

Implicit and explicit in their assessments of the costs and benefits of a close relationship was a feeling that because of their strong entrepreneurial and free enterprise orientation, Americans would not give Canada any advantages or special treatment in their dealings with our country, but would be as "ruthless" as they would be with any other country.

Some of the Vancouver participants offered the view that while some of the economically nationalistic policies of the past had damaged our relationship and cost some economic opportunities, they had produced a beneficial signal to other countries that we were becoming more sophisticated in our economic planning. "The Americans used to just take us, now they take us seriously" said one participant.

C. Expectations of Continued Prosperity

There were some serious doubts expressed about whether Canada's prosperity will grow in the future unless our international competitiveness is improved. That said, however, most of the group participants seemed to believe that simple maintenance of the status quo would not require a major economic overhaul. Vancouver participants seemed more likely, based on their perceptions that their relative prosperity was waning, to say that sacrifices must be made simply to ensure the status quo.

Most participants seemed skeptical, however, about whether Canadians could be expected to comply with a general appeal to enhance productivity through personal sacrifices, something which will be discussed in greater length elsewhere in this report.