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Serial # 7-85CMSI  
N° de série

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The Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence

Le comité du Cabinet chargé de la Sécurité et des Renseignements

Minutes

A meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence was held in Room 323-S, House of Commons, on Wednesday, December 18, 1985 at 3:30 p.m.

Procès-verbal

Une réunion du comité du Cabinet chargé de la Sécurité et des Renseignements a eu lieu dans la pièce 323-S, Chambre des communes, le mercredi 18 décembre 1985 à 15 h 30.

POU Expenditure / No. de prestac. BCP



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Present

The Deputy Prime Minister  
and Minister of National  
Defence  
(Mr. Nielsen)  
in the Chair,  
The Minister of Justice and  
Attorney General of Canada  
(Mr. Crosbie),  
The Minister of National  
Revenue  
(Mr. Beatty),  
The Minister of  
Finance  
(Mr. Wilson),  
The Associate Minister of  
National Defence  
(Mr. Andre).

Also Present

Mr. T.D. Finn  
(Canadian Security  
Intelligence Service),  
Mr. J.H. Taylor  
(Department of External  
Affairs),  
Mr. F. Iacobucci  
(Department of Justice),  
Mr. D.B. Dewar  
Gen. G.C.E. Thériault  
(Department of National  
Defence),  
Comm'r R.H. Simmonds  
(Royal Canadian  
Mounted Police),  
Mr. J.M. Shoemaker  
(Department of the  
Solicitor General),  
Mr. J.L. Manion  
(Treasury Board),

Secretary

Mr. J.B. Seaborn  
(Privy Council Office).

Assistant Secretaries

Mr. H. Intscher  
Mr. J.E. Harlick  
Ms. N. Jauvin  
(Privy Council  
Office).

étaient présents

Le vice-premier ministre et  
ministre de la Défense  
nationale  
(M. Nielsen)  
Président,  
Le ministre de la Justice et  
procureur général du Canada  
(M. Crosbie),  
Le ministre du Revenu  
national  
(M. Beatty),  
Le ministre des  
Finances  
(M. Wilson),  
Le ministre associé de la  
Défense nationale  
(M. Andre).

étaient aussi présents

M. T.D. Finn  
(Service canadien du  
renseignement de sécurité),  
M. J.H. Taylor  
(Ministère des Affaires  
extérieures),  
M. F. Iacobucci  
(Ministère de la Justice),  
M. D.B. Dewar  
Gen. G.C.E. Thériault  
(Ministère de la Défense  
nationale),  
Comm'r R.H. Simmonds  
(Gendarmarie royale du  
Canada),  
M. J.M. Shoemaker  
(Ministère du Solliciteur  
général),  
M. J.L. Manion  
(Conseil du trésor),

Secrétaire

M. J.B. Seaborn  
(Bureau du Conseil privé).

Secrétaires adjoints

M. H. Intscher  
M. J.E. Harlick  
Mme N. Jauvin  
(Bureau du Conseil  
privé).

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Security of Personnel - Government of Canada; and  
Protection of Government of Canada Assets

Sécurité du personnel - Gouvernement du Canada;  
et protection des biens du Gouvernement du Canada

The Committee had for consideration a  
Memorandum from the Solicitor General (Cabinet Document  
3-0424-85MC(02)(R) dated October 24, 1985) concerning the  
security of personnel and the protection of government  
assets.

The Chairman asked the Solicitor General  
to outline the proposed policy. The Solicitor General  
in making his presentation to the Committee noted the  
growing number of security clearances, which in his  
view stemmed from an outdated policy and pointed to the  
need for a new policy and more streamlined procedures.

In the course of the discussion, the  
following main points emerged:

1. 
2. while the scope and application of security  
screening as proposed in the policy is  
narrower than that proposed by the  
interdepartmental committee of deputy heads,  
after discussion, members expressed  
satisfaction with the policy as proposed by  
the Solicitor General;

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3. members expressed the view that the directives should ensure that the deputy heads have broad discretion to determine which positions shall require a security clearance, and have the personal responsibility of determining who shall be granted or denied a security clearance;
4. some members queried the effectiveness of the personal interview which was, after discussion, approved in principle and on a phased-in basis in order to test and refine procedure;
5. the possibility of cost recovery by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service for security clearance investigations should be examined by the Treasury Board.

