



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Toronto, ON

Day 2

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EVIDENCE

Witness 3: Thomas Marazzo

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[00:00:00]

Shawn Buckley

Our next witness today is Mr. Tom Marazzo. And Tom, I placed a couple of sheets of paper on that thing there for you, that will be exhibits.

Thomas Marazzo

Okay, got it.

Shawn Buckley

And I'll, for starting, ask you if you will state your full name for the record and then spell for the record your first and last name.

Thomas Marazzo

Okay, Thomas James Marazzo T-H-O-M-A-S M-A-R-A-Z-Z-O.

Shawn Buckley

And Mr. Marazzo, do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth today?

Thomas Marazzo

I do.

Shawn Buckley

Now, my understanding is that you were a combat engineer for the Canadian Armed Forces for 25 years.

Thomas Marazzo

I started off in the reserves in high school. I was infantry and then after I graduated college in '90, I joined the Regular Force in 1998 as a combat engineer officer until 2015.

Shawn Buckley

And then you have a bachelor's degree, basically in software—that's what it's called.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And then you went on and got a Master of Business Administration.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And when COVID-19 appeared on the scene, you were a teacher at Georgian College in Barrie, Ontario?

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Now, what happened as COVID came along in 2020?

Thomas Marazzo

The world lost its mind and its ability to do basic critical thinking. So you know, I kind of was keeping an eye on this from afar. I knew something was up. I was watching what was happening in China and around the rest of the world and I was closely listening to the way the media was presenting it. So I think immediately I was skeptical of what the public was being told. And when the media says, look left, I always look right. Because in my experience, they really just can't be trusted.

I was teaching in class full time for about six months and then, six months into it, COVID hit and the first lockdown happened. And so we had to transition to online learning for—I was teaching online for the next 18 months. But I could see that there was this with the other post-secondary: Western University implemented a vaccine passport and then Seneca College implemented a passport as well.

You were seeing these stories of students all over the place. They weren't even allowed to register for online learning if they didn't get the vaccine. There was a lot of— My entire time with COVID nothing made sense. Nothing at all. In terms of what the media narrative was, they were scaring the crap out of the public at every possible opportunity and they were always talking about case count, case count. And it's like, so what? Case count is a

meaningless number. It's just meant to fill people with fear. And for me it just didn't seem to have an effect. Other than I was baffled by the illogical aspect, you know? The case count numbers were only meant to scare the public.

Shawn Buckley

Right. Now eventually—because you kind of intimated you saw something coming. So eventually a vaccine mandate was imposed, am I right?

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Tell us how that came about and how you responded to that.

Thomas Marazzo

Well, I had been sent a text from one of the coordinators of the programs that I was teaching in and he said, "You know, Seneca just implemented a passport." And when Seneca College does it, usually the other colleges follow suit. And I had been stockpiling as much money as I could, knowing that I was probably going to be affected by this. And so students registered for school. And then, just before school started, the President put out an email, basically threatening people with very strong aggressive language, saying that if you didn't get this vaccine, you were no longer employed. At the time, I was a member of an organization called Police On Guard. I was eligible because I was retired military. But there had been— Some of the police officers that were retired were in the group, were actually sharing a lot of the case law and putting together some really helpful documents. So I went in and I researched it.

[00:05:00]

And when the President sent out the email threatening everybody's employment, I basically did a "reply all," so I copied the President, the Vice-President, the VP of HR, all the deans that I personally knew, and as many faculty as I could find.

Shawn Buckley

And this actually ran into the hundreds, didn't it?

Thomas Marazzo

Oh, it was; yes, a couple of hundred for sure.

Shawn Buckley

I apologize to the audience: I can't draw this document up because of the format I copied it in. But Commissioners, I've given you two pages and the first one is Mr. Marazzo's response, which is Exhibit TO-17 in these proceedings. And Mr. Marazzo, you have a copy. That is the email that you sent in response.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes. My intention was to basically say, “How is it exactly that you believe you’re going to get around all of these specific laws?” And there was no response right away, but then one faculty member just replied—hit a “reply all,” and said, “Please take me off your distribution list.”

Shawn Buckley

Okay. So you send this email and one person replies first, saying, “please take me off your email.”

Thomas Marazzo

Yes. “Take me off of your distribution list,” yes.

Shawn Buckley

And this was a “reply all,” wasn’t it?

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. So what happened after the first?

