



VMUN 2024

Canadian House of Commons

BACKGROUND GUIDE



VANCOUVER MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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Dear Members of Parliament,

My name is Ethan Yang, and it is my distinct honour to welcome you to VMUN 2024 as the Speaker of the House of Commons. Model United Nations—the House of Commons especially—has been a cornerstone of my secondary education. So, it is my hope that my experiences will be reflected in yours as well. I am confident that the House of Commons will be an excellent opportunity for all to experience Canadian politics firsthand—and develop requisite skills in public speaking, debate, and more.

This year, Members of Parliament will have a unique opportunity to debate, discuss, and discover a critical topic in the contemporary Canadian political landscape: *Foreign Interference*. I encourage all to consider the following four themes in your research: Canada's role in a globalized world of states, our governing of the economy (specifically in regards to international trade and regulation), our democratic ideals, and our politics of collective identity—especially cognizant of Canada's nature as a multicultural society.

In order to uphold fruitful and productive committee sessions, all delegates should prepare and research thoroughly on both the topic at hand, as well as their own relevant stances before the conference. Please feel free to refer to the following resources in your preparation process: this **Background Guide**, the **Private Members' Resolution (PMR) Guide**, and the committee **Standing Orders**, all of which can be found on VMUN's website. The parliamentary procedures will be reviewed and clarified during the first committee session as well, so we encourage you not to feel intimidated by any unfamiliarity. In addition, we highly recommend that you conduct additional in-depth research leading up to the conference to maximize this unique and rewarding experience.

Finally, I am honoured to work with your Deputy Speaker, John Demianczuk, and your two Clerks, Sissi Zhao and Erin An. I wish you all the best of luck in your preparations. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at hoc@vmun.com. I look forward to meeting you all.

Sincerely,

Ethan Yang
HOC Speaker

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Addressing Foreign Interference

Overview

Concerns over sovereignty have long been at the forefront of national leaders' minds. Covert interference has been one of the primary ways in which hostile governments have attempted to affect foreign affairs to their advantage. Canada, since its emergence into the world stage from under Britain's shadow, has also been the target of significant foreign interference.

Since World War II, Canada has become increasingly aware of foreign agents present within its borders and attempting to spy, or directly affect Canadian affairs.¹ The first hostile country to have a significant covert presence in Canada was the Soviet Union, before and throughout the height of the Cold War. Once this was revealed by Soviet defector Gouzenko in 1945, the Canadian government began taking countermeasures; this began with the RCMP's Special Branch, established in 1950.² The Special Branch was the first government body formally established for counterintelligence operations, before which it had been part of the RCMP's Criminal Investigation Branch.³ Following a series of controversies regarding the RCMP and Special Branch's conduct in Quebec, the responsibility for counterintelligence was transferred to an entirely new agency, separate from the RCMP, known as the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS).⁴

Following the establishment of CSIS, new adversaries came to the forefront, especially as the Cold War drew to a close at the end of the 20th century. Most notably, Chinese interference became more prominent, particularly as trade grew stronger between Canada and China, and a growing diaspora immigrated to Canada.⁵ Chinese influence began with cooperative intelligence-gathering efforts between Chinese businessmen and triads; however, as geopolitical competition intensified between China and the West, China has now begun to attempt to influence Canadian elections—most notably, the 2019 and 2021 elections.⁶

¹ Catharine Tunney, "CSIS Says 2020 Was a Banner Year for Espionage Operations Targeting Canada," *CBC News*, April 12, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/nsicop-espionage-pandemic-1.5983612>.

² Edward Butts, "Igor Gouzenko," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, May 27, 2008, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/igor-sergeievich-gouzenko>.

³ R.C. Macleod, "Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, February 7, 2006, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/royal-canadian-mounted-police>.

⁴ "The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS): Past and Present," *CCLA*, September 22, 2021, <https://ccla.org/get-informed/talk-rights/the-canadian-security-intelligence-service-csis-past-and-present/>.

⁵ Jim Bronskill, "Canadian Intelligence Flagged Chinese Meddling 37 Years Ago: Newly Released Report," *CTV News*, July 22, 2023, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/canadian-intelligence-flagged-chinese-meddling-37-years-ago-newly-released-report-1.6490065>.

⁶ Elizabeth Thompson, "Inquiry into Foreign Interference to Begin Hearings in New Year," *CBC News*, November 2, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/foreign-interference-inquiry-hogue-1.7016148>.

Timeline

March 29, 1867 — The British North America Act receives royal assent; Canada's governmental structure is established as a bicameral parliamentary democracy.⁷

November 7, 1885 — The “Last Spike” is driven in at Craigellachie, British Columbia, completing the Canadian Pacific Railway which linked the east and west of Canada together.⁸ The CPR was built with over 15,000 Chinese labourers, leading to significant Chinese immigration to Canada.

July 1, 1923 — The Chinese Immigration Act is passed, excluding nearly all Chinese immigrants from entering Canada.⁹ During this period, less than 50 Chinese immigrants entered Canada, and the Chinese population in Canada decreased by 25%.

September 7, 1945 — Igor Gouzenko, a Soviet intelligence officer working in Ottawa, defects from the Soviet Union to the Canadian government. He brings documents that reveal Soviet espionage in Canada, Britain, and the United States. This prompts investigations into further espionage and is also considered the beginning of the Cold War.¹⁰

October 1, 1949 — After a prolonged civil war, the Communist Party of China (CPC), led by Mao Zedong, declares the establishment of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949.¹¹

October 13, 1970 — Following the election of Pierre Trudeau as Prime Minister, Canada formally establishes diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China.¹² This demonstrates a shift away from former Canadian relations with the Republic of China (Taiwan).

May 1983 — The Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act is enacted, establishing the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) as Canada's primary intelligence agency. CSIS is tasked with collecting intelligence, conducting security assessments, and protecting national security.¹³

1995 — Project Sidewinder, a joint RCMP-CSIS operation that identifies Chinese espionage activities in Canada, is launched. The project reportedly focused on technology theft and intelligence gathering by Chinese entities. It is shelved in 1997, and eventually resurfaces in news reports.¹⁴

⁷ The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, “British North America Act,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/event/British-North-America-Act>.

