

Politics Today: If you're planning a cross-border shopping trip, read this

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Politics Today is your daily guide to some of the stories we're watching in Ottawa and across Canada, by The Globe and Mail's team of political reporters.

Why are things more expensive in Canada?

The Senate finance committee reports this afternoon on possible reasons for price discrepancies between Canada and the United States on certain goods. If you're planning a trip to Buffalo, maybe you should watch [their report](http://senate-senat.ca/NFFN.asp%20) [http://senate-senat.ca/NFFN.asp%20] at 3:45 p.m. ET first.

Budget watch

There's nothing to report on the new budget...yet. But by the afternoon, we'll have a lot to chew over with a luncheon speech by Finance Minister Jim Flaherty at the Economic Club of Canada and a new report out at 9 a.m. ET from the Canada West Foundation, Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Canadian Municipalities. We'll watch for a better sense of the timing of the budget and just how much infrastructure spending there is.

Movement on milk

The European Union's trade commissioner is in Ottawa today, and a [Canada-EU free-trade deal](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawa-prepared-to-give-up-dairy-tariffs-for-access-to-europes-markets/article8286552/) [http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawa-prepared-to-give-up-dairy-tariffs-for-access-to-europes-markets/article8286552/] looks closer than ever. There may be some movement on the dairy sector, a long sticking point for Canada. It make concessions in exchange for more access to EU markets for Canadian meat.

Maritime union not likely any time soon

A third of Nova Scotians support the idea of a political union among the Maritime provinces, according to a new poll. Innovative Research Group, a national polling firm, asked 533 Nova Scotians what they thought of the idea of merging Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince

Edward Island – 54 per cent said they were opposed and 36 per cent said they supported the idea. (The rest didn't know.) Pollster Greg Lyle says the telephone survey shows the idea of a union is a "hard sell," but he adds that "the fact that more than a third of Nova Scotians support Maritime union without much of a case being made says the idea is not dead on arrival."

The poll was conducted last month. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Late last year, three Senators from each of the Maritime provinces pitched the idea of a union, in which Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI would join forces to build wealth, jobs and trade opportunities – this, rather than three small provinces competing amongst one another. The three premiers are not interested in the idea right now. – *by Jane Taber in Halifax*

The Supreme Court could use more women: Deschamps

In case you missed it: In a wide-ranging interview ahead of her departure today, former Supreme Court justice Marie Deschamps had a lot to say to the [Globe's Kirk Makin](#).
[<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/supreme-court-needs-more-women-justice-deschamps/article8149711/>] There are some fascinating details in there about the behind-the-scenes of the court, including an aborted experiment in pre-hearing conferences.