



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Winnipeg, MB

Day 2

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EVIDENCE

Witness 2: Jeffrey Tucker

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Wayne Lenhardt

I have Mr. Tucker on my screen. Good morning, Jeffrey.

Jeffrey Tucker

Yes, good morning.

Wayne Lenhardt

If you could give us a brief bio for our listeners. I gather you're with the Brownstone Institute. I don't have much more information on you, but apparently—

Jeffrey Tucker

Yeah, that's fine. I'm an economist by training and I've worked at a number of different institutions. I was working at an institution that hosted the Great Barrington Declaration in October of 2020, and then subsequently founded the Brownstone Institute, which specializes in public health and economics. I have several books that I've published and one I've written on the subject of the government response to COVID, which is, in my view, universally negative in every country it was tried, without exception.

Wayne Lenhardt

Some of the people that know you here at the Frontier Institute have said that you're very versatile and that you would be able to, perhaps, give us some idea of what actions we could take as citizens for a phenomenon like this.

So to give you a bit of context to work with, I watched this right from the beginning. And it became obvious to me after Donald Trump was diagnosed with COVID and was cured in a couple of days that early treatment was clearly available, not only available but actually worked. And early treatment was basically prohibited for most of the COVID phenomenon. And I think if it had been allowed, a lot of—for example, Dr. Bhattacharya's testimony yesterday would probably be irrelevant because I think the treatment very clearly worked.

We had Trump. We had Rudy Giuliani, got cured in a day. We had personalities— Joe Rogan got cured in a couple of days and so did Dan Bongino. I mean, this was available, but it was prohibited. And we were told that there was no cure for COVID. All you could do is go off and quarantine for 14 days and take aspirin. So let me throw it to your discretion here. Is there something we could have done in order to lessen or basically eliminate most of COVID?

Jeffrey Tucker

Public health has always said that when a new respiratory pathogen comes along, the most important thing is to find out the ways to make sick people well. And medical science has a long history of dealing with respiratory infections, and this is what medical doctors were saying throughout February of 2020. They were saying, “don’t panic. We know how to fix this. We have plenty of cures. We know that getting out in the sun is very good for you, vitamin D. There are other medications that are available you can use in a combination, whether it’s vitamin supplements or ivermectin can be very good, antibiotics for secondary infections.” A lot of people thought hydroxychloroquine had seen some success with SARS-CoV-1, and subsequent random control trials have confirmed that.

Wayne Lenhardt

Can I stop you for just a moment? I’ve forgotten to swear you in. So will you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony today?

Jeffrey Tucker

I do.

Wayne Lenhardt

Thank you.

Jeffrey Tucker

So this is the priority of public health, always in the presence of a new pathogen. And by the way, there’s always a new pathogen. So everything mutates from everything else. And this is the way the microbial kingdom works. It’s just constantly mutating. And a pandemic means that it’s not yet endemic, meaning that it impacts a lot of people at the same time. And then the usual way you get out of a pandemic is through natural exposure and an upgrading of the immune system. That has been going on since the beginning of time, since the beginning of the human experience on earth, we evolved to coexist with pathogens.

So the role of medical doctors in public health has been to focus on making sure that sick people have the means to get well.

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That was not a consideration. At least, I can only speak for the U.S. case because that’s the one I know the best, but it was not a consideration at all. The NIH and the CDC just completely rejected the idea of early treatment.

And all my research points to one very grim reality: which is that very early on in the pandemic response the sole goal was to protect everybody from the pathogen through lockdowns and restrictions of mass meetings, closing of all indoor and outdoor congregative venues in order that we could wait for the vaccine to come along. The idea of the vaccine was that it would protect you against infection and transmission. And then we'd end the pandemic through this new technology called mRNA platform technology. And that would give the pharmaceutical companies a big boost, and everybody would love them and be grateful.

Well, that was the scenario that was mapped out sometime in February of 2020 by English and American public health officials. None of that scenario turned out to be true at all. First of all, the lockdowns and the banning of meetings, the dividing of the workforce between essential and non-essential, the plexiglass, the masking, none of that actually stopped the pathogen. It probably redirected or delayed maybe, although it's hard to say that there's a whole lot of evidence in that respect either. We don't see any real difference in virus trajectories between areas that were locked down and those that were not.