Thomas Marazzo

So then shortly after another faculty, same thing: “Please take me off your distribution list.” “Please take me off.” And so after about the tenth, one of the other faculty said, “As much as I’d love to see you guys read all your comments, could you just hit ‘reply,’ so I don’t have to spend all day long deleting all of your emails?”

Shawn Buckley

And this was an email sent, as you say, to several hundred people.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes, several hundred. One of the faculty responded to him and said, “No, I think we should stand together in unity against this guy.” And then immediately after, they all jumped on board, including the dean of the faculty I worked in, the coordinator, some of my other colleagues that I work closely with teaching. Every five to ten seconds, I was getting another email, “Please take me off your distribution,” “Please take me off your distribution.” After a while I just stopped looking at it because I was getting these things coming in every, you know, five to ten seconds from another person.

Shawn Buckley

Basically, what this was: Because you were taking a stand and basically questioning the legality of the vaccine mandate, all of the people in this email chain made a point of publicly shaming you.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

How did that make you feel?

Thomas Marazzo

I was kind of—at first it didn't bother me too much. But then I was starting— I was actually quite shocked. Because these are the types of people that like to profess that they teach their students critical thinking. But yet, I outlined all of this legislation in front of them and it didn't seem like any of them actually had the ability to exercise critical thinking. So I was— I was embarrassed actually, I was embarrassed for them. And I know that sounds maybe a little bit arrogant on my part, where, you know, I'm the lone person criticizing the vast majority of the faculty. But I kind of laid it all out for them. All they had to do was take a look at it. And instead, what they did is they went with groupthink and their own fear and they just started piling on one person who's standing alone, who is waving a warning sign for them. They didn't care. They were just trying to virtue-signal to the Dean that they were on board with this stuff.

Shawn Buckley

No, but personally, how did it make you feel? You felt embarrassed for them, basically, in having to do this virtue-signalling. But how did it make you feel that basically, one after another was participating in an act designed to shame you publicly?

Thomas Marazzo

I think I transitioned very quickly to surprise, to shock. I was a little bit angry that not one of them had the courage to actually back me up. Like, there was a couple of them that sent me private emails saying, "Hey, I understand, good." But they weren't going to come forward. They weren't going to stick their neck out. They were perfectly happy to see me stick my head out. To be honest, I started to get quite angry about it, that I wasn't getting any support from any of them.

[00:10:00]

I mean, just the law of large numbers: I should have got somebody doing a "reply all" and saying, "Wait a minute: maybe this guy's got a point. Maybe we should be discussing this." And nothing.

Shawn Buckley

So let's just put this into context. I mean we're basically talking about faculty members at a university. Is that right?

Thomas Marazzo

Yes—or a college.

Shawn Buckley

Yeah, okay a college. But these will be people with Master's degrees and PhDs that have been taught to think critically. And they are your colleagues.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

You're one of them, and some of them will be your friends.

Thomas Marazzo

Um hum.

Shawn Buckley

Did any single one of them stand up publicly for you?

Thomas Marazzo

No, not one.

Shawn Buckley

Now, getting back then. So you send this email and you're publicly shamed. How did Georgian College respond to your email?

Thomas Marazzo

I was summoned to a virtual meeting. First off, I was ordered to remove the email by the VP of HR. But I didn't see his email till later on and didn't matter anyway, because he had directed the IT Department to take down my email. Then I was summoned to a meeting on the Friday. This is the first week of school, so by the first Friday, classes had already started. That Friday, I was summoned to a meeting, asked some questions, and then told that I would have to come back to another meeting Monday morning. Monday morning, I believe 8 or 9 a.m., first thing in the morning— And the union rep was there, the union president was actually on the call, but you'd never know it because he didn't say a word. And I was informed that I was being fired for cause. So I was fired and I haven't had a job since that time.

Shawn Buckley

Now, David, can I have you— I've got on this computer a copy of that termination letter. If you can pull that up on the screen for the online audience to see. And Commissioners, you have a paper copy in front of you [Exhibit TO-17a].

Mr. Marazzo, so you've sent an email. And my understanding is— And I'm just reading from the second paragraph: "Your actions are in violation of the College's Employee Code of Conduct, the Appropriate Use of Email and Anti-Spam Compliance Policy and the Information Technology Acceptable Use Procedure."

So you didn't have a student or anyone complain about your behaviour.

Thomas Marazzo

No, all my teaching ratings were really high.

