.S. and that we will eventually be 'swallowed up.' Participants wondered why the U.S. was so interested in such an agreement and concluded that the agreement was skewed to U.S. advantage. In addition, persons in each of the opponent groups expressed frustration about the content of the Canada - U.S. FTA, saying they were uncertain what was in it and how it was negotiated. Several expressed a concern that it was badly negotiated and the public was kept uninformed of the content of the deal.

(ii) The Canada - U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Not surprisingly, opinions about the Canada - U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) varied most significantly between moderate supporters and moderate opponents to the agreement.

Moderate supporters of the FTA in each of the three cities in which focus groups were conducted readily identified 'positives' when asked to air their views on the existing FTA. In Ottawa, respondents were particularly positive pointing out that Canada must broaden and maintain its ties with the United States. Despite positive assessments, however, supportive participants in Ottawa again pointed out that short-term pain was inevitable, that there would be adjustments and that it would be difficult for those Canadians working in "protected or subsidized" jobs ("The disadvantages are all in the adjustment phase; advantages will make the whole agreement more efficient and a natural equilibrium will occur.")

Similar, although somewhat less positive, perceptions were reported among moderate supporters in Vancouver and Winnipeg. In Vancouver participants pointed out the advantages of access to the U.S. market under free trade and the advantages of a level