The Committee agreed to the general policy as set out in the Memorandum and further agreed that:

1. the Treasury Board issue and amend operational policies, directives and guidelines for security of personnel and protection of Government of Canada national interest assets in accordance with the recommendations and proposals in the Memorandum to Cabinet;
2. this personnel security policy apply to all government and non-government personnel whose duties may afford access to classified government information;
3. criteria for three security clearance levels and appropriate screening procedures be established;
4. persons should be denied a security clearance if there are reasonable grounds to believe that:
  - (a) they are engaged in or may engage in activities that constitute a "threat to the security of Canada" as that term is defined in the CSIS Act;
  - (b) because of personal beliefs, features of character, association with persons or groups considered a security threat, or family or other close ties of affection to persons living in oppressive or hostile countries:
    - (i) they may act or may be induced to act in such a way as to constitute a "threat to the security of Canada", as defined; or,

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- (ii) they may disclose, may be induced to disclose or may cause to be disclosed in an unauthorized way, Government information classified in the national interest;
5. the Treasury Board examine proposals for cost recovery in relation to security clearance investigations;
  6. the Treasury Board and Public Service Commission examine and prescribe a system of verification for trustworthiness and essential suitability of all public service employees as required by the nature of their duties;
  7. a security classification system be established for the protection of national interest information with appropriate designators and injury tests;
  8. the Treasury Board develop guidelines and procedures for the safeguarding of national interest information; and develop guidelines and procedures for protecting all other categories of sensitive, non-security information;
  9. the ultimate responsibility of deputy heads for security in their government institutions be confirmed;
  10. the miscellaneous recommendations contained in paras. 70, 71, 73-76 of the Memorandum be approved.

Protective Security and Counter-Terrorism Arrangements  
within Canada

Mesures de protection et d'antiterrorisme au Canada

The Committee had for consideration a Memorandum from the Solicitor General on Protective Security and Counter-terrorism Arrangements within Canada (Cabinet Document 3-0476-85MC(02) dated October 21, 1985);

At the Chairman's invitation, the Solicitor General introduced his memorandum on this subject. He noted that the two proposals to increase protective security for foreign missions and internationally protected persons outside the National Capital Region, and to create a dedicated hostage rescue force in the RCMP, are costly insurance policies. However, the terrorist threat within Canada is rising and the Minister considered that it is necessary to enhance the Government's capability to protect foreign targets and to be able to rescue successfully any terrorist-held hostages. With respect to the rescue force proposal, the Minister explained that he prefers to have it

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located in the RCMP, both for legal reasons and because it represents a legitimate extension of the RCMP's present police enforcement role. He noted that such a force will require DND logistical support. As regards resources for the two proposals, the Minister indicated that these would be new responsibilities for the RCMP and thus he would be requesting new resources to support them.

The Minister of Finance asked why the Department of National Defence was not being tasked with the rescue force. The Associate Minister of National Defence and the Chief of the Defence Staff identified several reasons relating to role and costs why the Canadian military forces would not be as well suited as the RCMP to perform the kind of assault and rescue tasks envisaged for the rescue force.

At the Chairman's invitation, the Secretary to the Treasury Board (representing the President of the Treasury Board) explained that while the President of the Board supported both proposals, he was quite concerned with the large number of person-years required by the proposals and with the resulting inconsistency with the public service rationalization policy announced in the Government's May 1985 budget. He encouraged the RCMP to identify internally lower priority tasks that would yield the necessary resources to fund these two proposals.

The Ministers present, the Under Secretary of State for External Affairs (representing the SSEA) and the Secretary to the Treasury Board all strongly supported enhancing the level of protective security outside the NCR, and the creation of the rescue team located in the RCMP. The Chairman directed the Solicitor General and the President of the Treasury Board to find the resources to support these two high priority initiatives. The Chairman agreed with the Solicitor General that a recent Treasury Board decision precluded finding the resources in the municipal contract policing activities of the RCMP.

The Committee agreed that:

- protective security arrangements be enhanced for foreign missions and internationally protected persons outside the National Capital Region;
- the RCMP be authorized to establish a dedicated hostage rescue force for the resolution of terrorist hostage seizures in Canada which are beyond current response capabilities;
- the Solicitor General and the President of the Treasury Board decide on the source of the funds and resources required to implement these two high priority initiatives; and,
- before the rescue force becomes deployable, the Solicitor General report back to the Committee on the creation of the rescue force, setting out the crisis management framework, including a system of command,

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control and communications for commitment of the force, and report on his discussions with the provinces regarding use of the force.