⁸ Omer Lavallé, “Canadian Pacific Railway,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, March 6, 2008, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/canadian-pacific-railway>.

⁹ Arlene Chan, “Chinese Immigration Act,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, March 7, 2017, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/chinese-immigration-act>.

¹⁰ Edward Butts, “Igor Gouzenko,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, May 27, 2008, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/igor-sergeievich-gouzenko>.

¹¹ The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, “Establishment of the People's Republic,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed December 5, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/place/China/Establishment-of-the-Peoples-Republic>.

¹² “Canada Ties,” *China Daily*, September 27, 2005, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/focus/2005-09/07/content_475809.htm.

¹³ “The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS): Past and Present,” *CCLA*, September 22, 2021, <https://ccla.org/get-informed/talk-rights/the-canadian-security-intelligence-service-csis-past-and-present/>.

¹⁴ RCMP-CSIS Joint Review Committee, “Chinese Intelligence Services and Triads Financial Links in Canada,” Sidewinder: Chinese intelligence services and Triads Financial Links in Canada, June 24, 1997, <https://www.primetimecrime.com/Articles/RobertRead/Sidewinder%20page%201.htm>.

October 2010 — Tencent Holdings launches WeChat, a multipurpose messaging, social media, and mobile payment app. WeChat quickly gained widespread popularity in China and with the Chinese diaspora abroad, including in Canada.¹⁵

December 1, 2018 — Meng Wanzhou, the CFO of Huawei Technologies and daughter of the company's founder, is arrested in Canada at the request of the United States. She faces allegations related to violating U.S. sanctions on Iran, triggering a diplomatic dispute between China, Canada, and the U.S.¹⁶

December 10, 2018 — In apparent retaliation for Meng Wanzhou's arrest, two Canadians, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, are detained in China on suspicion of espionage. They became known as the "Two Michaels."¹⁷

May 6, 2022 — The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) releases its 2021 report, highlighting the "persistent and sophisticated" threats against Canada's electoral system.¹⁸

February 24, 2023 — Han Dong, a Liberal Member of Parliament, is alleged to be a "witting affiliate" of Chinese interference efforts in the 2019 federal election, in a Global News report.¹⁹ It is also claimed that Trudeau and the Liberal Party ignored CSIS warnings about Dong. Dong was later expelled from the Liberal caucus, and has yet to be readmitted.

June 9, 2023 — Appointed special rapporteur on Chinese interference by Justin Trudeau, Mr. Johnston resigns from his role; a "highly partisan atmosphere" is cited as a contributing factor to this decision.²⁰

Historical Analysis

Sino-Canadian Relations: A History

Canada's subordinate role in the British Empire meant that Sino-Canadian diplomatic relations were entirely driven by British policy. Within this framework, however, Canadian economic interests were increasingly asserted in China; these interactions had a small, but growing impact upon both. The first major development during this period began with the establishment of Canada itself. In 1867, the British Parliament ratified the British North America Act, unifying Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes to form the Dominion of Canada.²¹ Along with these provinces, however, the newfound Dominion also gained control over a vast swath of Western territory; largely unsettled by European colonists and lacking infrastructure, Canadian administration over the West was tenuous at best.²²

¹⁵ Arjun Kharpal, "Everything You Need to Know about WeChat - China's Billion-User Messaging App," *CNBC*, February 4, 2019, <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/02/04/what-is-wechat-china-biggest-messaging-app.html>.

¹⁶ "The Meng Wanzhou Huawei Saga: A Timeline," *CBC News*, September 25, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/meng-wanzhou-huawei-kovrig-spavor-1.6188472>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Steven Chase, "A Timeline of China's Alleged Interference in Recent Canadian Elections," *The Globe and Mail*, August 21, 2023, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-chinese-election-interference-canada-timeline/>.

¹⁹ Ashley Burke, "MP Han Dong Says He Wants to Rejoin Liberal Caucus after Being 'vindicated' by Johnston's Report," *CBC News*, May 24, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/han-dong-liberal-caucus-1.6853124>.

²⁰ Darren Major, "David Johnston Resigning as Special Rapporteur on Foreign Interference," *CBC News*, June 9, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/david-johnston-resigns-1.6871761>.

²¹ P.B. Waite, "Confederation," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, *Historica Canada*, October 29, 2019.

²² Omer Lavallée, "Canadian Pacific Railway," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, *Historica Canada*, March 06, 2008.

British Columbia's conditional admission into the Dominion in 1871 exacerbated this issue; provincial leaders demanded the construction of a trans-continental railway within a decade.²³ Moreover, unlike the vast hinterlands of the interior, British Columbia was already an economically productive and settled colony; integrating British Columbia was therefore of paramount importance to prevent growing American influence—and eventual dominance, as feared by Canadian leaders—over the West.²⁴ The trans-continental railway's ten-year deadline, along with its strategic and political importance (British Columbians now voted in federal elections) placed enormous pressure upon the administration of Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald for its timely completion.²⁵ While construction proceeded without significant difficulty over the largely flat prairies, the Rocky Mountains, however, were a different story. Precipitous terrain presented numerous challenges for construction, and the region's remoteness significantly increased the cost of labour.²⁶

Chinese immigration was seen as a solution by the MacDonald administration.²⁷ British Columbia, through the port of Vancouver, was well-positioned as a Pacific gateway to China. As a result, Chinese railway workers could easily be transported by sea to British Columbia, whereas European workers had to make the long journey across the incomplete railway.²⁸ Moreover, Chinese workers were paid far less than workers of other ethnicities.²⁹

Overall, the completion of the trans-continental railway in 1885 resulted in two lasting effects. Firstly, the employment of Chinese workers in its construction established a permanent Chinese presence in Canada.³⁰ Secondly, it connected British Columbia and its Pacific coastline to the burgeoning industrial and financial centres of the Canadian East; the Canadian economy was now trans-continental. The port of Vancouver became Canada's gateway to lucrative Chinese markets. Indeed, the completion of the railway marked a significant growth in economic interactions between the two nations; for example, in 1923, bilateral trade amounted to about CAD 27.3 million.

