

## Chinese interference in Canadian politics

October 7, 2023

A BACKGROUND: There have been allegations of Chinese interference in Canadian politics, including the federal elections of 2019 and 2021. According to leaked intelligence reports, Chinese diplomats and proxies in Canada tried to sway election outcomes in favor of the Liberals. The allegations include claims that China provided secret funding through its Toronto consulate to 11 candidates who ran in the 2019 federal election, and that in 2021, Chinese diplomats and proxies made undeclared cash donations to political campaigns and hired international Chinese students to volunteer for certain candidates full-time.

The Chinese government has denied any interference, calling the allegations “purely baseless and defamatory”. However, these allegations have strained diplomatic relations between Canada and China. In May 2023, tensions escalated with tit-for-tat expulsions of a Chinese diplomat in Toronto and a Canadian diplomat in Shanghai.

**Note:** Please see “Trudeau denies Chinese influence on Canadian Elections” dated November 20, 2022 at <https://diginews360.com/trudeau-denies-chinese-influence-on-canadian-elections/>

Please read “Ending Chinese Efforts to Influence Canadian Elections” dated November 11, 2022 at <https://diginews360.com/ending-chinese-efforts-to-influence-canadian-elections/>

Please read “Michael Chong calls for Ending Chinese Interference in Canada” dated November 10, 2022 at <https://diginews360.com/michael-chong-end-chinese-interference-in-canada/>

Foreign interference is not new to Canada. In 2021, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) reported that it continues “to observe steady, and in some cases increasing” foreign interference, and warned that this is the “greatest strategic threat” facing Canada’s democratic institution.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023, Nadine Yousif of BBC published an article at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-64813182> saying that Prime Minister was under pressure to probe China’s interference in Canadian politics.

**Steven Chase** and **Robert Fife** in their article of May 2, 2023 in *Globe and Mail* informed that **Michael Chong**, a conservative MP had complained that he and his family were being targeted by China.

**Michael Chong** was first elected to Parliament in 2004 and represents the riding of Wellington-Halton Hills. He currently serves as **Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs** for the Official Opposition. (Earlier in 2006, he has served as a Minister in the Federal cabinet.)

Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** arranged a meeting of Mr. **Michael Chong** with national-security adviser **Jody Thomas** and Mr. **David Vigneault**, **Head of CSIS**. Mr. Chong said Mr. Vigneault informed him he was authorized to read to him from the CSIS report quoted by *The Globe* “because it relates to a threat to you and your family.”



**NSA Ms. Judy Thomas** told Mr. Chong the government was investigating why he had not been alerted about this.

Mr. Chong said. “They did not tell me there was a diplomat in the Chinese consulate in Toronto that was targeting my family.”

MPs from NDP and Bloc Québécois supported Mr. Michael Chong in his demand from the **Commons Speaker Anthony Rota** for protection and for determining

whether Mr. **Zhao Wei**, a Chinese diplomat in Canada was committing a contempt of the House by targeting him, his family in Canada and his relatives in Hong Kong since **he had moved a resolution which censured China for genocide of Uyghurs in Xinjiang in the Parliament in 2021 and since the resolution had been passed by the House.**

Thereafter the Canadian government declared **Zhao Wei** as “persona non grata” on May 8, 2023, after allegations that he was involved in a plot to intimidate **Conservative MP Michael Chong** and his relatives in Hong Kong. In response, China expelled a Canadian diplomat in Shanghai, **Jennifer Lynn Lalonde**, on May 9, 2023.

Sam Cooper reported in Global News dated Nov 7, 2022 that Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) has informed Prime Minister Justin Trudeau that China had funded at least 11 federal candidates running in the 2019 election through a clandestine network. The funds were allegedly transferred through an Ontario provincial MPP and a federal election candidate staffer. Separate sources aware of the situation said a **Chinese Communist Party (CCP)** proxy group, acting as an intermediary, transferred around \$250,000. The 2022 intelligence asserted that **China conducts more foreign interference than any other nation.**

In the same Report, Sam Cooper quoted some unnamed experts say that the alleged interference points to **weakness in Canada’s outdated espionage and counterintelligence laws**, which **sophisticated interference networks run by China, Russia and Iran** are exploiting.

