Government of Canada Gouvernement du Canada Bureau du Conseil privé

Security / Sécurité (with attachment(s) / avec pièce-jointe(s))
Secret - CEO / Secret - Réservé aux Canadiens

To/Pour:					Date :	
The Prime Minister					Jan 11, 2024	
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Transmittal Note / Bordereau de transmission

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Gouvernement du Canada Bureau du Conseil privé

National Security and Intelligence Advisor to the Prime Minister

Conseillère à la sécurité nationale et au renseignement auprès du Premier ministre

Ottawa, Canada K1A DA3

SECRET//CEO

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

c.c.: John Hannaford, Nathalie G. Drouin

DEFENSIVE BRIEFING FOR STAFF OF A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

(For Information)

SUMMARY

- On January 17, 2024, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and the Integrated Terrorism Assessment Center (ITAC) will provide an unclassified defensive threat briefing to Mr. Ian Todd, Chief of Staff of the Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Pierre Poilievre.
- CSIS and ITAC had offered to provide a defensive briefing to the Leader of the Opposition, but Mr. Poilievre requested that his Chief of Staff attend the briefing on his behalf.
- It is assessed that Mr. Poilievre, by the nature of his position, could be exposed to foreign interference and espionage threats from state actors, and that he may be the target of violent extremist threats.
- The joint unclassified CSIS and ITAC briefing will provide information to better enable Mr. Poilievre to respond to and better protect himself against such threats by taking protective measures, and information on how to report any concerns to CSIS and other authorities in the future.
- CSIS notes that at no time has intelligence indicated a threat to life, physical harm, or detention of Mr. Poilievre or his family.

Background

In 2021, CSIS began a program of defensive and protective security briefings to elected and public officials across Canada, after it became apparent that foreign state actors and their proxies were highly interested in influencing Canadian elected officials and their staff, and that more could be done to educate officials about this threat.



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- These unclassified briefings aim to increase awareness about a variety of threats, how they manifest, and the mitigation strategies that can be employed. They are meant to inform and are not intended as a means to collect intelligence. In 2022, CSIS conducted 49 such briefings with federal elected officials.
- High-profile individuals, such as the Leader of the Opposition, continue to be aspirational targets for violent extremists. Foreign state actors may also prioritize foreign interference efforts against parliamentarians in leadership positions, such as the leaders of opposition parties, Cabinet Ministers, Parliamentary committee chairs, etc.

CSIS has determined it will not conduct any disclosures

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PCO Comment

- The joint unclassified briefing to the Chief of Staff of the Leader of the Opposition provides an opportunity to give an overview of CSIS and ITAC's respective mandates; to sensitize Mr. Todd to threats posed by hostile state actors and violent extremists; provide advice on security best practices; and for Mr. Todd to ask questions and raise concerns.
- Mr. Todd may inquire about a letter the Leader of the Opposition wrote to CSIS in March 2023, in which he requested whether CSIS had any information indicating CPC members were involved in foreign interference-related threat activity. CSIS did not respond to this request. If Mr. Todd raises the letter, CSIS intends to convey that it does not have the authority to share this information.
- As mentioned, the briefing to Mr. Todd will be done at the unclassified level. In May 2023, you had written to Mr. Poilievre, and the leaders of the other opposition parties, offering them a security clearance to enable them to view the confidential annex of the report prepared by the Special Rapporteur on Foreign Interference. Although Mr. Poilievre never formally responded to your letter, he stated publicly that he rejected the offer to see the documents.
- PCO recognizes that Mr. Poilievre or his Chief of Staff may choose to take this information into the public domain, which may generate media attention.

Jody Thomas

Walshe/Eldebs/