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***Backgrounder***

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# What Canadians Have to Say About Relations With the United States

Alan S. Alexandroff  
and Don Guy

## **The Backgrounder in Brief**

*Recently, Canadians have warmed to the idea of closer social and cultural ties with the United States. Now, if Canadian political leaders want to pursue closer economic integration, they will have to educate citizens on the material benefits that can flow from such a policy.*

## ***About the Authors***

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Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Canada's relationship with the United States has been under intense scrutiny, particularly among Canadians. That scrutiny intensified after Ottawa refused to support the United States-led coalition in the invasion of Iraq, and a handful of Canadian politicians issued some needlessly provocative criticisms of the military action.<sup>1</sup> This paper explores Canadian public attitudes towards a closer relationship with the United States. The public-opinion data surveying Canadian attitudes indicates that Canadian politicians are currently free to choose either an incremental or, as it has come to be called, a *Big Idea* approach to negotiating a closer post-NAFTA relationship with the United States. However, the public's growing scepticism over the benefits of free trade lead us to recommend that politicians focus on the tangible benefits — whether increased employment opportunities or general improvements in the Canadian standard of living — in pursuing any closer bilateral relationship. Canadians' responses in opinion polls show that they are confused over — and do not favour — any policy described as *economic integration* with the United States. Still, they are open to improving the relationship with the U.S. How matters are labelled can, in fact, have an impact on whether Canadians initially approve or disapprove of an initiative. As well, Canadian politicians will have to open a dialogue with citizens over such issues as common homeland security and defence. Political leaders will have to educate and persuade the public of the merits of a renewed or augmented relationship with the United States if they decide that it is essential to negotiate closer economic and political ties.

Fortuitously, there is now a chorus of proposals and options exploring how to manage and enhance Canada-U.S. relations. This lively policy debate has emerged from a variety of sources including think tanks, policy experts, the media and former politicians and bureaucrats, primarily Canadians. The C.D. Howe Institute was one of the first to raise the issue. Wendy Dobson initiated *The Border Papers* series with "Shaping the Future of the North America Economic Space." In that *Commentary*,<sup>2</sup> she urged the Canadian government to consider proposing what she called a "Big Idea" that would lead to a much closer relationship. The goal, she said, is to remove economic barriers and obstacles that undermine North American economic security. In the *Commentary*, she proposed several possible Big Idea packages that would lead to a deeper bilateral relationship and satisfy the main U.S. preoccupation: enhancing national security on its northern border. Specifically, she recommended consideration of a customs union, or a common market or what she described as a "strategic bargain", a "pragmatic mix of customs-union-like and common-market-like proposals plus Canadian initiatives in areas of strength that are of particular interest to Americans". "The key to the

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1 Hart and Dymond describe the impact of September 11 as creating, "an aggressive, single-minded, American-first foreign policy. See, Bill Dymond and Michael Hart, "Canada and the Global Challenge: Finding a Place to Stand," *Commentary: The Border Papers*, No. 180 (March, 2003).

2 Wendy Dobson, "Shaping the Future of the North American Economic Space: A Framework for Action," *Commentary: The Border Papers*, No. 162 (April 2002).

idea is to achieve deeper integration without undermining political autonomy,”<sup>3</sup> she added.

## Alternative Approaches

Since the release of her Commentary, numerous other proposals have appeared,<sup>4</sup> some supporting her approach, others promoting a much more low-key strategy. One of the most prominent was the Conference Board of Canada’s policy brief entitled, “Renewing the Relationship: Canada and the United States in the 21st Century.”<sup>5</sup> This paper pointedly rejects the Big Idea approach. The authors, Charles Barrett and Hugh Williams, oppose a new negotiating round with the United States similar to earlier free trade negotiations and agreements. The authors say a new Big Idea round may well disadvantage the weaker state — Canada. They add that engaging in a high-profile bilateral negotiation again is likely to reach a conclusion that Canadians will find difficult to accept. Yet, as with the previous free trade negotiations, such public bilateral negotiations make it difficult for the parties, especially the weaker one, to walk away from the negotiating table. Instead, the Conference Board urges a bilateral process where the issues are addressed in “an incremental and pragmatic manner... .” Over a long period of time, the authors contend, the two countries will be required to work through a series of issues that are best handled below the political radar. Because both countries are committed “to keeping the cross-border trade moving, while maintaining a high degree of security,” political intervention needs to be restricted to those instances where an impasse between officials has to be broken. Barrett and Williams say “it is at this level of specific initiatives that much of the Canada-United States relationship is defined.” They summarize their approach by urging a number of content and process approaches, including:

- Avoiding the Big Idea;
- Making a step-by-step pragmatic effort to renew the relationship;
- Expanding on successful approaches, such as the *Smart Border Declaration*;
- Encouraging security cooperation;
- Working towards a common external tariff;
- Identifying mutual interests in international trade negotiations, and
- Building relationships at all levels, making use of Canadian expatriates.

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3 Dobson 2002, p. 20.

4 There were a number of precursors to the Dobson proposal, including Fen Hampson and Maureen Molot, “Does the 49th Parallel Matter Any More?” *Vanishing Borders: Canada among Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) and Michael Hart and William Dymond, *Common Borders, Shared Destinies: Canada, the United States and Deepening Integration*, (Ottawa: Carleton University, Centre for Trade Policy and Law, 2001). The Dobson piece garnered significant public attention and her “Big Idea” became a part of the policy universe of articles and position papers on deeper integration.

5 Charles A. Barrett and Hugh Williams, “Renewing the Relationship: Canada and the United States in the 21st Century,” *Conference Board Briefing*, (February 2003).

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As is often the case, the apparent polarity between incremental and Big Idea approaches is more in the minds of the experts than it is in the view of more casual observers. Some of the difference in interpretation arises from labelling. One example is a proposal presented by Thomas d'Aquino on behalf of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (CCCE).<sup>6</sup> The CCCE recommends a number of initiatives, including reinventing the border, maximizing economic efficiencies, building on resource security, sharing in continental and global security and developing 21st century institutions. Still, d'Aquino says the CCCE proposal, "falls well short of what some people think of as big ideas: there is no political union, no currency union, not necessarily even a customs union."<sup>7</sup> Given the broad scope of issues proposed in the CCCE initiative, however, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that it is, indeed, a Big Idea.

How does a Big Idea differ from an incremental approach, and what importance, if any, should we draw from the differences? There are, in fact, real substantive and, most especially, procedural distinctions inherent in the two approaches. On the procedural side, an incremental approach would tackle a negotiation on an issue-by-issue process below the political horizon. The Big Idea, by contrast, assumes that politicians will take ownership of a new, deeper-integration negotiation between the two countries and in some manner publicly announce such an approach. The Big Idea requires a large initiative driven by Canada.

On the substantive side, the Big Idea approaches seem to fall into two categories that in fact overlap and carry the same label. There are *true* Big Idea approaches. These initiatives encompass proposals all the way from political union through a currency union to a common market and possibly even a customs union. However, as Wendy Dobson makes clear, there are Big Ideas that fall short of these well-understood economic proposals for deeper integration, yet still fit the category. These approaches generally encompass a number of dimensions, such as the border and homeland security, defence, institutions and immigration, as well as a significant number of economic areas, including standards and regulation, labor mobility, agriculture and natural resources, competition and trade-remedy laws. Thus, in content, many current proposals are actually comprehensive Big Ideas. These include the CCCE,<sup>8</sup> Hufbauer and Vega,<sup>9</sup> Pastor,<sup>10</sup> Hart and Dymond<sup>11</sup> and Burney.<sup>12</sup>

6 "Security and Prosperity: The Dynamics of a New Canada-United States Partnership in North America." A presentation by Thomas d'Aquino President and Chief Executive, Canadian Council of Chief Executives, at the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, Toronto, January 14, 2003.

7 Thomas d'Aquino, "Coaxing the Elephant: Can Canada Best Support Multilateralism by Cozying up to the United States?" *Policy Options*, (May 2003), pp. 33–36, at p. 35.

8 *Supra*, fn. 10.

9 Gary Hufbauer and Gustavo Vega, "Wither NAFTA: A Common Frontier?" in *The Rebordering of North America? Integration and Exclusion in a New Security Context*, eds. Peter Andreas and Thomas Biersteker, (London: Routledge Publishers, forthcoming 2003).