Shawn Buckley

So basically, you were getting fired for—by your email—basically stating that there are other laws and things like that should be considered before a mandate is imposed.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Now I want to segue into another topic because you found yourself involved in the Trucker Convoy.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Can you tell us how you became involved and what your role was?

Thomas Marazzo

I was following it just like everybody else on social media. And through a friend of a friend basically, I ended up on a phone call with a guy named James Bauder, who's with Canada Unity. And the intention of that call was, I thought, just to give some advice. Because as a former military, this was quite a normal. This would have been easy for anybody with some experience in the military. I had taken the call with the expectation that I would just give some advice. And within 15 minutes of that call, James had just said, "Would you mind just coming to Ottawa?" Because I was only in the Kingston area, so for me to go to Ottawa was maybe a two-hour drive. So within three hours of that phone call, I found myself in Ottawa. And I walked into this conference room with a whole bunch of truckers, a couple of Ottawa police, and next thing you know, I was there for 22 days.

Shawn Buckley

And that was to the very end.

Thomas Marazzo

To the very end, yes.

Shawn Buckley

And my understanding is that you became a spokesperson for the Truckers Convoy.

Thomas Marazzo

Yeah, on occasion. I didn't do too much of the public stuff. And it was never my intention, that just kind of— The longer I stayed at the Convoy, the more my role started to evolve.

Shawn Buckley

Now, you came after a couple of days. My understanding is that the Truckers Convoy lasted for 24 days in Ottawa.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And you were there for 22 days.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes. Two days after is when I arrived.

[00:15:00]

Shawn Buckley

Can you share with us— Because some of us weren't there and I don't think we appreciate the size, the number of Canadians that got involved, can you share with us basically the size, including on weekends?

Thomas Marazzo

Well, the weekends was the big swell. That is when the general public that were not working during the week would come and bring their families, bring their kids, and participate in the activities there in Ottawa. It was like Canada Day: every weekend was like Canada Day. And you know, at one point I would estimate that there was probably 100,000 people that showed up on one of the weekends. We had a stage sound system and people were giving speeches. There was lots of activities. So the influx on the weekends was much greater than during the week. But I would think, on weekends you were looking at about a hundred thousand people would come into—down to Wellington.

And of course, then there were truckers. Finding the exact number of truckers was always a big challenge for everybody. But if you just look at some of the video you could see there's a lot of trucks that showed up to Ottawa.

Shawn Buckley

And we're talking thousands, we're talking trucks in the thousands.

Thomas Marazzo

Well, that originally travelled across Canada, yes. But when they arrived into Ottawa, I would estimate somewhere around a thousand in the whole Ottawa region. Because there were trucks that were out at various different locations, not just in the downtown core.

Shawn Buckley

Now, being involved—because you were involved with the leadership, and that’s how you became a spokesman at times—what was your understanding of the goal of the Truckers Convoy?

Thomas Marazzo

Well, after over two years of all these protests that were going on across the country, everybody who protested was literally being either ignored or arrested for protesting. When the mandates came out for the truckers, the truckers took it upon themselves and said, “We’re ending these federal mandates. That is our objective, is to go to Ottawa and make them listen, because they haven’t been for two years. So the goal is to end the federal mandates—and all of them.” It was the mask mandates, vaccine mandates, lockdowns, you name it, travel restrictions, this cross-border issue. So for the truckers, they were allowed as unvaccinated to travel into the United States, drop their load. But when they came back, they were required to quarantine for 14 days. So how do you do a cross-border trip and then come back and have to quarantine in your home, place yourself under house arrest for 14 days, and still expect to make a living? They couldn’t do it. And it was a significant portion of the actual industry.

Shawn Buckley

Now, my understanding is this protest is right on Parliament Hill. I mean, it’s at the seat of government.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And you’re telling us they wanted to have a dialogue with the federal government. Am I correct? You basically did a public statement asking the Prime Minister to speak to you and the truckers.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes, several times.

Shawn Buckley

And am I correct that even the Ontario Provincial Police called on the federal government to speak to the truckers?

Thomas Marazzo

Yes, there was an engagement plan that was drafted by the OPP. And I heard this testimony directly from the person who wrote it, I believe he’s an acting inspector, Marcel Beaudoin of the OPP [Ontario Provincial Police]; he’s the Liaison Team Leader for the OPP. And he had drafted an Engagement Plan. It was presented to the federal government the day before they invoked the *Emergencies Act*.

