



MEMORANDUM NOTE DE SERVICE

To
A Ian Fine
Director General
Knowledge Centre

From
De Harvey Goldberg
Team Leader
Strategic Initiatives

Security - Classification de sécurité

[Security]

Our File - Notre référence

Your File - Votre référence

[Your File]

Date July 5, 2006

Subject
Objet Report on meetings in Toronto, June 29 to 30, 2006

I was in Toronto from June 29th to 30th to meet with a number of community groups regarding hate on the Internet and disability issues. As a result of unforeseen circumstances was not able to participate in the meetings.

1. Ontario Government Hate Crimes Community Working Group

The Working Group was established by the Government of Ontario in December 2005. Chaired by [redacted] the Working Group is mandated to prepare a report for the Attorney General of Ontario on best practices in Ontario, across the country and internationally to combat crimes motivated by hate. The Working Group consists of representatives of a wide variety of religious and ethnic groups that are often the victims of hate.

I gave the members of the Working Group an overview of the Commission's work with regard to hate on the Internet. This was followed by questions and answers. The panel members, in general, seemed to have little knowledge about section 13. Their reaction was positive and they appreciated knowing about the Commission's work.

Questions and answered focussed on the judicial definition of hate and the balancing of free speech with freedom from hate. A couple representatives of the Muslim community expressed concern that the threshold for hate was too high and that much of what they perceived as anti-Islamic comments in the media and elsewhere would not be included in the current definition of hate. I referred them to the [redacted] article in the Hate on the Internet magazine, copies of which I had distributed.

They also questioned whether the Commission would accept complaints dealing with anti-Muslim sentiments. I assured them that the Commission was fully committed to fulfilling its mandate under section 13.

Another panel member asked whether the Commission would be open to meeting with groups to discuss, in general, how we investigate race based complaints. I explained to her our team

based approach and assured her that the Commission welcomes input from community groups.

4. Canadian Jewish Congress

I met with [redacted] Canadian Jewish Congress, to discuss a new initiative regarding hate on the Internet. [redacted] recently addressed a group of very senior telecom executives at the Telcom Summit in Toronto. He urged them to take proactive measures to ensure that the internet systems they run do not knowingly include content that could contravene the *Criminal Code* or the *CHRA*. He says he received a favourable response with several of the largest telecoms committing to discuss this matter further.

A copy of the Hate on the Internet magazine was included in pdf in the kits of all participants at the Telecom Summit.

A meeting is planned for September or October in Toronto. [redacted] requested that the Commission participate in this initiative by, at least, attending in an advisory capacity. As this initiative is congruent with our strategy of building collaboration and dialogue with internet

providers I indicated that the Commission was interested in this initiative but I made no firm commitment as to the degree of our involvement.

6. Canadian Arab Federation

I met with _____, Canadian Arab Federation to brief him on the work that the Commission is doing with regard to section 13. I gave him a copy of the Hate on the Internet magazine and the deck explaining our work pursuant to section 13. He welcomed the Commission's outreach on this issue, noting that the OHRC had been active on issues regarding anti-Arab and anti-Muslim issues but that he felt the CHRC had been quite until now.

He asked whether the Commission would be able to provide a session on section 13 for representatives of the CAF's constituent organizations. I said we would certainly be willing to do so.

Overall I think this round of meetings was successful in the continuing process of networking with key stakeholders and of furthering the Commission initiatives in the areas of disability and hate on the Internet.

Harvey Goldberg