10 Robert Pastor, *Toward a North American Community: Lessons from the Old World for the New*, (Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 2001).

11 Michael Hart and William Dymond, *Common Borders, Shared Destinies: Canada, the United States and Deepening Integration*, (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Centre for Trade Policy and Law, 2001).

12 Derek Burney, "Engagement not Irrelevance," *Policy Options*, (May, 2003), p. 32.

## Awaiting the Two-Way Dialogue

Still, for all the debate that experts and organizations have initiated in Canada in the last two years, there are a number of very evident missing pieces to the discussion. For one thing, there has been little clear expression of what direction Ottawa is going to take. When and if the government undertakes a policy initiative, it will by necessity involve a two-way dialogue,<sup>13</sup> one between Ottawa and Washington and another between the federal government and the Canadian people. In the current debate most experts have evaluated and opined on what they believe the United States will, or will not, be willing to accept and whether the United States can even be encouraged to enter a discussion with Canada. We do not attempt to read the U.S. political entrails in an effort to come up with an estimation of American willingness to enter a Big Idea, or a much more limited negotiation for deepening the two countries' economic and homeland security.

It is the second dialogue that we find to be even more critical and on which we focus. Before the federal government can even begin to consider a major new set of negotiations with the U.S., it will have to convince Canadians that such an action is essential to their sustained wellbeing and prosperity. The extent of integration that the Canadian public is prepared to accept and the willingness to concede security protections in a common defence are charged issues.

This *Backgrounder* concentrates on the likely state of the Canadian public's receptiveness to a process that would strengthen the interlocking Canadian-U.S. relationships as shown by a close reading of recent opinion-sampling data. An examination of current Canadian public opinion will provide a benchmark for politicians and officials. And assuming that politicians conclude that renewal of the cross-border relationship is necessary, public attitudes will give them and Canadian officials a clearer picture of the kind of dialogue they will have to open with citizens. To that end, this paper includes a recent syndicated study that POLLARA conducted in the fall of 2002 and provided to select corporate and government subscribers (POLLARA Survey).<sup>14</sup> In addition, it updates these findings with a more recent survey taken just before the outbreak of conflict in Iraq.<sup>15</sup>

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13 The notion of a two-way dialogue draws its insight from Robert Putnam's rather famous piece on international negotiation: Robert Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer, 1988), pp. 427-460. In that article Putnam analyzed the complications for international negotiators who face two audiences in negotiating agreements: those across the table and the interests back home.

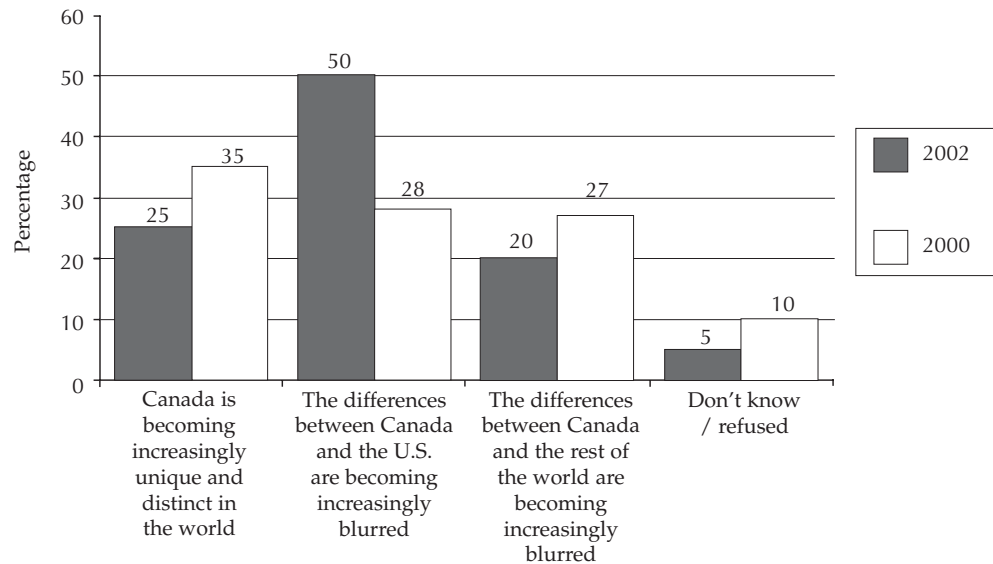
14 "Crossing the Line: Canadian Attitudes Towards North American Economic Integration," (Fall 2002) (POLLARA Survey). The margin of error based on the total sample of 1,200 is plus or minus 2.8 per cent 19 times out of 20.