In another report dated Feb 25, 2023, Sam Cooper’s report in Global News, identified the MPP, who helped transfer the funds, as **Han Dong**. (He won 2021 elections, along with at least 11 Toronto-area riding candidates allegedly supported by Beijing in the 2019 contest.)

[www.DiGiNews360.com](http://www.DiGiNews360.com) believes that the candidates were all of Liberal Party, since China was wary of the policies of the Conservatives.

The Cooper Report, dated Feb 25, 2023, also says that **Michael Chan**, a former Ontario cabinet minister, is a political kingmaker and pivotal Liberal fundraiser. Three intelligence sources said investigators believed **Chan** had orchestrated **Geng Tan’s** ouster with a campaign that persuaded Justin Trudeau’s aides to back **Han Dong** instead. (Reference:

<https://tinyurl.com/ykzp4jdr>). **Geng Dan** was the **FIRST Mandarin-speaking MP**. But he was unable to satisfy China's requirements.

According to the Cooper's Report, CSIS had said that Michael Chan was providing Reports on political issue in Canada to Chinese Consulate Officers. Chan said, "If they (CSIS) are alleging this, it is not true."

Both **Michael Chan** and **Han Dong** denied the allegations of being close to China.



**Kwok Chi (Michael) Chan**

**X:** @michaelchanyr

Deputy Mayor of Markham: 2022 to present

Minister Ont & MPP (Ont): Feb 8, 2007-Jun 7, 2018

TAIWAN: The January 2022 Privy Council Office "Special Report", as quoted by the Global News in the Cooper's article of Feb 25, 2023 says , that both Chan and Dong worked to block any political engagement with Taiwanese officials.

CHINA'S POLICE STATIONS in CANADA: The Report of Feb 25, 2023 by Cooper also mentions about **Chinese police stations** currently probed by RCMP **investigators in Vancouver and Toronto**, where Chinese security officials are believed to operate undercover and target Chinese diaspora citizens, including Beijing's critics.

The Report by Nadine Yousif of BBC, dated 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023, reported that the **Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs** was looking into the intimidation of **Michael Chong**.

Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** also asked members of parliament and senators in the **National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians** to begin a review of foreign interference and to report its findings to the Parliament.

On March 15, 2023, Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** announced a series of probes into the alleged interference by China and appointed **Right Honourable David Johnston**, as an independent special rapporteur, to look into the matter.

The rapporteur had until 23 May to decide whether to recommend a public inquiry to examine the claims, with a full report coming later this year. On 23<sup>rd</sup>

May, **Right Honourable David Johnston** released a 55-page report on **foreign interference in Canadian institutions**, warning that subversive efforts represented an “increasing threat” to democracy. However, he announced that he would not launch a public inquiry on the issue.

The Conservative leader, **Pierre Poilievre**, criticized Johnston’s conclusions. He said that David Johnston should have recused himself from this probe, since he was previously a member of the **Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation charity**, which received controversial donations linked to the Chinese government.



***Pierre Poilievre: Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada***

Mr. Johnston is a **former Governor General of Canada** and law professor. Mr. Johnston has been given a wide mandate to look into the extent and impact of foreign interference in Canada’s electoral processes and make expert recommendations on how to further protect Canada’s democracy and uphold Canadians’ confidence in it. He is expected to provide reports to the Prime Minister, Opposition Leaders, and Canadians by **October 31, 2023**.

Federal opposition parties - the **New Democrats** and the **Conservatives** - are pushing for an "independent and public" inquiry into the accounts. Their calls have been echoed by Canada's **former Chief Electoral Officer Jean-Pierre Kingsley** and **Richard Fadden**, the **former director of CSIS**.