

Table 16 -- Continued

ISSUE STATEMENT	JULY 1986	NET CHANGE SINCE APRIL 1986	PERCENT AGREE
	$\bar{X}$		
I'm really concerned that the free trade issue is only going to create tensions and frustrations in Canada, just as things were getting better.	.11	+.35	46
Today, very few Canadian companies develop and manufacture world class products which can compete internationally.	-.06	+.31	48
If our economy becomes any more closely tied to the American economy we will lose our political independence.	-.09	+.04	46
All the discussions about free trade may matter to businesses, but free trade won't make any difference to the average Canadian worker.	-.78	+.42	37
I think a free trade deal with the Americans is important enough that we should be prepared to change our basic social system including things like unemployment insurance and health insurance.	-1.40	N/A	31

Note: N/A indicates that these were new issues statements and tracking data is not available.

The data suggest an overwhelming -- and increasing -- consensus (75%) that the United States will not do Canada any special favours. So too is the suspicion that Americans may be out to take advantage of us gaining ground. Conviction that Canada must maintain her independence remains strong for 67% of all Canadians. Tracking data indicate that the overall consensus about the top issues defining the debate remains relatively unchanged. The belief that Canadians must suffer short term adjustments for long term benefits in the event of any free trade agreement persists (61%). At the same time, there is virtually equivalent conviction that if it costs consumers more to remain distinctively Canadian, then this is a price most are willing to pay.