This period of economic and cultural exchange significantly diminished during the Sino-Japanese War; the Second World War as a whole resulted in a fundamental realignment of Canadian interests in China: in 1944, the Canadian government established formal diplomatic relations with the Chinese Nationalist government, a measure previously viewed as unnecessary given that Sino-Canadian relations were, until then, only economic.³¹ In 1949, however, the Nationalists lost the Chinese Civil War; the Communists now controlled the Chinese mainland, and the Nationalists fled to the island of Taiwan.³² The Communist victory produced a diplomatic dilemma for Canada, as Canadian foreign policy followed that of its closest allies: the United States and Great Britain. Both, however, took a diverging stance on whether to recognize the Communist government; while the United States refused, Great Britain—under the left-leaning Labour Party—opened diplomatic relations.³³ As a

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Anthony Perl, "Public Enterprise as an Expression of Sovereignty: Reconsidering the Origin of Canadian National Railways," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 27, no. 1 (1994): 23–52, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3229258>.

²⁶ "Building the Railway," *Government of British Columbia*, <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/multiculturalism-anti-racism/chinese-legacy-bc/history/building-the-railway>.

²⁷ Scott N. Romaniuk, "Timeline of Canada-China Relations," (China Institute, University of Alberta, 2020).

²⁸ David Lee, "Chinese Construction Workers on the Canadian Pacific," *Railroad History*, no. 148 (1983): 42–57, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43523867>.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ John Hilliker and Donald Barry, *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946–1968* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt81002>.

³² O. Edmund Clubb, "The Man Who Lost China," *The New York Times*, October 24, 1976, <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/10/24/archives/the-man-who-lost-china.html>.

³³ John Hilliker and Donald Barry, *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946–1968* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt81002>.

result, Canada maintained a balanced policy: while Canada would not recognize the Communist government, an embassy would be opened in Nanjing.³⁴ Eventually, the Korean War put an end to this period of relatively cordial relations; with Canadian forces directly engaging those of Communist China, the Canadian embassy was forced to close in 1951 by Chinese authorities.³⁵ After this, Canada maintained relations solely with the Nationalist government in Taiwan.³⁶

In spite of its two-ocean geography, Canadian foreign policy had always retained a primarily Atlantic and continental outlook in the 20th century: 83% of Canadian exports went to Europe and the United States; Canada's closest allies were Great Britain and the United States.³⁷ While successive commodities booms had drawn money and people West, Canada's economic and demographic centre was still firmly rooted in Ontario and Quebec.³⁸ The Pacific, in spite of improved trans-continental infrastructure, was always secondary in importance—peripheral, even.³⁹ However, the election of Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau in 1968 marked a fundamental realignment of Canadian foreign policy; this “Pacific Tilt” aimed to reflect the growing economic and strategic importance of the Pacific and Western Canada.⁴⁰ A series of domestic events underlined this shift: the 1973 energy crisis resulted in an oil boom in Alberta, drawing people and money—voters and donors—westward, increasing the political importance of the region.⁴¹ Western Canadians were keen on the opportunity that Pacific markets represented—a sentiment that was increasingly reflected in the polls.⁴²

China, in spite of its Communist government, represented the largest opportunity: its population dwarfed that of its neighbors, and was barely food-sufficient or energy-sufficient—deficits easily resolved by Canadian wheat and oil exports.⁴³ Therefore, further rapprochement with China was Pierre Trudeau's first priority, despite the incongruity of China's dictatorial rule with Canadian democracy. During his 1968 election campaign, he stated: “We have an economic interest in trade with China... and a political interest in preventing tension between China and its neighbours... Our aim will be to recognize the People's Republic of China government as soon as possible.”⁴⁴ And thus, Canada became among the first Western countries to recognize the Chinese Communist government after the Korean War.⁴⁵ This proved opportune; after establishing economic and diplomatic ties in the 1960s, China quickly became Canada's 9th largest trading partner.⁴⁶

Rapprochement with Communist China meant prosperity for Canada, but it also meant vexation from Canada's allies. For example, the issue of Taiwan became a source of intense controversy when former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau blocked Taiwanese participation in the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics.⁴⁷ Supporting Beijing's One China Policy and ignoring its human rights abuses to retain Canadian economic interests increasingly became a recurring theme, not only for the Pierre Trudeau's administration, but for successive governments as

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Greg Donaghy, “Pierre Trudeau and Canada's Pacific Tilt, 1945–1984,” *International Journal* 74, no. 1 (2019): 135–50, doi:10.1177/0020702019834883.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ William Borders, “Trudeau to Go to China to Better Special Ties,” *The New York Times*, October 7, 1963, <https://www.nytimes.com/1973/10/07/archives/trudeau-to-go-to-china-to-better-special-ties-expected-to-see-mao.html>.

⁴⁶ Scott N. Romaniuk, “Timeline of Canada-China Relations.”

⁴⁷ Ibid.

well.⁴⁸ The brutal Tiananmen Square Massacre, while drawing a brief period of condemnation, resulted in little fundamental change in Canada's approach to Sino-Canadian relations.⁴⁹

Economic relations with China grew rapidly after its admission to the World Trade Organization in 2001, marked by numerous high-profile visits. Attempts to reverse this trend have proved futile. For instance, the Harper administration was forced to backtrack its hardline China policy during the 2008 financial crisis, which saw Chinese export markets remain reliable buyers for Canadian commodities as Western economies stagnated.⁵⁰ Indeed, Canada has grown reliant on Chinese trade; even for exports, China is Canada's third largest trading partner.⁵¹

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS)

Canada is isolated from foreign threats by the Atlantic and Pacific, and allied with its only significant neighbour, the United States; foreign threats have never played a significant role in Canadian history. Consequently, Canada lacked a continuous and extensive intelligence system for much of its history; rather, intelligence systems have tended to emerge intermittently to counter immediate threats.⁵² For example, domestic intelligence in World War I, primarily aimed at preventing German sabotage of Canadian infrastructure, was placed under the responsibility of a myriad of different organizations—governmental or otherwise.⁵³ In addition to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Dominion Police—a separate force analogous to the United States Capitol Police—private detective agencies were contracted to protect Canadian assets from sabotage.⁵⁴

