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 Privy Council Office / Bureau du Conseil privé

Security / Sécurité (with attachment(s) / avec pièce-jointe(s))

Transmittal Note / Bordereau de transmission

To / Pour : PM	Date : May 19, 2023
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Subject / Objet:
Engagement of Parliamentarians on Foreign Interference Threats

From / De :		Via:	
Name / Nom	Office / Bureau	Name / Nom	Office / Bureau
+ Marie-Hélène Chayer		+ Jody Thomas	
-		-	

Approved By / Approuvé par :

Name / Nom	Office / Bureau
+ [Signature]	
-	

Drafting Officer / Rédacteur : _____
 Admin typist / Dactylographe : _____

Action Requested / Mesure de suivi :

Your Signature / Votre signature Your Comments / Vos commentaires Your Meeting / Votre réunion
 Your Decision / Votre décision Your Information / À titre d'information

For the attention of / À l'attention du :

Prime Minister / Premier ministre Clerk / Greffier Minister / Ministre

Remarks / Observations :

Proactive Disclosure / Divulguation proactive

Can the briefing note title be released to the public? / Le titre de la note d'information peut-il être divulgué au public?

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No / Non** **Please confirm which Section applies / Veuillez confirmer selon quel article

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See page 2 for a description of each Section / Consultez la page 2 pour obtenir une description pour chaque article.

ATIP delegated authority approval / Autorisation de l'autorité déléguée de l'AIPRP :

Name / Nom	Signature
+ Marie-Hélène Chayer	[Signature]
-	

Reference Numbers / Numéros de référence :

WEBCIMS # 2023-NSIA-00066 GCDocs Transmittal Note / Bordereau de transmission
 GCDocs Briefing Note / Note d'information
 GCDocs Other Numbers / Autres numéros

Rec'd - Reçu

MAY 20 2023
 NSA to CNS BU - BCP

In consultation with / En consultation avec :

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<input type="checkbox"/> NSIA / CSNR	<input type="checkbox"/> Corp / SM	<input type="checkbox"/> LSMP / SLPM	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMS / COMMS	
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Clerk of the Privy Council and
Secretary to the CabinetGreffier du Conseil privé et
Secrétaire du CabinetOttawa, Canada
K1A 0A3**SECRET****MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRIME MINISTER**

c.c.: Nathalie G. Drouin, Jody Thomas

ENGAGEMENT WITH PARTY LEADERS ON FOREIGN INTERFERENCE

(Decision Sought/Signature Required)

SUMMARY

- A growing body of evidence has highlighted that Parliamentarians may be of specific interest to foreign interference (FI) threat actors.
- PCO has briefed you under separate cover about steps taken to ensure awareness of intelligence reports related to Parliamentarians (**Tab A**).
- To counter FI threats, increased awareness – through means of public communication and tailored engagements – is a key element of an effective strategy.
- PCO recommends that you offer classified briefings (provided by Canada's security agencies) to leaders of recognized federal political parties in the House of Commons (i.e., parties with at least 12 elected members, as per the *Parliament of Canada Act*). These briefings would support better-informed policy debate, and better position Canada's political Party Leaders to take action to protect themselves, their parties, and Canada's national security from specific threats. It would also enable these leaders to read any classified annex of the report of the Independent Special Rapporteur (ISR), and/or reports from the National Security & Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) and the National Intelligence and Intelligence Review Agency (NSIRA).
- To facilitate these briefings, it is also proposed that Party Leaders be provided with the opportunity to obtain a TOP SECRET security clearance and be briefed on handling classified information. Together, these measures would enable Canada's security agencies to prepare and deliver tailored classified briefings up to the TOP SECRET level, as needed.
- You have sent letters to Party Leaders advising them of the opportunity for classified briefings (**Tab B**). Two Party Leaders have publicly stated that they would refuse the offer. PCO will stand ready to liaise with the offices of any Party Leaders who would eventually accept the offer to ensure security forms are properly filled out and submitted. Upon receiving clearances, PCO will then work to coordinate the briefings, in coordination with your office.
- **Do you agree?**

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SECRET**BACKGROUND**

- There has been growing interest in the matter of FI in democratic processes. Debate on these issues has been ongoing in the House of Commons, including within the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (PROC).
- CSIS intelligence does show that Parliamentarians have, in fact, been wittingly or unwittingly involved in FI attempts with various levels of intensity.
- PCO has briefed you under separate cover about the steps taken to ensure awareness of intelligence reports related to Members of Parliament (**Tab A**).