15 National random telephone survey of 1,679 adult Canadians was conducted between March 3 and March 11, 2003, and is considered accurate plus or minus 2.4 percent, 19 times out of 20.

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**Figure 1: Measuring the Difference in Direction**

Question: Which of the following best describes what direction you think that Canada is moving in at the present time?



## Considerations Underlying Attitudes towards North American Economic Integration

Last fall's POLLARA Survey results show a fairly dramatic shift in what the public perceives as the main direction or trajectory for Canada. Starting with the 1990 *World Values Survey*, analysts found signs of a potential value convergence among Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, including growing consciousness of North Americanness among people in the three countries.<sup>16</sup>

### *Moving in a (North) American Direction*

In surveys at the turn of the millennium there appeared to be no consensus among Canadians over the country's trajectory.<sup>17</sup> Survey results showed that it was unclear whether Canadians saw themselves becoming increasingly unique and distinct in the world, becoming more like Americans, or whether they were becoming more like the rest of the world (globalized). Now, as shown in Figure 1, half of Canadians (50 percent) say that the statement "*the differences between Canada and the U.S. are becoming increasingly blurred*" best describes the current direction of Canada. This is a significant increase from results published in 2000, where just over one-quarter (28 percent) of Canadians said this was the direction in which Canada was headed.

<sup>16</sup> Ronald Inglehart, Neil Nevitte and Miguel Basáñez, *The North American Trajectory. Cultural, Economic, and Political Ties among the United States, Canada and Mexico* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1999).

<sup>17</sup> POLLARA, *Canada Speaks* (national public opinion survey of 1,200 adult Canadians), January, 2000.

**Table 1: Perceived Effects of U.S. Investment on Canadian Jobs/Standard of Living**

Job Growth			Standard of Living		
Job Growth	No Real Impact	Job Loss	Improvement	No Real Impact	Decline
55	11	29	50	16	29

By comparison, one-in-four (25 percent) said that Canada is becoming increasingly unique and distinct in the world, compared with 35 percent in 2000. As well, fewer Canadians said that the differences between Canada and the rest of the world are becoming increasingly blurred (20 percent vs. 27 percent in 2000). Five percent of those polled said they are unsure which direction Canada is moving in at the present time.

While the key conclusion from recent polling confirms a dramatic acceleration towards closer North American ties in the opinion of Canadians, it would be unrealistic to conclude that they are in full agreement with that trajectory. Indeed, of the 50 percent of those polled who said that the differences between Canada and the U.S. are becoming increasingly blurred, nearly three-quarters (72 percent) said they are opposed to this trajectory. This compares with one-quarter (23 percent) who said they favour such a trend and 5 percent who said they are unsure of how they feel about Canada and the U.S. becoming increasingly alike. A similar rejection of the national trajectory occurs among those Canadians who say that the differences between Canada and the rest of the world are becoming increasingly blurred. In this group twice as many are opposed to this trend as regard it favourably. Three-in-five (60 percent) said they are opposed, compared to one-third (32 percent) who said they are in favour. Eight percent said they are unsure how they feel about Canada becoming increasingly like the rest of the world.

To summarize, today Canadians hold three different views of their place in the world, with the vast majority now believing that Canada's national identity is becoming less and less distinct. Just three years ago, a plurality of Canadians polled said they believed that *distinctiveness* was our national trajectory. Today, this is the view least likely to be held by Canadians. Instead, the North American trajectory has emerged as the dominant trend. But significantly, the majority of Canadians who say they hold this view nevertheless say they are unhappy with the direction. Put another way, three years ago, a working majority of Canadians said they were happy with their perceived national direction; today, just 20 percent say they are. Finally, these findings don't support a current oft-mentioned view that Canadians are now more confident and ready for change.

Canadian opinion is less fractured on the issue of U.S. direct investment.