The latter half of the 20th century, however, rapidly exposed the inadequacies of Canada's intermittent intelligence systems. In 1945, a cipher clerk employed at the Soviet embassy in Ottawa—Igor Gouzenko—defected, bringing with him several documents exposing a Soviet spy ring in Canada.⁵⁵ This event, called the Gouzenko Affair, made it clear that Canada was in no way safe. This new war—the Cold War—was fought with deception rather than invasion: Canada's geography offered little in the way of protection from the former. Canada also became a prime target due to its alliance with the United States, with little capability to defend the American intelligence, arms, and technology it received from spies.⁵⁶ As a result, the Gouzenko Affair was a crucial turning point, “contribut[ing] significantly to the development of Canadian intelligence capabilities.”⁵⁷ Canadian intelligence became increasingly consolidated in a single agency: the RCMP Security Service.⁵⁸

Another turning point in the history of Canadian intelligence capabilities was the 1970 October Crisis, during which the *Front de libération du Québec* (FLQ) kidnapped both British diplomat James Cross and Québec Minister of Labour Pierre Laporte, while murdering the latter. The RCMP Security Service's controversial role

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Joseph Brean, “Harper Signs \$2.5B Deals with China, and Raises Human Rights Issues — Signalling New Era of Cooperation,” *National Post*, November 9, 2014, <https://nationalpost.com/news/politics/harper-signs-2-5b-deals-with-china-and-raises-human-rights-issues-signalling-new-era-of-cooperation>.

⁵¹ “Canada's State of Trade 2020,” *Government of Canada*, September 6, 2023, <https://www.international.gc.ca/gac-amc/publications/economiste-economiste/state-of-trade-commerce-international-2020.aspx?lang=eng>

⁵² Wesley K. Wark, “Intelligence and Espionage,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia, Historica Canada*, March 4, 2015.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Alen Hristov, “The Gouzenko Affair and the Development of Canadian Intelligence,” *E-International Relations*, December 8, 2018, <https://www.e-ir.info/2018/12/08/the-gouzenko-affair-and-the-development-of-canadian-intelligence/>.

⁵⁶ Wesley K. Wark, “Intelligence and Espionage.”

⁵⁷ Alen Hristov, “The Gouzenko Affair and the Development of Canadian Intelligence.”

⁵⁸ Wesley K. Wark, “Intelligence and Espionage.”

in the brutal suppression of the Québécois independence movement following the October Crisis culminated in 1984, when the RCMP Security was reformed as the independent agency it is known today: the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

Current Situation

Sino-Canadian Relations

Economic Reliance on China

Recent Chinese political economy has been marked by rapid growth and resilience through a unique model of state capitalism. In fact, China maintained double-digit annual GDP growth while the West faced recession during the 2008 financial crisis. Indeed, Canada—and the West as a whole—is remarkably reliant on this authoritarian state as both a buyer for commodities and a seller of manufactured goods.⁵⁹ Today, China is Canada's second most important trading partner. This state of affairs offers unique challenges to Canada's ability to freely exercise foreign and domestic policy. Every action and every statement must consider the Chinese perspective—for nobody wants to “hurt the feelings of the Chinese people,” and in doing so, hurt their voracious appetite for Canadian grain and oil. Canada's ability to effectively criticize Chinese human rights abuses and its actions in Canada are severely limited by our economic dependency.

Election Interference

On November 7, 2022, Global News reported on a series of leaked briefings prepared by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). Foreign operatives, affiliated with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), had allegedly worked to subvert Canadian democracy during the 2021 federal elections: agents were placed in the offices of MPs to influence policy; clandestine payments were made through intermediaries to support CCP-aligned candidates; and smear campaigns were waged against politicians considered unfriendly to Chinese interests—especially those who had voted in favour of condemning the Uyghur genocide.⁶⁰ Chinese operatives formed a network with at least 11 federal election candidates, who received in total around CAD 250,000 from the Chinese consulate in Toronto; an Ontario provincial MPP and a federal election candidate staffer acted as financial intermediaries to conceal the transaction.⁶¹ Just two years later, in 2021, reports found that Chinese diplomats made undisclosed donations to political parties while paying Chinese students to volunteer for particular candidates.⁶²

China has also sought to exploit multi-ethnic divisions in Canada through the use of Chinese-language social media. For instance, in the 2021 election, disinformation campaigns were spread by leveraging Chinese-Canadian organizations, Chinese-language media outlets, and the Chinese social media network WeChat.

⁵⁹ Colin Scarffe, “The Canada-China Global Commerce Picture and Supply Chain Links,” *Government of Canada*, September, 2020, <https://www.international.gc.ca/trade-commerce/assets/pdfs/economist-economiste/analysis-analyse/canada-china-chine-commerce-en.pdf>

⁶⁰ Sam Cooper, “Canadian Intelligence Warned PM Trudeau That China Covertly Funded 2019 Election Candidates: Sources,” *Global News*, November 7, 2022, <https://globalnews.ca/news/9253386/canadian-intelligence-warned-pm-trudeau-that-china-covertly-funded-2019-election-candidates-sources/>.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

Notable Conservatives targeted include MP Kenny Chiu and Michael Chong—both of which were highly critical of severe Chinese human rights abuses in Xinjiang and Hong Kong.⁶³ These reports were confirmed by researchers from McGill University, who found that Chinese state media worked “with an apparent aim to convince Canadians of Chinese origin to vote against the Conservative Party.” Indeed, China has used multiple tools to influence the Canadian public, ranging from broadcasting state-sponsored propaganda on social media platforms such as Twitter (now ‘X’) to exerting government control over China-based social media platforms such as WeChat and TikTok.