Considerations

- As lawmakers and politicians, all Parliamentarians are at risk of being targeted by FI actors and, increasingly, by domestic extremism, as are many of their constituents.
- You have sent letters to Party Leaders offering classified briefings. Should Party Leaders accept this offer they would first have to undergo a security clearance process, like members of NSICOP. The outcome of the process cannot be pre-determined. Should any serious concerns emerge during the clearance process, they would be brought to the attention of PCO, and will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- Party Leaders would be briefed on receiving and handling classified information. Contrary to members of the NSICOP, they could claim immunity, based on parliamentary privilege, were they to divulge classified information during House of Commons proceedings. The *NSICOP Act* specifies that no member or former member may claim immunity based on parliamentary privilege if they divulge classified information in Parliamentary proceedings.
- Based on the experience of the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force (in the context of previous federal elections), some Party Leaders may choose not to accept an invitation to classified briefings. Nevertheless, offering these briefings to opposition leaders would reiterate the government's commitment to transparency.
- This approach could also allow classified reports from NSICOP, the NSIRA, and the Independent Special Rapporteur to be shared with political Party Leaders.

Recommendation

- In view of ongoing debates around FI, democratic processes, and growing threats to Canada's national security, it is recommended that classified briefings be offered to the leaders of political parties. In the near term, this would serve to improve awareness on the level and types of foreign interference in political spheres. It would also highlight other threats to Canada's national security, political parties, and Parliamentarians themselves.

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SECRET

- Such briefings would support informed policy debate on FI and other national security threats, such as violent extremism. The briefings would better position Canada's political Party Leaders to take action to protect themselves, their parties, and Canada's national security. This initiative could also signal publicly that Canada and all Canadian political parties take threats to national security seriously.
- The focus of the briefings would be to provide Party Leaders with information that is not available publicly, or through the regular means by which officials provide unclassified information to Parliament. As such, it is envisioned that the briefings would be delivered at the SECRET level, though with the option of going up to TOP SECRET, if required. Care would be taken to protect all Cabinet Confidences.
- The briefings would carefully balance the privacy rights of individuals with national security considerations. The *Privacy Act* "permits the disclosure of personal information where, in the opinion of the head of the institution (that is disclosing said information), the public interest in disclosure clearly outweighs any invasion of privacy that could result from the disclosure." As such, personal information related to threats facing or posed by members of the party could be disclosed to the Party Leader as part of these briefings, as required. Party Leaders' awareness of threats affecting or involving the members of their parties in both the House of Commons (and the Senate, if applicable) would assist them in proactively applying mitigating measures, which would directly contribute to the public interest.
- Individual classified briefings would be offered to political Party Leaders exclusively and would be delivered in person in a secure location. This format would allow increased awareness of those key elected officials, while protecting classified and personal information. PCO would coordinate the briefings, which would involve senior representation from CSIS and the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), and would take place every four months, or as needed.
- PCO would advise your office of the dates and topics in advance of the briefings, the first of which would offer an overview of the intelligence community's activities, processes and priorities, followed by the FI threat, including in past federal elections. Future briefings would prioritize the most pressing national security topics of the day, potentially including FI and ideologically motivated violent extremism.
- If you agree with this proposal, PCO will engage with Party Leaders' offices who have expressed an interest in receiving these briefings to ensure that security clearance paperwork is properly filled out and submitted. Upon confirmation of clearances, PCO will coordinate the briefings, in consultation with your office.

Janice Charette

Attachments

10254917 Chayer/

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TAB | A
Onglet

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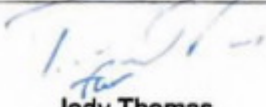
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MAY 19 2023