### *Effects of U.S. Investment in Canada*

As seen in Table 1, a majority of Canadians say they believe that U.S. companies investing in Canada produce job growth (55 percent) and improvement in the standard of living (50 percent). At the same time, three-in-10 say they believe that such investment by U.S. companies will erode Canada's economic well being, with 29 percent saying the result will be job losses, or a decline in the Canadian



standard of living. A smaller proportion say that U.S. investment would not affect jobs (11 percent) or Canada's standard of living (16 percent).

### *Evaluation of the Free Trade Agreement*

Recent studies (EKOS June 2002, Mendelsohn, Wolfe and Parkin) have found that Canadians approve of trade agreements, generally, and North American free-trade agreements, specifically. However, the edges of a "permissive consensus"<sup>18</sup> could well begin to fray around public attitudes that suggest Canada may not be getting everything it needs from free trade agreements. In other words, though Canadians have been relatively willing to defer to their politicians over international policy matters generally after all these years of free trade agreements, they may not be so quiescent in a new negotiating round. It would seem that there will be no automatic acceptance of any agreement likely to be offered by Canadian politicians.

For example, a recent CRIC survey found that:

[Thirteen] years after signing the landmark Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, which survey data show that (the Canadian public) ... support, a clear majority (67 percent) believe Americans benefit more than they do from Canada-U.S. trade — an increase of 23 percent in the past 21 years. In fact, only one-in-10 Canadians believe that this country benefits more than the U.S. from the bilateral trading relationship. The numbers who say that both countries benefit about equally has fallen 21 points over the past two decades, from 42 percent in 1981 to 21 percent today.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, the POLLARA Survey demonstrates that nearly 15 years after the 1989 FTA, Canadians tend to think that the agreement with the U.S. has not done enough to keep talented workers in Canada (68 percent), help job creation in Canada (50 percent) and increase living standards in Canada (45 percent). A majority of Canadians say, however, that positive results have been achieved in the areas of increasing investment (58 percent) and productivity (52 percent) in Canada.

18 The term "permissive consensus" arises from American political scientist V.O. Key Jr. (1964). Key is one of the pioneering figures in public opinion research. He argued that there was a permissive consensus in international affairs as opposed to domestic policy. As a result of this permissive consensus, the public was willing to defer to elites and experts to make decisions on international issues. The public created what was termed a "zone of acquiescence" in public opinion, where a range of acceptable outcomes was permitted. According to Mendelsohn, Wolfe and Parkin, *infra*, at p. 354, Canadians today permit such a consensus, "because on most issues the public does not have a preferred plan of implementation; instead they have goals and values — latent opinion — and so long as they believe that the government generally shares these priorities, they will support associated government action."

19 [http://www.cric.ca/en\\_html/opinion/opv4n33.html#file](http://www.cric.ca/en_html/opinion/opv4n33.html#file).

**Table 2: Fall 2002 Support for the Federal Government Fostering Closer Economic Ties between Canada and the U.S. Overall by Region**

	Support	Overall Oppose	DK
		%	
Atlantic	62	31	6
Quebec	76	21	3
Ontario	73	21	6
Prairies	51	38	11
BC/Territories	48	50	1

### Support for Closer Economic Ties with the U.S.

Meanwhile, support for closer economic ties with the U.S. has remained remarkably stable over the last 13 years. Regardless of how the question is framed in surveys, at least two-thirds of Canadians have been supportive of strengthening our economic relationship with the U.S.

The 1990 World Values Survey found that 71 percent of Canadians surveyed said that *Canada should have closer economic ties with the U.S.* This rose to 79 percent in the 2000 World Values Survey.<sup>20</sup> Making allowances for differences in question wording across different surveys, in the Fall 2002 Survey, POLLARA found that two-thirds of Canadians (66 percent) said they supported *the federal government fostering closer economic ties between Canada and the U.S.*, while three-in-10 (29 percent) said they were opposed.

While University of Toronto political scientist Neil Nevitte found that respondents' educational attainment and income were the best predictors of support for closer economic ties, the POLLARA Survey identified region as the best predictor of support and opposition, as shown in Table 2. Three-quarters of residents in Quebec (76 percent) and Ontario (73 percent) said they support the federal government fostering closer economic ties with the U.S. British Columbians, on the other hand, appeared to be the most wary (50 percent said they are opposed).