So they were briefed on the 13th of February. And then the next day they invoked it and it completely ignored any form of engagement.

Shawn Buckley

Now, I assume—I mean, we've got on weekends 100,000 people on Parliament Hill. We have trucks all around Parliament Hill and in other parts of Ottawa. This is going on for 24 days. I assume, as a spokesperson who actually had been authorized to issue a public statement for dialogue, that all of your time was taken up speaking with the federal government to kind of deal with these issues.

Thomas Marazzo

That would have been great.

Shawn Buckley

And you laugh. Tell us what really happened there.

Thomas Marazzo

The highest ranking non-elected person I ever spoke to was Steve Kanellakos: he was the City Manager of Ottawa. And I met with him on two separate occasions. But we never met with the mayor. The highest-ranking police officer I ever sat in a room with was an inspector.

[00:20:00]

And he didn't really participate much in that meeting. But my day-to-day conversations were no higher than the rank of sergeant with the Ottawa Police.

Shawn Buckley

Okay, so I just want to focus us. Because this likely is the largest protest, well, definitely in my lifetime and likely in your lifetime. And the object is to have a dialogue with the federal government. Did a single federal government person speak with you or the truckers?

Thomas Marazzo

The Member of Parliament, the Conservative Member of Parliament for Tamara Lich's riding, I believe, had a conversation with her. But they're not the government. They're just as powerless to get anything going on with the federal Liberals, the government in power. There was nothing. We never met with any of the Liberal Party. We were trying to back-channel and maybe get some help from the Conservatives to arrange some sort of meeting. Never happened, we never— And we expected, actually— Because the Liberal government had had a previous history of engaging with other protests. And again, the OPP testified at the Public Order Emergency Commission that their expectation was that the Liberal government was actually going to reach out and talk to us. And they didn't. There was literally no dialogue between us and the federal government or the Ontario Government.

Shawn Buckley

And that would be for the full 24 days?

Thomas Marazzo

The full time.

Shawn Buckley

Before the *Emergencies Act* is invoked, not a single dialogue with the federal government?

Thomas Marazzo

Nothing, nothing at all.

Shawn Buckley

What is your worst memory? Well, let me just back up. What was your impression? You were there for 22 days. And we've heard that the Prime Minister is basically disparaged. We've seen pictures of Nazi flags—just a few handful. An immediate person spoke to that yesterday.

But what was your observations of how people were behaved, and basically the entire atmosphere and behaviour? How would you characterize it?

Thomas Marazzo

Well, up until the last two days—the 18th and 19th of February—up until those two days, everything really was more of a festival, party-type of an atmosphere. And people were being very responsible in— For example, we shovelled the roads, we shovelled the sidewalks, we collected garbage and on occasions we did first aid. We always kept safety lanes open, despite what any media outlet tells you. We worked really hard to make sure that EMS was always able to get through any portion, and they did. There was testimony of that as well, that we actually accomplished that. But overall, it was a friendly environment. If you ever even talked to some of the people that went there, it's a constant theme: that it was such a truly Canadian experience and it didn't matter over ethnicities, races, religions, creeds, anything.

It was ordinary Canadians from east to west that were there being Canadians. And they were putting their foot down and saying, you know, "We're going to be here, we're going to be non-violent, we're going to be peaceful, we're going to try to make the best of a situation, because we'll be here for a long time. But we're not going to be aggressive, we're not going to be violent." You know, we were even donating food to homeless shelters because we had so much support that we were sharing it within the community. We were not a threat to businesses; we were actually asking for business owners to open up so that we could shop in their businesses. We were trying to support that community.

But overall, our intention was never to go and put pressure on the residents of Ottawa, it was just the government and that's what we were there to do. And, you know, it was a very, very peaceful, very fun experience for a lot of people—very fun.

Shawn Buckley

Now, you understood that the *Emergencies Act* was invoked. And my understanding is you basically gave a public statement and you had a dialogue with the OPP to basically permit a staged withdrawal, without the need for what we all witnessed—thank goodness, because people could live stream.

Thomas Marazzo

Yeah, so on the 19th, the morning of the 19th, I had a meeting in my hotel with several truckers that were in various leadership positions. And we made the decision to recommend to the truckers to peacefully withdraw from the city. And we chose that language very specifically,

[00:25:00]

because we wanted to obviously instil the idea that we're still going to be peacefully interacting with the police. Despite the day before, where the police were exceedingly aggressive and the whole situation had been violent.

