

E. Opponents (Concern for Control and U.S. Domination)

The statements of those feeling free trade is a bad idea articulate the underlying concerns and fears of the potential loss of sovereignty or control and of the prospects for domination by the U.S. Typical of the statements made are the following:

- o "I don't like the United States anyway. They may take over Canada. We will be ruled by them if we have free trade";
- o "The United States has too much control over us already";
- o "Giving too much to the Americans; sooner or later they will want it all";
- o "It just means that we will be exploited by the Americans";
- o "The Americans will just end up telling us what to do";
- o "Canada's economy would be controlled by the United States. The Americans will become dominant in the free trade -- the agreement will become lopsided to the Americans' advantage"; and
- o "I'm afraid that Canada will be swallowed up."

These statements illustrate the strength of emotion inherent in the rationales for opposition to free trade offered by Canadians, in contrast to supporters of free trade who focus more on expectations of tangible economic benefits.

The data also reveal a relationship between respondents' understanding of and level of attentiveness to the free trade discussions and their overall support or opposition to the initiative. Those who claim to have been following the discussions "very closely" are more likely (29%) than average to say that free trade will "only be good for the U.S." Among those with firm or intense views on the trade initiative (feel it is a very good or a very bad idea), the same relative proportion indicate that they understand the issue as well as they would like.

To summarize, Canadians' views are at present split on whether it would be a good idea or a bad idea to enter into a free trade agreement with the United States, and most feel that they do not understand the issue as well as they would like. Key issues influencing