Trade questions – June 11, 2018

We'd like to ask you some questions about topics that have been in the news lately.

Changing topics now …

Q1 (T) Canada, the US, and Mexico implemented the North American Free Trade Agreement (or NAFTA) in 1994. Overall, would you say NAFTA has generally:

Benefitted Canada
Hasn't really had an impact one way or the other
Hurt Canada
Not sure / Don't know

Q2. As you may be aware, U.S. President Donald Trump has implemented new tariffs on steel and aluminum that are exported from Canada into the U.S. These taxes on goods brought into the U.S. from other countries are intended to help improve the economic outlook for American companies that produce these products, but some experts warn that they will be bad for the U.S. economy, overall.

Based on whatever you may have seen or heard about these new tariffs, would you say …

[RANDOMIZE]
These tariffs will HELP the U.S. economy
These tariffs will HURT the U.S. economy
[ANCHOR]Not sure/Really can't say

Q3. The Canadian government says it plans to retaliate "dollar-for-dollar" against these U.S. tariffs, by introducing its own duties on $16.6 billion worth of goods that Canada imports from the United States, including, steel and aluminum, as well as other goods, including sailboats, whiskey, plywood, refrigerators, washing machines and herbicides, among other things.

What are your views on this response? Would you say it …

Goes too far
Is the right approach
Does not go far enough
Not sure/Can't say

[T] Q4. Trump says a major reason he's imposing tariffs on Canada is that he's disappointed with the slow pace of negotiations over the future of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

As mentioned, the original NAFTA agreement has been in place since 1994. Canada, Mexico, and the United States have been renegotiating it since last year.

How much attention would you say you have been paying to these negotiations? Are you paying:

A lot of attention
Some attention
A little bit of attention
No attention at all

[T] Q5. Based on whatever you may have seen or heard about NAFTA negotiations so far, which of these overall approaches would you say Canada should take to negotiations going forward?

[RANDOMIZE]
A "soft" approach – making difficult concessions to keep a good relationship with our biggest trading partner
A "hard" approach – refusing difficult concessions even if it means a worsening of trade relations with the U.S.

Q5a. The Trump administration has also suggested it may prefer to negotiate separate, or bilateral, trade deals with Canada and Mexico. This would effectively break up NAFTA.

Some people say Canada should pursue this because it is more likely to get a better deal by negotiating one-on-one with just the United States. Other people say Canada and Mexico will have more leverage against the United States if they stick together and insist on a three-way deal. Which view is closer to your own?

Canada should negotiate one-on-one with the U.S. for a new bilateral trade agreement
Canada and Mexico should stick together and only pursue a three-country trade deal with the U.S.
Not sure

[T] Q6. How confident are you in the ability of the Canadian government to effectively represent Canada's national interests in future trade negotiations with the Trump administration? Would you say you are:

Very confident
Moderately confident
Not that confident
Not at all confident

[ASK THOSE WHO SAY 'NOT THAT' OR 'NOT AT ALL' CONFIDENT]
[T]Q7. And, which of the following would you say is closer to the reason you're not confident? (Even if neither is exactly how you feel)

[RANDOMIZE]
The Trump administration is too unpredictable – no Canadian government would be well-qualified to deal with it
The Trudeau government is poorly qualified to deal with the Trump administration – some other party would handle it better

[T] Q8. Finally, assuming negotiators are able to agree on a new NAFTA deal, do you expect the end result to be better or worse for Canada?

Better deal
Worse deal
The same overall
Not sure/Can't say