So even on the second day we were emphasizing peace, but we were recommending that the convoy withdraw from the city. At 10:03 that morning on the 19th of February, I made a call to the OPP. I was pretty emotional about it because I had just finished watching a lot of the video footage on the news of people getting beaten. And I was there when Candace was run over by the horse and the other man. I was standing 15 feet away—so I witnessed this violence myself. And I wasn't too happy about the veterans getting beaten by the police as well, at the National War Memorial. I made the call to the OPP and I said, "Look, we're recommending that they leave. But you need to move the concrete barriers and allow us to get fuel into the trucks." Because we were boxed in, we couldn't actually move. We couldn't leave if we wanted, unless people literally walked out of the city. So we said, "You need to move the concrete barriers and you need to let us get fuel into the truck, so they can drive out."

But we were recommending that the drivers, the truck owners, leave the city. And he said "Yeah, I'll pass it up the chain." And nothing happened. No concrete barriers moved and people were continuously beaten and arrested.

Shawn Buckley

Okay, so I just want to be perfectly clear. You were personally involved in trying to make arrangements with the police for the truckers to withdraw their trucks from downtown Ottawa.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And this was all done in an effort to forestall unnecessary violence against Canadians that you had witnessed the day before.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And there was no answer or no response.

Thomas Marazzo

No. We were starting to see some of the leadership of the convoy get arrested anyway. By that point, Tamara had already been arrested, Chris Barber had been arrested. I think Danny Bulford, who's retired RCMP, was already arrested and in custody at that time. Which was why on the last day I was the one who gave the public statements saying—because I was the last one left that the public would recognize and maybe listen to.

Shawn Buckley

Right. Now, you spoke about what happened at the War Memorial. Can you describe that? I'm going to play a video. And there's a person in the video and I want you to share with us your knowledge and relationship with that person. But please explain to us in detail who was at the War Memorial and what occurred.

Thomas Marazzo

So as the convoy went on, more and more Canadian military veterans—in a lot of cases, combat veterans—started to arrive in Ottawa. And they spent time mostly concentrated at the National War Memorial because, for a time, there was a big steel fence around the memorial and the veterans were quite upset about this, because it wasn't being cleaned off with snow. It was being kind of neglected. I was there as well when the veterans took down the steel fence. The police came in, they thought that the monument was kind of, you know, not being taken care of. But as soon as they came in, they saw all the veterans. We said, "Look, we're going to put a 24 and 7 guard on the memorial," and they did. So the veterans, for two weeks, had a 24 and 7 vigil on the National War Memorial, protecting it. And that's kind of the ground they typically stuck to.

But after the *Emergencies Act*, when the police started to do their raiding, the veterans formed a wall and they linked arms and basically said, "We're not going to move off this piece of ground." They're not going to fight, but they linked arms and they were resisting—peacefully resisting. One of the individuals, Chris Dearing: he was a wounded Afghanistan vet. Two others of his colleagues were immediately killed. He was blown up in a LAV-3 IED explosion that sent the vehicle 100 feet into the air, flipped over. The turret fell out, Chris fell out. He was badly, badly injured—luckily not killed. But he was there. He arrived and one of the veterans told the police, "Look, when you come up, this guy here: he's in bad shape. He's a wounded veteran, he's in really bad shape."

[00:30:00]

Well, they rolled through and at one point they just grabbed Chris right out of the line, right out of the chain, and two of the police started beating him on the ground.

Shawn Buckley

I'm just going to stop you. So Chris is a war veteran that served this nation in Afghanistan.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And he witnessed two of his fellow soldiers being killed in action.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And he himself was wounded and has problems to this day because of that.

Thomas Marazzo

He has many physical problems. He's not very employable right now, but— You know, he's not a large person. But he was certainly not a threat to any of the large police officers and if you show the video, you'll see the difference in size.

Shawn Buckley

And I will. But before I do, I saw some other videos. And I saw that Chris was wearing three medals—

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

On his jacket, that don't show up in this video. So he's a decorated war veteran.

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

I'm just going to play this video and it's short. I'm going to play it twice because it's so short. But I just— I just want the people of Canada to see how we treat decorated war veterans.

Thomas Marazzo

To be clear too: all the veterans that were there were wearing their berets and their medals. So they were easily recognized as Canadian veterans.

