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There existed a strong view that communications during the negotiating process would be an important means of assessing the content of a potential North American Free Trade Agreement. Participants did not identify other means of receiving or obtaining information related to the content of a potential agreement. They wanted to avoid a perceived frustration with the Canada - U.S. negotiations stemming from a reported lack of information and wanted to ensure that they understood, and were able to comment on, the components of an Agreement prior to its acceptance by negotiators.

Comments made at the end of the opponent groups conducted in Vancouver and Winnipeg reinforce this view (see Section VII - Advice to Minister/Negotiators). Both moderate FTA supporters and opponents in both cities pointed out that they wanted more information about this round of negotiations. They wanted to ensure that they understood what was being negotiated at the time of negotiations. They also wanted to ensure that the negotiating team understood what Canadians wanted and reflected their views in the negotiating process.

These views were driven, in part, by a view that the Canadian negotiating team might back down or compromise on some issues that the public would not accept. There was some sense that the U.S. position would prevail and participants wanted to ensure that that did not occur.