A Review of Government Policy on Hostage and Related Crisis Situations

Un examen de la politique du Gouvernement sur les prises d'otages et autres évènements de même gravité

The Committee had for consideration a Memorandum from the Solicitor General on A Review of Government Policy on Hostage Related Crisis Situations (Cabinet Document 4-0273-85MC(03)(R) dated October 21, 1985).

At the Chairman's invitation the Solicitor General introduced his memorandum on this subject. He explained that, after review of the existing government guidelines for dealing with hostage and related crisis situations, he would recommend that the principle of "no concessions" on fundamental demands by hostage takers be confirmed, with some modifications to be made regarding the granting of minor concessions and the authority of the "on scene" official. He also recommended that the "no concessions" principle be made public at an appropriate time, but not to wait to do so until another hostage situation occurs.

The Chairman noted the role assigned to the RCMP in security offence cases pursuant to s. 61(1) of the CSIS Act and enquired whether progress is being made with the provinces regarding which jurisdiction (federal or provincial) would manage hostage terrorist incidents. The Senior Assistant Deputy Solicitor General reported that, with the exception of Ontario and Quebec, a good working accommodation could be put into place with the other eight provinces in the near future. With respect to these two provinces, the principal stumbling block is their desire to determine which level of government will be in charge of an incident once the incident has occurred. However, he expressed the view that these provinces would soon concede on this point.

In reply to a question by the Chairman the Senior Assistant Deputy Solicitor General affirmed that the Memorandum's recommendations would not alter the Prime Minister's authority or ability to give direction in incidents such as the seizure of the Turkish Embassy in March 1985 or the bomb threat to the Toronto transit system. On the contrary, he stated that they would enhance the federal government's ability to manage such incidents.

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The Committee confirmed the basic policy of "no concessions" with respect to fundamental demands in such situations, and agreed that this policy be made public at an appropriate moment, at the discretion of the Solicitor General.

The Committee agreed that the existing guidelines for dealing with such situations be modified with respect to the possible granting of minor concessions and the authority of the "on-scene" official managing the response to these situations, and approved the new guidelines as set out in Annex C of the Memorandum, the guidelines to be circulated separately to appropriate government departments and agencies.

The Committee noted that the Solicitor General, as lead Minister in hostage and related crisis situations occurring in Canada and following from the new guidelines, is responsible for ensuring that each concerned department or agency develop its own operational contingency plan for responding to such situations, and agreed that the Minister report to the Committee within three months on the development of these plans.

A Strategy for Public Communications in Terrorist Incidents

L'élaboration d'une stratégie de communications publiques dans les cas d'incidents terroristes

The Committee had for consideration a Memorandum from the Solicitor General on A Strategy for Public Communications in Terrorist Incidents (Cabinet Document 2-0274-85(02)(R) dated October 16, 1985).

At the Chairman's invitation, the Solicitor General introduced his memorandum on this subject. As background, he outlined the difficulties the government authorities had encountered with the media while trying to manage the seizure of the Turkish Embassy in March, 1985. He stated that the Memorandum's recommendations are designed to enable the Minister responsible for handling a terrorist incident, and the Department of the Solicitor General, to engage in forward planning, including discussions with the provinces and the media, so as better to co-ordinate the Government's public management of any future terrorist incidents. The Minister indicated that he was fully conscious of the possible dangers involved in discussing with the media its role during crises, but believed that it was necessary to do so.

All Ministers supported the Memorandum's recommendations. The Chairman cautioned the Solicitor General, however, to check with him further should the Minister or his Department wish to engage outside experts to develop these public communications strategies.

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The Committee noted that the Solicitor General is the lead Minister for handling terrorist incidents in Canada and the Secretary of State for External Affairs is lead Minister for such incidents outside Canada. In this connection the Committee agreed that:

- the lead Minister would be the principal government spokesperson in these incidents;
- the lead Minister would name a designated person to co-ordinate and provide general information concerning these incidents; and,
- the general press lines set out in Annex A of the Memorandum would be used in responding to the media.

The Committee agreed that the Department of the Solicitor General, in the course of developing strategies for public communications in terrorist incidents, undertake discussions with appropriate provincial or municipal authorities regarding their respective responsibilities for communications in terrorist incidents, and with representatives of the media regarding their conduct during such incidents.

The Committee also agreed that the RCMP be given sole responsibility for communications concerning operational matters where jurisdiction is clearly federal.

J.B. Seaborn,  
Secretary,  
Secrétaire.

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