Shawn Buckley

And the police were told that in any event.

Thomas Marazzo

They were told.

Shawn Buckley

And you told us that they were told that Chris actually has some physical issues.

Thomas Marazzo

Yeah, specifically Chris was pointed out.

Shawn Buckley

In this video, Chris is basically the gentleman in the brown jacket being dealt with by the police?

Thomas Marazzo

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Can I have the screen please—thank you.

[A Global News video clip is played of the final Friday of the Trucker Convoy, depicting police beating Chris Dearing, a Canadian war veteran who was wounded in Afghanistan.]

What was your experience of the police during those last two days?

Thomas Marazzo

Very, very mixed. At one point I was there— Like I mentioned, I was there on the line when the horse came through and ran over the two people. I remember there was a large group of OPP standing there. I walked over and I was looking at them, and I kind of started yelling at them saying, “Thank you, thank you, you got to be proud of yourself for stealing the future of my kids and your kids too.” And they looked at me— They looked at me as if, though, you know, “If I could shoot this guy and get away with it, I’d drop him right now.” That was the impression I got. I didn’t see people that had any shame in their eyes, I saw people that were getting geared up to go in and beat people. That’s what I saw. I had very mixed emotions because on my one-on-one dealings with specific individual officers, it was very good, not all. Then when we got to that— And what’s interesting is, none of the police that we were interacting with the previous three weeks were the ones that were on that line. They brought in new people from other jurisdictions that had no ties, no relationships, hadn’t been in Ottawa, to come in and start mass-arresting people.

Shawn Buckley

And as my final question before I give commissioners the opportunity to question you, is: What happened to your bank accounts, and what was the effect of that?

Thomas Marazzo

My bank account was frozen, along with approximately 280 Canadians. I was not informed that it would be. I was not informed that it was frozen and I was never told when it would be returned to me. It was credit cards, banks, joint accounts, any financial asset that I had. And my ex-wife was notified by her financial institution that they were looking at hers.

[00:35:00]

It’s recently been disclosed in the media that all of our information was shared globally to banks—including China, India, France, U.K., Wall Street. All of our personal information

was shared and they were told, “If you’re doing banking with these people, cease doing banking with them.”

Now to be clear, there was never a warrant for my arrest. I was never charged. I’ve never been convicted. My son has a heart condition. And if we didn’t have cash, we would not have been able to purchase his heart medication. You had to have cash to actually buy this. They didn’t give any consideration to anything like that. Nothing, there was no information that we knew about. Next thing you know, rumour started that bank accounts were frozen. And, you know, I was one of them. And on top of that, now I’m being sued for \$400 million for my participation in the convoy.

Shawn Buckley

Well, welcome to your Charter-protected right for freedom of expression and freedom to assemble. I’ll open it up for the commissioners if they have any questions for you, Mr. Marazzo.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

Good morning. I just would like to go back for a moment to the faculty union. And I see in your email that you have listed a number of legislative pieces. Usually, unions stand up for the minority voice to some extent. I’m just wondering, in this case, you said the union member remained silent.

Did you have any thoughts about that or any follow-up conversations with the union that would suggest that they were silent for a reason or being silenced by the administration?

Thomas Marazzo

There was nothing offered. I was in a pre-meeting before all this had happened. There were several people on the call and I remember specifically asking the union president in this call: If something like this were to occur, would they represent us as individuals, or would they look at it almost like a ‘majority rules’ kind of a thing? And his response was to the negative. He did say, “We’ll take it as a case by case,” but then he immediately shut me down and told me that that question was inappropriate to ask in that meeting. And one of the other people participating, a faculty member, asked me a question about my original question. And he shot her down and said, “that’s inappropriate for you to talk to the other faculty member in this Zoom meeting.”

I did go to arbitration after, but that’s a whole other story. I did lose the arbitration because I couldn’t attend the arbitration. But my feeling was that the union did— I did threaten to go, what is it—DIF? I can’t remember the acronym, for when you don’t feel that the union is actually representing you. I did suggest to them that I was going to do that. I did indicate to the union that I was considering suing the College. They said, “You can’t because of the collective agreement.” And I said, “Well, I’m actually considering going after you guys first, so that I can then go after the school.” And I did have lawyers that were gearing up to do that. But, you know, I’ve only got so much bandwidth and I’m pretty exhausted after a year and a half of this. So on that particular issue, I’ve walked away, but I think there was a few lawyers that really would have liked to pursue that.