Amidst public discussions regarding foreign interference, opposition politicians advocated for an impartial public inquiry to probe the allegations of interference. But instead of a public inquiry, Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau appointed a ‘special rapporteur’ to produce a report. However, this move stirred significant controversy, as the chosen individual was former Governor General David Johnston, characterized as a ‘family friend’ of the Trudeaus and a member of the Trudeau Foundation. Notably, the Trudeau Foundation faced accusations of receiving donations from Chinese agents, adding to the concerns surrounding the impartiality of the appointed rapporteur. Predictably, Johnston’s report was met with concern by all opposition leaders over severe conflicts of interest and its obfuscation of key information.

Chinese “Service Stations”

Foreign interference does not exclusively encompass cyberwarfare; many forms of intrusion play out on Canadian soil. To begin, China has established “service stations,” (also known as police stations) in dozens of nations across the globe that, according to the member state, are used to carry out services related to “passport renewal, police operations, collecting opinions from the diaspora community and spreading policy information.”⁶⁴ While China claims that these service stations do not infringe on the international rule of law, Safeguard Defenders, a Spanish Human Rights group, reports that these police stations “violate territorial integrity” by “setting up a parallel policing mechanism using illegal methods.”⁶⁵ The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, during a national investigation into Chinese service stations in Canada, regarded the unsanctioned organizations as foreign interference.⁶⁶

In 53 countries across the world, national police forces have discovered over 100 different police stations, all accused of enforcing Chinese law undercover.⁶⁷ Instead of renewing passports, these stations allegedly pressure and persecute Chinese diaspora populations across diplomatic boundaries.⁶⁸ Consisting of diaspora Chinese citizens with ties to the nation’s security and intelligence sectors, the police stations coerce citizens to return to China where they face the justice system. In one instance, after facing both intimidation and compulsion to return home, an anonymous Chinese citizen left their life in Canada only to be fined CAD 380,000 for embezzlement of public funds.⁶⁹ Hoping to uncover hidden police stations, the RCMP launched a national investigation, attempting to shut down these instances of foreign intervention.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Rantanen, Maria. 2023. “What Exactly are Overseas Chinese ‘Police Stations’?” *Richmond News*. <https://www.richmond-news.com/local-news/what-exactly-are-chinese-police-stations-6449088>.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Leyland Cecco, “A Brazen Intrusion’: China’s Foreign Police Stations Raise Hackles in Canada,” *The Guardian*, November 7, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/07/chinese-police-stations-toronto-canada>.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

Intimidation of MPs and their Families by Chinese Agents

While combatting the intrusion of foreign justice systems in Canada, politicians, as well as their families, have faced threats and intimidation from foreign states. On May 16, 2023, Conservative Michael Chong testified at the House of Commons on the basis that his rights as a Member of Parliament (MP) were infringed upon by alleged Chinese interference.⁷⁰

Chong gave his statement after the Globe and Mail broadcasted a confidential document entitled “The People’s Republic of China Foreign Interference in Canada: A Critical National Security Threat,” outlining multiple instances of Chinese encroachment targeted towards the Conservative Party.⁷¹ This contained information proving that Chong’s relatives were being sought out for “potential sanctions,” and that they would be made an “example of” to “deter others from taking anti-PRC positions.”⁷² All of this took place after Chong sponsored a parliamentary motion accusing China of human rights abuses.⁷³

Investigations concluded that Chinese diplomat, Zhao Wei, led the search for information about Chong’s family and established them as a target of China, resulting in his expulsion from Canada. With both Chong and his family being targeted by foreign intimidation, he has accelerated dialogue about interference by speaking about his experience. Hoping to protect all Canadians, Chong has called for changes in legislation to bridge the gaps in the nation’s intelligence and security.

The Han Dong Incident

In March 2023, Global News uncovered two unnamed national security documents revealing that Liberal MP, Han Dong, was conspiring with China.⁷⁴ The reports alleged that in 2021, Dong secretly instructed a Chinese diplomat not to release Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, two Canadians who were illegally imprisoned in China for 1,020 days in retaliation for the arrest of Huawei senior executive Meng Wanzhou—accused of various fraud-related charges by U.S. prosecutors.⁷⁵ Following this revelation, Dong gave a statement confirming that he had indeed spoken with a Chinese diplomat but denied that he pushed for their release to be delayed. Dong has since resigned from the Liberal caucus and announced that he would sit as an independent MP after being the subject of allegations involving interference by China in Canadian politics in later months.

⁷⁰ Ryan Tumilty, “MP Michael Chong Says he has Received Personal Threats, in Addition to Threats on his Family,” *National Post*, May 16, 2023, <https://nationalpost.com/news/politics/mp-michael-chong-received-personal-threats>.

⁷¹ David Shribman and Tim Cestnick, “China Views Canada as a ‘High Priority’ for Interference: CSIS Report,” *The Globe and Mail*, May 1, 2023, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-china-targets-mps-csis/>.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Nadine Yousif, “What to Know About Canada and China’s Foreign Interference Row,” *BBC*, May 23, 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-64813182>.

⁷⁴ Catharine Tunney, “MP Han Dong Leaving Liberal Caucus, Denies Allegations of Working Against Release of 2 Michaels,” *CBC News*, March 22, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/han-dong-independent-1.6787960>.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

Canadian Intelligence Capabilities

The CSIS Today

Today, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) serves as Canada's primary intelligence agency. Its core responsibilities are defined by its mandate, which states that CSIS must "investigate activities suspected of constituting threats to the security of Canada...and take measures to reduce threats to the security of Canada."⁷⁶ Established during the Cold War, the primary mission of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) initially centered around countering and surveilling the actions of foreign actors—especially following the effective dissolution of the FLQ after the October Crisis.⁷⁷ However, in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the 9/11 attacks, the focus of CSIS underwent a notable shift towards monitoring and addressing terrorist activities.⁷⁸

Throughout its history, CSIS has focused its activities on signals intelligence, which is the collection and analysis of information from various electronic sources such as radar and radio transmissions. In recent years, the importance of signals intelligence has grown due to the increasing reliance on digital communication. Indeed, the CSIS's expertise in signals intelligence has demonstrated significant relevance in recent years. Furthermore, Canada belongs to the "Five Eyes" intelligence-sharing group, an alliance between Australia, Britain, New Zealand, and the U.S. to gain insight into covert international affairs, protect Canadian citizens from cyber threats, and reduce the pressure of hostile state activity.⁷⁹ Consequently, the CSIS has a disproportionate global reach, as a result of its interconnectivity with allied intelligence services.