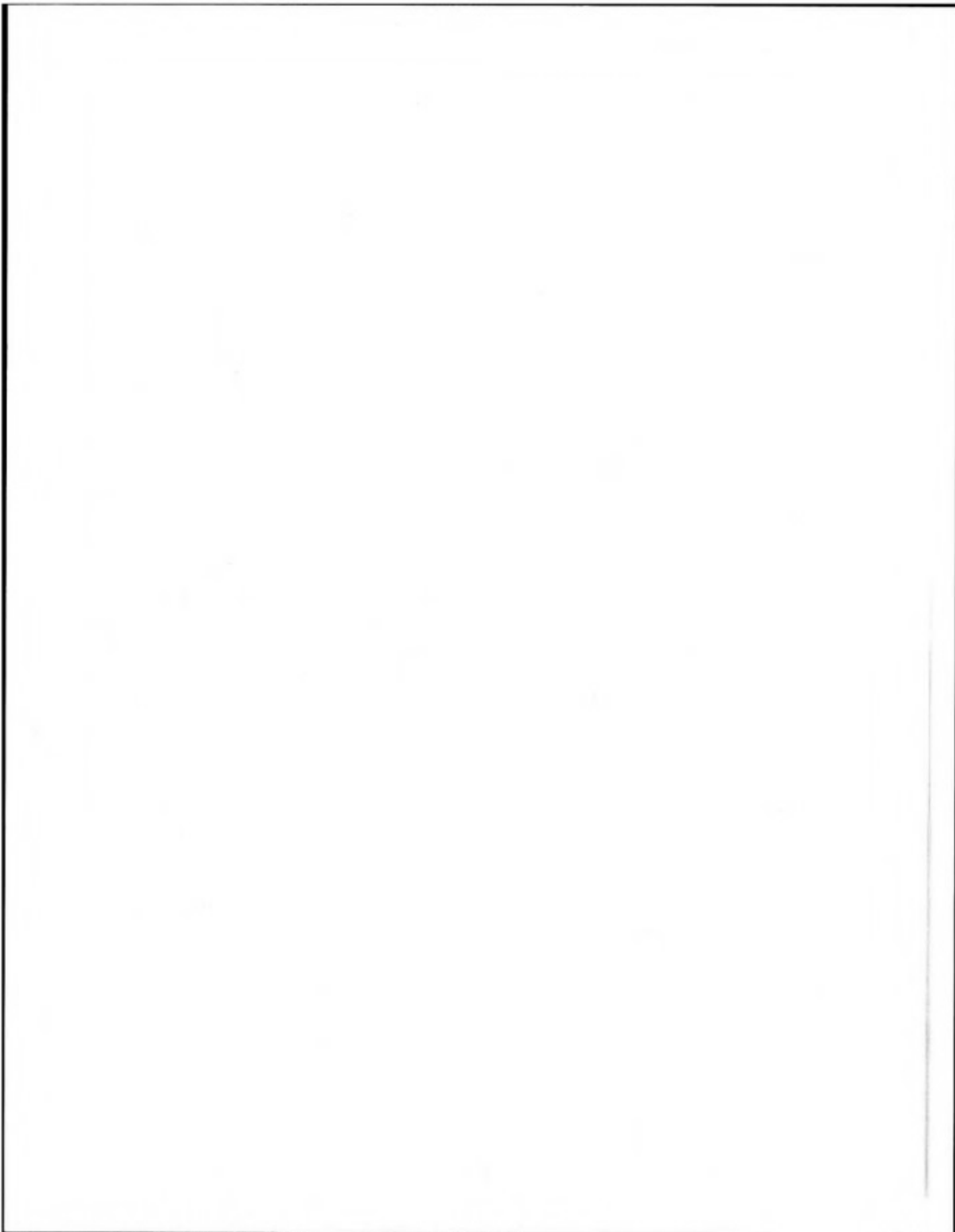
National Security and Intelligence
Advisor to the Prime MinisterConseillère à la sécurité nationale et au renseignement
auprès du Premier ministreOttawa, Canada
K1A 0A3**SECRET****MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRIME MINISTER**
c.c. Janice Charette, Nathalie G. Drouin**STEPS TAKEN TO ENSURE AWARENESS OF INTELLIGENCE
REPORTS RELATED TO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

(Information Only)

