

Clerk of the Privy Council and
Secretary to the Cabinet



Greffier du Conseil privé et
Secrétaire du Cabinet

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0A3

MAR 18 2019

The Right Honourable Justin P.J. Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Room 315-A, West Block
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister:

Recent events have led me to conclude that I cannot serve as Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to Cabinet during the upcoming election campaign. Therefore, I will be taking steps to retire from the public service well before the writ of election is issued.

One of the key roles of the Privy Council Office is to be ready to assist whichever government Canadians elect in October. It has been my privilege to work with the transition teams of three prime ministers. It is now apparent that there is no path for me to have a relationship of mutual trust and respect with the leaders of the Opposition parties. Furthermore, it is essential that during the writ period the Clerk be seen by all political parties as an impartial arbiter of whether serious foreign interference has occurred.

Therefore, I wish to relinquish these roles before the election. It is essential that Canadians continue to see their world leading public service as non-partisan and there to provide excellent services to Canadians and the governments they elect.

The timing of my retirement is something we should discuss, as your Government will have a busy Cabinet agenda until the end of the Parliamentary session, and you will want to seek advice on how best to address succession.

- 2 -

I will have more to say later, but I would be remiss if I did not use this letter to thank you for the confidence you have placed in me over the past three years and the opportunity for extraordinary personal and professional experiences in the service of my country.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Wernick