However, the CSIS has several key operational limitations. Unlike the United States' Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) or Britain's Secret Intelligence Service (MI6), Canada does not have a dedicated bureau for human intelligence, which involves the collection of intelligence through interpersonal contact and sources.⁸⁰ Human intelligence is a critical component of any comprehensive intelligence strategy, as it provides nuanced and context-specific information that may not be available through purely observations-based signals intelligence.⁸¹ Indeed, the absence of a human intelligence bureau could potentially limit the scope and depth of intelligence that CSIS is able to gather on foreign actors. Furthermore, while CSIS can conduct investigations and operations, both covert and overt, it does not have the authority to enforce the law in the way that police agencies do, which precludes it from making arrests directly.⁸² Instead, when the CSIS identifies a threat, it reports information to the Government of Canada, which in turn refers the matter to law enforcement agencies.⁸³

⁷⁶ "Mandate," *Government of Canada*, January 25, 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/security-intelligence-service/corporate/mandate.html>.

⁷⁷ "The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS): Past and Present," *CCLA*, September 22, 2021, <https://ccla.org/get-informed/talk-rights/the-canadian-security-intelligence-service-csis-past-and-present/>.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ John Ferris, "Explainer: How Does Canadian Intelligence Protect Us against Foreign Interference?," *UCalgary News*, July 10, 2023, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/news/explainer-how-does-canadian-intelligence-protect-us-against-foreign-interference>.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Chris Hall, "CSIS to Be given 'power to Disrupt,' Not Arrest, Jihadists in New Terror Bill," *CBC News*, January 30, 2015, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/csis-to-be-given-power-to-disrupt-not-arrest-in-new-anti-terror-bill-1.2937123>.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

Other Concerns and Actors

Indian Interference in Canada

Recent controversy over India's alleged interference in Canada revolves around the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a Canadian citizen who had immigrated from India in 1997. Nijjar was a separatist leader advocating for the independence of the majority-Sikh Khalistan region in Northern India.⁸⁴ In 2020, Nijjar was accused by the Indian government as being the "mastermind" behind the Khalistan Tiger Force, an organization officially designated a terrorist group by the Indian government. In 2023, however, Nijjar shot multiple times outside a Sikh cultural center in Surrey, British Columbia, where he served as president.

In September 2023, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau informed the House of Commons of "credible allegations of a potential link between agents of the government of India and the killing of [Nijjar]." These statements triggered a diplomatic dispute between Canada and India, with the latter vehemently denying the allegations. To date, no concrete evidence supporting these claims has been publicly disclosed. Canada's allies in the Five Eyes have urged the Indian government to actively participate in investigations, while Canadian opposition leaders have called for greater transparency. As this is a developing situation, Members of Parliament are advised to stay informed as relevant information arises ahead of the conference.

Cyberwarfare

Cyberwarfare is just one method of executing large-scale international campaigns for nations across the globe. The state-sponsored cyber programs of China, Russia, Iran and North Korea employ cyberattacks on Canada as a result of the nation's international influence, powerful allies, and involvement in groups including NATO and the G7.⁸⁵ Many of these nations spread disinformation, a form of false information that "manipulate[s], cause[s] damage, or guide[s] people, organizations, and countries in the wrong direction," with the end goal of steering populations to align with their foreign agenda.⁸⁶ While Canada is continuously at risk of foreign interference, aggressive nations tend to concentrate their cyberattacks on elections, and frequently target citizens, hoping to rattle Canada during periods of immense political and economic change.⁸⁷ For instance, according to an independent report investigating the integrity of the 2021 election, China, Russia, and Iran all exploited social media sites to influence the voting results.⁸⁸ Most notably, investigators emphasized a post spreading anti-Conservative rhetoric on the Chinese messaging app WeChat, referring to China's methods to sway the vote as "a sophisticated strategy to disrupt Canada's democracy."⁸⁹

⁸⁴ Brennan MacDonald, "Blinken Again Urges India to Co-Operate as Canada Probes Killing of pro-Khalistan Activist," *CBC News*, November 10, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/secretary-blinken-india-canada-investigation-nijjar-homicide-1.7025302>.

⁸⁵ Canadian Centre for Cyber Security, "National Cyber Threat Assessment 2023-2024". *Canadian Centre for Cyber Security*, 2022, <https://www.cyber.gc.ca/en/guidance/national-cyber-threat-assessment-2023-2024>.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Kenton Thibaut, "Report on the Assessment of the 2021 Critical Election Incident Public Protocol," *Government of Canada*, 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/di-id/documents/rpt/CEIPP-rpt-eng.pdf>.

⁸⁹ Ian Austen, "Foreign Efforts to Subvert Canada's Last 2 Elections Failed, Report Says," *The New York Times*, February 28, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/28/world/canada/canada-elections-foreign-interference.html>.

The rise of social media has transformed internet platforms into mechanisms of online foreign interference.⁹⁰ When Canadians use apps or online resources with a server located on foreign soil, their data is exceedingly vulnerable. Within their borders, states can manipulate private corporations to reveal an individual's data, compromising personal information, including a user's political affiliations. As a result, states can choose specific Canadians as targets for their propaganda, exposing them to distinct rhetoric, hoping to skew their political ties and influence public opinion.⁹¹ Many also abuse the algorithmic nature of these platforms to disperse propaganda. In August 2021, Facebook reported that a "Russia-linked influence campaign" made multiple fraudulent accounts perpetuating disinformation about COVID-19 vaccines, whose posts were later circulated by Instagram influencers, on Facebook's other platform.⁹²

Artificial Intelligence

Over the past few years, the international community has experienced exponential growth in artificial intelligence (AI) development. Through the use of deepfake technology, an extension of generative AI, anyone can fabricate exceptionally accurate videos of people doing whatever they choose.⁹³ This technology has begun spreading counterfeit political narratives and disseminating foreign propaganda to detriment the reputation of political leaders, discredit their voices, and spur public distrust.⁹⁴ In 2020, a YouTube channel posted several deepfakes of Andrew Scheer, with his face plastered on an old video of Pee-Wee Herman. Viewed by thousands, the video reduced his credibility to many citizens, damaging public trust in him.⁹⁵ As this technology becomes ubiquitous, it becomes another weapon in the arsenal of state-backed cyberwarfare programmes, swaying voters to align with their political agenda. While the Canadian Security Intelligence Service works to address these issues, many still slip under the radar, indicating that improvements in cybersecurity are essential within the nation.

