

EM9215: The Toronto Star, September 5, 1992, page A12

# Trade deal ‘dangerous,’ 65% say

OTTAWA (Special) – A clear majority of Canadians believe the Canada-U.S.-Mexico trade deal will put Canada in "a more dangerous position," an Angus Reid-Southam News poll shows.

Sixty-five per cent of respondents to the poll by the Winnipeg-based research firm said the new pact is dangerous because Canadians will have to compete against low-wage Mexican workers.

Only 29 per cent accepted the federal government's view that the three-country deal improves the Canada-U.S. free-trade agreement by clarifying trade rules and opening the Mexican market.

Of Ontario respondents, 54 per cent expressed opposition to the deal, while 39 per cent said they supported it. Seven per cent of Ontarians polled said they were undecided.

But while a large number of Canadians

are worried about the deal's trouble-making potential, opinion about what to do now is more mixed.

Nationally, 53 per cent don't want the government to go ahead, while 41 per cent said they favour entering into the broader pact.

Following a longstanding trend on free trade, residents of British Columbia and the Atlantic provinces are the most opposed, while Albertans and Quebecers are divided on the question.

There's been little change in overall opposition from March, when the same question was asked in an Angus Reid-Southam News survey. Then, 64 per cent opposed the three-way deal while 31 per cent liked the idea.

And although most respondents think the new plan is "dangerous," they didn't offer a clear consensus on its long-term economic

impact.

Just 43 per cent thought it would hurt the economy in the long run while 24 per cent see it bringing improvement; 27 per cent predicted it will be a wash in the end.

The poll suggests that much of the opposition stems from a lack of trust in the Mulroney government to hammer out a good agreement.

When asked to ignore the plan unveiled last month, 59 per cent of those telephoned said they generally support the idea of North American free trade. Again, ignoring the current proposal, only 38 per cent oppose the concept.

The telephone survey of 1,500 adults Aug. 25-31 is considered accurate within 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

SOUTHAM NEWS

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