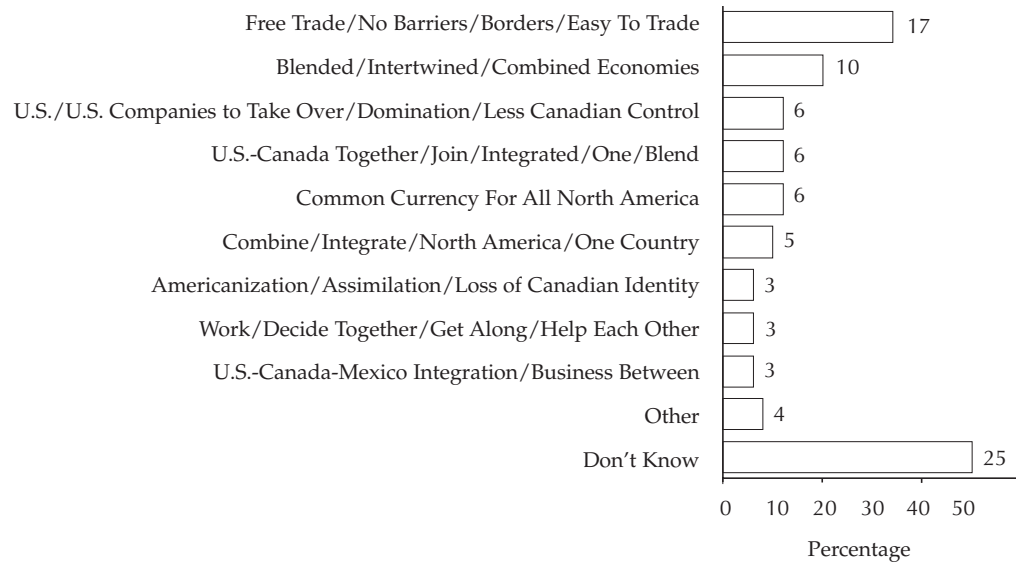
These numbers held more or less in March 2003, neither rising nor falling in response to events associated with the war in Iraq. Some 65 percent of respondents say they favour closer economic ties with the U.S, including 28 percent who strongly favour this policy. Meanwhile, 31 percent say they oppose closer economic ties, with 12 percent saying they are strongly opposed. However, the March 2003 Survey found that almost equal numbers (61 percent) also say they favour closer social and cultural ties with the U.S., which may run counter to popular perceptions.

Despite this support for closer economic ties, Canadians have mixed views on whether they support or oppose *North American economic integration* as shown in Figure 3. Support for North American economic integration hovers at something less than a majority (48 percent say they support, 44 percent oppose, 8 percent

<sup>20</sup> Neil Nevitte, "North American Integration: Evidence from the World Values Survey 1990–2000", Ottawa: Policy Research Initiative, 2003.

**Figure 2: Defining North American Economic Integration**

Question: Sometimes you hear people talk about North American economic integration.  
What do you understand this term to mean?



don't know), despite the fact that two-thirds (66 percent) of Canadians say they want closer economic ties with the United States. While relatively affluent Canadians (those earning \$75,000 or more per year) are significantly more likely than middle- or low-income Canadians to support North American economic integration, highly educated Canadians are no more likely than their less-educated counterparts to indicate support for economic integration.

These mixed results, as shown in Figure 2, indicate that the prospects for increased North American economic integration may depend on a public education strategy. When Canadians were asked what they understand the term "North American economic integration" to mean, one quarter (25 percent) said they are unsure or did not have a response. Seventeen percent said the term refers to free trade, while slightly fewer (10 percent) said it means intertwined economies. Just under one-in-10 Canadians said they understand the term to mean U.S. domination (6 percent), U.S.-Canada integration (6 percent), a common currency (6 percent) or Canada and the U.S. becoming one country (5 percent).

Perhaps the most important finding in the current context for decision-makers is that a large majority of Canadians in the March 2003 survey said that there was significant (39 percent) or some (39 percent) room for improvement in the relationship between the people of Canada and the U.S. Just one-in-five said that there was little (12 percent) or no (9 percent) room for improvement. So, while the Canadian public is open to greater economic integration, opinion will be strongly influenced by the actual content of the agreement and the manner in which politicians describe the relationship.