Possible Solutions and Controversies

Enhancing Election Security

Bearing in mind the increased frequency of foreign interference during elections, MPs must focus on improving electoral security. Political advertising is integral to achieving informed voting; as the public becomes aware of candidates and their plans for the country, citizens are more likely to vote for themselves and their families. But as foreign interference brings questions to the credibility of the candidates—through the use of online rhetoric, deep fakes, and other forms of cyberwarfare—electors become uncertain about where to place their vote. Furthermore, Members of Parliament can introduce and enforce legislation to enhance greater transparency in

⁹⁰"National Cyber Threat Assessment 2023-2024," *Canadian Centre for Cyber Security*, <https://www.cyber.gc.ca/en/guidance/national-cyber-threat-assessment-2023-2024>.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Kaleigh Rogers, "Deepfakes of Canadian Politicians Emerge on YouTube," *CBC News*, June 20, 2019, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/science/deepfakes-canadian-politicians-youtube-1.5181296>.

campaign advertising to protect electoral integrity.⁹⁶ This looks like disclosing the sponsors of political advertisements to citizens, the amount of money necessary to fund them, as well as the targeting metrics used to circulate them. Greater transparency spurs increased trust in electoral candidates and protects the democratic nature of elections from foreign manipulation.⁹⁷

Additionally, the House of Commons can look to invest in more protected electronic voting systems to bolster security. With the rise of online voting, which is used to make the process more accessible, elections become vulnerable to greater foreign meddling. While paper ballots are counted and verified in front of election scrutineers, many citizens worry that online voting can be hacked, which would destroy their integrity.⁹⁸ According to Nicole Goodman, an associate professor at Brock University, “Other countries... that use this technology... have some sort of regulatory framework, [but Canada does] not have that”. Furthermore, by developing standards on how online voting should be carried out across the nation, the House of Commons could protect the right to vote for all citizens and protect the nation from foreign interference.⁹⁹

Improving Cybersecurity

As many nations begin relying on cyberwarfare to execute international goals, MPs can focus on strengthening current cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive government and corporate data from espionage. First, the House of Commons can invest in cybersecurity research and development. Global cybersecurity job vacancies are predicted to rise to over 3 million by 2025, making the industry staggeringly understaffed, despite its responsibility to bolster international security.¹⁰⁰ By promoting talent development on a university-by-university basis and allocating greater funds and resources to cybersecurity research, the House of Commons can simultaneously encourage technological advancement and train a new generation of competent scientists within the industry. Secondly, Canada can escalate alliances with like-minded nations—particularly the U.S.—to enhance collaborative cybersecurity measures. The nations can endeavour to enhance the collective defence of critical infrastructure and begin to focus on areas such as transportation, telecommunications, and financial services, which, despite their vulnerability, have been deprioritized within cyberwarfare protection.

Combatting Disinformation

Alongside the development of cybersecurity technologies and regulation of voting systems, the House of Commons can create legislation to combat disinformation spread by foreign nations. Hoping to influence public opinion, states fabricate false information about politicians and disseminate it into a nation to breed distrust and polarization. Nonetheless, MPs can promote legislation to educate citizens about disinformation identification through digital literacy campaigns and create a database of credible sources to ensure the population reads accurate stories.¹⁰¹ Fake news changes how the public interprets daily information; however, by legitimizing

⁹⁶ Maria D. Crego, “Towards New Rules on Transparency and Targeting of Political Advertising.” *European Parliament*, January, 2023, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/733592/EPRS_BRI\(2022\)733592_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/733592/EPRS_BRI(2022)733592_EN.pdf).

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Waqas Chughtai, “Online voting is growing in Canada, raising calls for clear standards,” *CBC News*, October 21, 2022, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/online-voting-ontario-elections-1.6623659>.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Neelam Sandhu, “Canada-United States: Binational Cybersecurity for a More Resilient Today and Sustainable Future.” *BlackBerry Blog*, March, 2023, <https://blog.blackberry.com/en/2023/03/canada-and-us-advancing-binational-cybersecurity>.

¹⁰¹ Darrel M. West, “How to combat fake news and disinformation,” *Brookings Institution*, December 18, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/>.

particular news sources, the government can reduce contentious media, propagating accurate journalism. Finally, the House of Commons can consider working with social media platforms to implement more comprehensive content moderation mechanisms. Battlefields for disinformation, social media platforms can use new AI-based tools to detect misinformation and work to flag and remove content before it is published quickly. However, Canadian legislators must first clearly outline disinformation, and provide metrics to discern it from public opinion, or lawmakers risk infringing upon freedom of speech while attempting to reduce foreign influence within online communities.

Bloc Positions

Liberal Party

The Liberal Party of Canada claims to take a strong stance against foreign interference in Canada, recognizing that safeguarding Canada's national and economic security requires strong action both at home and abroad.¹⁰² However, the Liberal Party's actions thus far have been mixed. While prominent Liberals have been outspoken about alleged Indian government interference in the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, its stance on Chinese interference in the 2019 and 2021 federal elections has been notably subdued—likely due to it being the primary beneficiary of Chinese interference efforts. Indeed, rather than authorizing a comprehensive public inquiry, the party has opted for a more limited report from a 'special rapporteur.'

