



Addendum to *In Camera* Examination Summary: The Honorable Bill Blair

Minister Bill Blair was examined by Commission Counsel during in camera hearings held between February 28 and March 6 2024. The following addendum contains information provided by the witness that is relevant to stage 2 of the Commission's inquiry and that, in the opinion of the Commissioner, would not be injurious to the critical interests of Canada or its allies, national defence or national security

Notes to Reader:

- Commission Counsel have provided explanatory notes in square brackets to assist the reader.

1. Examination by Commission Counsel

1.1 Flow of intelligence related to Michael Chong

- [1] Minister Blair testified that he first learned of particular reporting on Mr. Chong when this broke in the media. He did not see any reporting on Mr. Chong or Mr. Chiu until 2023 but has since been made aware of some documents.
- [2] Minister Blair testified that he never saw the IMU whereby CSIS reported that it intended to brief Mr. Chong and Mr. Chiu on PRC FI.
- [3] Minister Blair testified that he did receive the CSIS Intelligence Assessment dated July 20, 2021. He saw the paragraph in that report which detailed PRC officials' interest in a Canadian MP's relatives who may be located in the PRC for further potential sanctions but this did not raise concerns for him. He further testified that Canada also imposes sanctions on foreign nationals, for example, on their ability to travel to Canada. He was not concerned about anyone's safety as a result of this report. Minister Blair testified that the activities reported in the CSIS Intelligence Assessment were consistent with

what he had already said publicly in his December 2020 letter to Parliamentarians and public pronouncements.

- [4] Minister Blair did not follow up with Mr. Vigneault on this reporting in 2021.

1.2 A Warrant

- [5] Minister Blair testified that he authorized a number of warrants during his tenure as Minister of Public Safety. In each case, he would be asked to go into a Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (“**SCIF**”), where he would be presented with a binder containing all relevant materials, which he reviewed thoroughly in order to ensure that the warrant application met the statutory requirements. It usually took 2.5-3 hours to review. During his tenure as Minister of Public Safety, he approved each of the applications put before him, but he tried very hard to fulfill his responsibilities to make sure that he reviewed that material thoroughly.
- [6] Minister Blair testified that from the time warrant documents were put in from of him until he signed them, it was usually a matter of hours, not days. In every case he was very mindful of the necessity to deal with the request. Other than one particular warrant, he was not aware of any other warrant that took more than four to eight days between when he was alerted that it had been submitted to his office and when it was approved.
- [7] Commission counsel referred Minister Blair to a letter addressed to himself from Mr. Vigneault, enclosing the warrant application materials. Page 2 of the letter states: “Further to my initial briefing [several months prior], my office will be organizing a follow-up meeting to update you on this file at your earliest convenience.” Minister Blair testified that the Director and Deputy Director of CSIS briefed him. At this briefing, they shared intelligence relevant to the warrant. They did not indicate that they were initiating the process for a warrant application. However, because he was well briefed already, Minister Blair was very familiar with the material when the warrant package was presented to him.
- [8] Commission counsel directed Minister Blair to a Memorandum to the Minister from the Deputy Minister, dated four days after the letter from Mr. Vigneault enclosing the warrant application, regarding the application. Minister Blair testified that, to the best of

his recollection, this was not the document that he was presented with when he signed off on the warrant. The document he was presented with did not have that date on it. Turning to the last page with his signature, he testified on what date he signed the documents, and noted that this document says a date 2 days later, which he assumed is autopen. He signed in Toronto, but the authorizations would all be sent back to Ottawa to be compiled in this document. He does not believe this is the original document that he signed.

- [9] Commission counsel referred Minister Blair to the Designation and Approval form for the warrant [on the form the month is scratched out and replaced with a date approximately 6 weeks later]. Minister Blair confirmed that one part of the warrant approval process is that he designates and approves the affiant to be the person who applies for the warrant. He testified that he could not recall crossing out the month on the form and writing in a date approximately 6 weeks later, and he is not sure why he would have put that date because he signed off on these documents two days earlier. While the document indicates a particular date, he checked his calendar and confirmed he attended the CSIS office two days earlier. He believes that what happened is that the documents he signed in Toronto were then transmitted back to Ottawa. He is unsure about the delay between the two dates, but to the best of his recollection he signed the documents two days prior to the date on the documents.
- [10] Minister Blair confirmed that with respect to two other warrant applications at around the same time, the warrant would get to his office and be approved within four to eight days, and his actual time with the documents, start to finish, would be three to four hours.
- [11] Minister Blair testified that he first became aware of the warrant application on the date he recalls signing it. He did not know that it had been received by his office before that date. He was not aware of the date his office received it and no one showed him the earlier dates on the documents. On the date he recalls signing the warrant, he became aware that there had been some discussion and questions raised by his office with the Director and the Deputy Minister. However, he was not aware of how long it had been with his office. He did not become aware of this until last year. Since he is no longer the Minister of Public Safety, Minister Blair did not feel it was appropriate to go back and

ask either the Director or the Deputy Minister about what happened during those six weeks.

[12] Minister Blair testified that he also had a conversation that day prior to signing the warrant because his office had recommended a particular duration for the warrant. That conversation took place moments before he signed off on the warrant. He did not consult with anyone or seek further assistance or guidance on whether he should approve the warrant application.