- o In the course of their activities, national security and intelligence agencies, mainly the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), collect intelligence on national security threats with a nexus to Parliamentarians and their families. When the threats are credible and reach a level that demands an operational response, these agencies conduct operations under their respective Minister's authority to mitigate the threat.
- o You recently issued clear direction to ensure that you, your office, and Ministers are proactively made aware of intelligence reports related to national security threats to Parliamentarians and their families.
- o Public Safety portfolio agencies and CSE are developing and implementing internal measures to ensure that their respective Ministers are proactively made aware of these threats and of any required operational responses conducted under their authorities. On May 16, the Minister of Public Safety issued a ministerial directive to CSIS in which he articulated his expectations as to how threats to Parliament and Parliamentarians would be investigated, mitigated, and communicated. Advice is being developed on the possibility of providing classified briefings to Leaders of the Opposition, which will be provided separately.
- o As these measures are being implemented, and to ensure that you and your office are also kept abreast of these threats, CSIS and CSE will notify the Privy Council Office (PCO) of any intelligence report related to threats to Parliamentarians and their families, and of any related operational response. PCO will then notify you and your office, and will provide relevant advice for further action as required.
- o Recommendations are being developed on a more systematic and comprehensive approach to proactively elevate key intelligence reports, while protecting the privacy rights of individuals of interest to threat actors. This includes developing processes and advice to enhance the efficiency and accountability framework related to the dissemination and use of intelligence in support of strategic decision-making, including by better tracking readership and more effectively flagging specific reports for Ministers' attention.


 Jody Thomas
1185839/ [] Chayer


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LE MINISTRE DE LA PRÉSENTATION

MAI 23 2023

*Cher Yves-François***Monsieur Blanchet,**

Nous avons vu au cours des derniers mois que le Canada fait face à différentes menaces pour la sécurité nationale, dont quelques-unes risquent de toucher nos institutions démocratiques. Dans un monde où nos adversaires déploient plusieurs moyens évolutifs pour menacer nos intérêts nationaux, il est plus important que jamais d'entretenir un dialogue sain et transparent sur les menaces et la meilleure façon de les contrer.

Aujourd'hui, le rapporteur spécial indépendant a publié son premier rapport sur l'ingérence étrangère au Canada. Ce rapport a été distribué à votre cabinet et à celui des chefs des partis reconnus à la Chambre des communes, en plus d'être rendu accessible au public. Le rapporteur spécial indépendant a également produit une annexe confidentielle qui renferme un complément d'information et est mise à la disposition des personnes qui possèdent les autorisations de sécurité requises.

Je vous écris donc, à vous et aux autres chefs de parti, pour entamer le processus d'autorisation nécessaire, si vous le désirez. Des représentants du Bureau du Conseil privé communiqueront avec votre cabinet sous peu à ce sujet.

Dans l'espoir de continuer d'échanger avec vous sur ce dossier d'importance, je vous prie de recevoir, Monsieur, mes sincères salutations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yves-François Blanchet'.

M. Yves-François Blanchet
Chef du Bloc Québécois
Suite 202, édifice Wellington
Chambre des communes
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0A6

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PR. ME. MA. 10. 01. 23 / PREMIER MINISTRE

MAJ 23 2023
MAY 23 2023

Dear Mr. Singh,

The recent months have underscored that Canada is facing a number of national security threats, including some that may affect our democratic institutions. In a world where our adversaries have many evolving tools to threaten our national interests, it is more important than ever to have a healthy, transparent dialogue on these threats and how best to counter them.

Today, the Independent Special Rapporteur (ISR) produced his first report on foreign interference in Canada. This report has been shared with your office, as well as the offices of the other leaders of recognized parties in the House of Commons, as well as publicly. The ISR has also produced a confidential annex to this first report, containing additional details; that annex is available to those individuals with the relevant security clearances.

As such, I am writing to you and other party leaders to launch the requisite security clearance process, should you so choose. Officials from the Privy Council Office (PCO) will engage your office shortly to start this process.

I look forward to further discussions on these important topics.

Sincerely,

Mr. Jagmeet Singh
Leader of the New Democratic Party
Suite 579, Confederation Building
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

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PRIME MINISTER / PRÉMIER MINISTRE

MAY 23 2023

Dear Mr. Poilievre,

The recent months have underscored that Canada is facing a number of national security threats, including some that may affect our democratic institutions. In a world where our adversaries have many evolving tools to threaten our national interests, it is more important than ever to have a healthy, transparent dialogue on these threats and how best to counter them.

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I look forward to further discussions on these important topics.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be Justin Trudeau, written over a large, faint circular watermark.

Mr. Pierre Poilievre
Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada
Suite 754, Confederation Building
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6