In 2023, the Liberals appointed former Governor General David Johnston as special rapporteur to head a private inquiry into foreign election interference, which raised the ire of all opposition parties who demanded a public inquiry. Beyond the opacity of this investigation, opposition parties were further concerned by the close ties between Johnston and the Trudeau family, especially as Johnston was a member of the Trudeau Foundation. Though a final report was supposed to be released in October 2023, Johnston resigned on June 9, citing the “highly partisan atmosphere” surrounding the entire inquiry.¹⁰³

Following Johnston's resignation and new negotiations with the opposition parties, the Liberal Party has now agreed to begin a public inquiry into foreign interference; however, months after the original agreement, no announcements have been made.¹⁰⁴

Conservative Party

As the primary opposition party in the House of Commons, the Conservative Party has been incredibly vocal in its opposition to the Liberal Party's handling of the investigations into foreign interference. Most notably, it has been adamant in its demands for a public inquiry into the claims of foreign interference in Canadian elections.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Liberal Party, “Combatting Authoritarianism and Foreign Interference: Liberal Party of Canada,” *Liberal Party of Canada*, 2021, <https://liberal.ca/our-platform/combating-authoritarianism-and-foreign-interference/>.

¹⁰³ Darren Major, “David Johnston Resigning as Special Rapporteur on Foreign Interference,” *CBC News*, June 9, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/david-johnston-resigns-1.6871761>.

¹⁰⁴ Peter Zimonjic, “Liberals, Opposition House Leaders Meet to Discuss Foreign Interference Inquiry,” *CBC News*, July 8, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/house-leaders-opposition-liberals-meeting-inquiry-1.6900290>.

¹⁰⁵ Aaron D'Andrea, “What Opposition Parties Want next on Foreign Interference Probe,” *Global News*, June 16, 2023, <https://globalnews.ca/news/9773216/foreign-interference-opposition-inquiry-discussions/>.

Indeed, Conservative MP Michael Chong has been one of the prime targets of Chinese pressure and influence campaigns, even including pressure against his family members in Hong Kong.¹⁰⁶

Furthermore, the Conservative Party and its leader Pierre Poilievre, alongside the Bloc Québécois, have refused Trudeau's offer to see the classified sections of Johnston's interim report, as they view it as an attempt to legitimize secret investigations.¹⁰⁷ The Conservative Party continues to criticize the Liberal government's handling of the investigations and is currently negotiating for a public inquiry alongside the other parties.

New Democratic Party (NDP)

The New Democratic Party (NDP), despite their confidence-and-supply agreement with the ruling Liberal Party, has been primarily aligned with the other opposition parties in requesting a public inquiry into foreign interference. Indeed, the NDP was the party which proposed for Johnston to step down, citing his "perceived bias"—a move notably out of step with Liberal ambitions.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, the NDP has also pushed to expand the investigation beyond just China, but also into other nations such as Russia, India, and Iran.¹⁰⁹ The NDP has also criticized both the Liberal and Conservative parties for using the dispute to score political points instead of directly tackling the problem. Despite this, it has remained the most willing to cooperate with the Liberal government, and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh was willing to apply for security clearance to read the classified report compiled by Johnston.¹¹⁰

Bloc Québécois

The Bloc Québécois has cooperated closely with the Conservative Party in its staunch opposition to the Liberal Party's policies regarding foreign interference, and has been a strong proponent for a public inquiry into the claims of foreign interference in Canadian elections alongside the other opposition parties.

Following the resignation of Special Rapporteur Johnston, the Bloc Québécois has been active in proposing a number of replacements to lead the public inquiry, including many candidates from Québec. Furthermore, the Bloc Québécois and its leader Yves-Francois Blanchet, alongside the Conservative Party, have refused Trudeau's offer to see the classified sections of Johnston's interim report, as they view it as an attempt to legitimize secret investigations.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ Darren Major, "Canada Expelling Diplomat Accused of Targeting MP Michael Chong's Family," *CBC News*, May 9, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-expelling-chinese-diplomat-1.6836336>.

¹⁰⁷ Rachel Aiello, "'A Trap': Opposition Rejects Trudeau's Security Clearance Offer to Access Confidential Annex of Johnston Report," *CTV News*, May 24, 2023, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/a-trap-opposition-rejects-trudeau-s-security-clearance-offer-to-access-confidential-annex-of-johnston-report-1.6411204>.

¹⁰⁸ New Democratic Party, "Canada's NDP Wants Johnston to Step aside and Is Calling for a Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference," *Canada's NDP*, May 30, 2023, <https://www.ndp.ca/news/canadas-ndp-wants-johnston-step-aside-and-calling-public-inquiry-foreign-interference>.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ The Canadian Press, "NDP, Green Leaders Cleared to Review Evidence of Alleged Foreign Meddling - National," *Global News*, August 16, 2023, <https://globalnews.ca/news/9901053/ndp-green-leaders-foreign-interference-evidence/>.

¹¹¹ Rachel Aiello, "'A Trap': Opposition Rejects Trudeau's Security Clearance Offer to Access Confidential Annex of Johnston Report," *CTV News*, May 24, 2023, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/a-trap-opposition-rejects-trudeau-s-security-clearance-offer-to-access-confidential-annex-of-johnston-report-1.6411204>.

Green Party

For all intents and purposes, the Green Party has been largely irrelevant—especially in regards to this topic. Indeed, it has made few statements over the political conflict over a public versus private inquiry into the claims of interference. Nevertheless, it has primarily stood alongside the other opposition parties in voting in favour of a public inquiry. Notably, the Green Party and its leader Elizabeth May have accepted Trudeau’s offer to see the classified sections of Johnston’s interim report, though they still support a public inquiry.¹¹²

Discussion Questions

1. What policies have been put forth by your party to combat foreign interference?
2. How can Canada strengthen its election system and ensure the integrity of the election process?
3. How should Canada respond to foreign interference on an international level?
4. In what ways can Canada work with its allies to combat foreign threats?
5. Should the government be more transparent about potential investigations? Why or why not?
6. Why is Canada a target for foreign interference?

¹¹² The Canadian Press, “NDP, Green Leaders Cleared to Review Evidence of Alleged Foreign Meddling - National,” *Global News*, August 16, 2023, <https://globalnews.ca/news/9901053/ndp-green-leaders-foreign-interference-evidence/>.

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