Commissioner Raikkonen

Thank you.

Commissioner Drysdale

Good morning, Mr. Marazzo. Thank you for coming and telling your story. I have a few questions. The first is, I'm quite familiar with that area in front of Parliament on Wellington Street where the War Memorial is. And I'm assuming, like in most places in Canada when I look around, there are video cameras everywhere. Even in this hotel: when I'm in the elevator, there's a video camera watching me. Most of the videos that I have seen that were related to the convoy were videos shot by individuals with phones or whatever.

Do you have any idea what happened to or where the video from—I have no idea how many, but—what had to have been hundreds, if not thousands, of security cameras in the area recording?

[00:40:00]

Thomas Marazzo

Yeah, that was an issue that we had raised right at the beginning. When the lawyer or the legal team showed up from the JCCF, we started to inquire as to: Why are all of these CCTV cameras turned off? Why are they not—there's no public access? Because some of those cameras all across the country, which is really interesting: because all across the country, there are zones that have CCTV along the highways. And as the larger portions of the convoy were traveling across Canada, they were shut off. So when the convoy actually arrived into the city of Ottawa, all those CCTV cameras were no longer streaming for public consumption. All of those cameras were completely turned off, which was really bizarre to us, because we were kind of anticipating that in the future, we may need to see some of that footage. It was never activated, which is bizarre.

Commissioner Drysdale

You also mentioned an incident with regard to the horses and the trampling of one of the protesters. Are you aware of any type of independent investigation that's been carried out of the police actions and/or their messaging that was going on at that time surrounding that incident?

Thomas Marazzo

I'm not aware of any investigation into that incident.

Commissioner Drysdale

Are you aware of any other internal or public investigations of the actions of the police during the last two days of the protests?

Thomas Marazzo

No, I'm not.

Commissioner Drysdale

One last question. Concerning your statement about the 280 Canadian bank accounts who were frozen: I'm assuming that—and this is none of my business, you can tell me that if you wish—but I'm assuming that you are not using digital currencies and you're using ordinary money and bank accounts and ordinary identification cards yourself, like most Canadians?

Thomas Marazzo

Yes—and I’m absolutely against digital ID, as somebody who has experienced the current mechanisms to go in and attack people’s financial assets right now, even without digital ID. So digital ID is a step beyond what— I think every Canadian in this country should be outright rejecting the idea of these CBDCs, any form of digital ID, any form of currency like that in that manner. I think that Canadians should keep an eye on that every single day and get updates on it.

Because even under the current system, it took nothing for the government, without any criminal charges, to completely remove my ability to access my own financial assets. So I carry cash now. But I haven’t worked in 18 months, so I don’t have a lot of it.

Commissioner Drysdale

But the government didn’t act alone. I’m assuming that your bank account wasn’t with the Government of Canada, it was with a private institution. I’m assuming that your credit cards weren’t with the Government of Canada, and it was a private institution. How do you account for the incredible cooperation that was between the banks, the government, the credit card companies, and employers—whoever else was involved with that?

Thomas Marazzo

Well, that’s an interesting question, because it wasn’t just the banks that were ordered to seize the accounts. It was also the insurance industry, as well as, I think, more the equity market, like the big trading firms. Everybody was ordered to do it. It was the insurance company—the life insurance companies and stuff, and house insurance and all that—that said, “No, we’re not doing that.” So it’s interesting because there’s this kind of thought that the banks were compelled to do it legally, and if they didn’t, they’d be in breach. But the same order was given to the other forms of financial institutions, but they pushed back. Because if you would have frozen or taken away or removed somebody’s house insurance, then they’d be in default of their mortgage. And so they pushed back and said, “No, we’re not doing it.” And it’s funny, because the bank industry has more money than God. I think they can afford some lawyers to have tied this up for about a week or two until this was settled and not gone after people’s bank accounts. But they did it anyway.

It’s because there’s only five chartered banks. Well, no—I guess the credit unions, the credit card companies, they all did it. It was just the two other industries or sectors that didn’t do it. But the banks were right on board with it.

Commissioner Drysdale

That’s all the questions I have. Thank you very much.

Shawn Buckley

There being no further questions, we’ll let you go. Thank you on behalf of the National Citizens Inquiry for testifying, Mr. Marazzo.

[00:45:06]

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