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## Conclusion

The findings in the POLLARA surveys confirm and build on those that indicate that Canadians embrace trade and economic integration with the United States, while resisting social and cultural integration because of value divergence and continuing national identity concerns. Results from POLLARA surveys indicate Canadians perceive the FTA and NAFTA as mixed blessings. In fact, the results suggest that Canadians believe that many of the promised benefits of free trade have not yet been realized. A possible explanation is that Canadians may believe that we have not achieved true free trade, but rather a form of less restrictive trade, which still falls short of the degree of free flow of goods and services that Canadians had been led to anticipate. It may also be the case that politicians promised more from the agreements than they delivered. While trade disputes, such as those over softwood lumber, still represent a small portion of the total value of two-way trade, the public squabbling, and the emotional comments by various politicians in both countries, must raise questions in the Canadian public's mind over the success of previously negotiated free trade agreements.

Our remaining question concerns the extent to which attitudes regarding social, cultural and economic integration are linked in the minds of the Canadian public. This POLLARA Survey and others indicate that a majority of Canadians believe that both our economy and society are converging with those of the United States. At the same time, most Canadians want to go further in building closer economic, social and cultural ties with the U.S. However, the notion of *integration* is troubling to many who support closer ties. There is an obvious tension between the Canadian public's desire to maintain a unique Canadian identity and wanting to secure the economic benefits from closer economic integration with the United States. Canadian politicians and officials will have to be very alert to the need to explain the benefits that Canadians can realistically expect if they hope to persuade citizens of the necessity of an enhanced, or new, agreement. In addition, there is implicit evidence in this most recent survey that indicates Canadians are prepared for strategic trade-offs among various policy preferences — economic, social and cultural.

It seems fair to say that public opinion towards our relationship with the U.S. is well known, but not known well. It is clear that Canadians value our country's relationship with the U.S., primarily for the economic benefits it brings. The value associated with this economic relationship appears to have remained remarkably stable over recent years, despite the ups and downs of Canada-U.S. relations.

What is more, at the present time, Canadians appear to believe that there is room for improvement in relations between the two countries, likely as a consequence of a perceived threat to that economic relationship. It is also clear that the idea of integration remains poorly defined in the minds of Canadians, with many positive and negative associations crowding each other.

Overall the POLLARA findings lead us to conclude:

- The Canadian public does not *per se* reject either an incremental or a Big Idea approach. However, Canadians will be concerned that they benefit economically from a cross-border negotiation. The Big Idea approaches that include security and defence, among other things, remain untested with the
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Canadian public. If a Canadian government concludes it is advisable to include these dimensions in a negotiating round, Ottawa will have to open a discussion with Canadians on common homeland security and defence;

- In POLLARA's polling, a majority of Canadians say that the differences between ourselves and Americans are becoming increasingly blurred, a striking change from earlier polling. However, this does not show, in our view, a nation that some suggest is increasingly confident and ready for change. The polling indicates that a majority of those Canadians who see our identity becoming increasingly blurred with that of the U.S. actually oppose this trend. Canadians are conflicted.
- Canadian attitudes towards our economic relationship with the U.S. and the opportunity it offers, appear remarkably stable. Canadians strongly support closer economic relations with the United States, though they don't necessarily understand, and are less positive about, proposals characterized as bringing closer economic integration.

Recently, Canadians have warmed even to the idea of closer social and cultural ties with the U.S. Now, politicians will have to educate the public on the content of economic integration, if they choose to even use such labelling, because of the lack of understanding related to that expression. At the moment, and without a dialogue with Canada's politicians, which we believe is essential, Canadians would appear to favour processes through which they can be convinced that the agreement will create jobs, retain talented workers in Canada and raise the Canadian standards of living. These views would support initiatives in a wide variety of economic areas, including standards and regulations, labour mobility, natural resources and even trade-remedy mechanisms. In the latter, it would be reasonable to conclude that the public would support the elimination of trade-remedy sanctions between Canada and the United States.

In short, if Ottawa decides to initiate a negotiation leading to closer economic integration with the United States, there is fertile ground to be ploughed among Canadians, though public opinion would have to be carefully cultivated in advance to mobilize the necessary support.

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