I mean, we have the case of Sweden, which had never had any lockdowns or school closures. They went through the pandemic like everybody else and they have some of the lowest mortality losses in all of Europe and no deaths among healthy children at all. So the lockdowns didn't really work to protect people from the virus; people were going to get it anyway. And the masks, all the random control trials show no evidence that the masks actually protected against the pathogen.

And the vaccine was— People think it came out fast. It was actually delayed relative to what they believed. I thought it was going to be rolled out by the summer. It kept being delayed and delayed. Some speculation that it was delayed for the U.S. election in November. It came out two weeks later, but once it was deployed, the evidence came in pretty quickly that it would not protect against infection. Whatever protection it did provide was very short term, maybe a couple, three months, and that it certainly didn't stop the transmission of the pathogen, which is to say it had no real contribution to make in the achievement of herd immunity.

So all this entire time, people kept getting sick. Now, remarkably, the people that were advocating for early treatments and had found a nice cocktail of things for people to take who get sick were censored; their voices were censored online by social media companies, and they were dismissed and denounced by major media at the behest of government officials that were running the pandemic response.

So this went on for the better part of two years. Now, in a lot of countries, and I'm speaking about Central America and Eastern Europe and many places around the world, people figured out that a combination of ivermectin and zinc and doxycycline, to prevent against secondary infections, was enormously successful. India had a miraculous experience really with ivermectin, and it was true all-over Central America. Mexico, El Salvador, these are not prescription medications. They were available over the counter and handed out to everybody, and it really helped the population. But in the U.S., and probably true in Canada too, these things were almost impossible to get.

And it was all because we were relying exclusively on the vaccine to solve the problem of the pandemic. The vaccine turned out to have not achieved anything like what they had predicted. And in fact, there's a lot of evidence that the highly vaccinated were also even more, and this is from all over the world, more likely to contract COVID. And sometimes even more likely to have adverse reactions

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due to immune dependency enhancement. So what that means is that the vaccine rewires the immune system in ways that make it smart only against one variant, but when the variant changes, it increases individual vulnerability to the new variant.

So all of this could have been anticipated. In fact, was anticipated. I'm not a medical doctor or a scientist in this field at all. But I knew all of this from just ninth grade biology class and from reading a first-year medical textbook on virology that I downloaded in the early part of the pandemic. So I could have predicted everything that happened. But for some reason, the officials behind this response did not understand this. And so they began to impose vaccine mandates and threaten people with their jobs.

Our data indicate that millions of people were displaced from their professional positions, either by being outright fired or just being afraid of the vaccine mandates, not wanting the vaccine, being afraid of being fired, getting fed up with being badgered and harassed and criticized and then demonized as being unvaccinated. You remember the U.S. administration said that the pandemic was entirely the fault of the unvaccinated, which is completely false. So lots of people's lives were dramatically disrupted through these vaccine mandates that turned out to have absolutely no public health justification at all.

Wayne Lenhardt

Do you see anything that the average citizen or any groups of citizens could have done in order to derail this process as it was happening?

Jeffrey Tucker

There was a great deal of fear in the air. We all have fantasies of alternative scenarios. What if the artists had stood up and said, "We're not going to be silenced?" What if the dance halls had not closed? What if the churches had stood up and said, "We're going to continue to let people worship God?" What if the small stores had just opened in any case?

The problem with all those scenarios is that while they might have worked on a mass level, we have plenty of evidence of the people who did do that were arrested, like the previous person who testified here, were arrested and harassed by the government. And a lot of people can't afford fines; they don't want legal entanglements. They certainly don't want to go to jail. So many people were just terrified into going along.

You also have the additional problem that mass gatherings now, even protests, are not as easy as they used to be due to facial recognition technology. We saw in the case of January 6, 2001[sic], everybody who was on Capitol Hill that day has been chronicled in a book and many have been jailed. Others have been harassed and forced to testify, and their lives have been ruined solely for speaking out for political reasons. So these days, it becomes much more difficult to protest these kinds of actions due to these new technologies. So I understand why people were afraid to get out and protest: nobody wanted to be demonized, and even private gatherings in those days were extremely difficult.

In western Massachusetts, I can tell you that anybody who held a house party was in danger of being demonized by the local media. What people were doing, and it's not necessarily the police but individuals were doing, was flying drones around the community and discovering houses with lots of cars parked out front in the evening and taking pictures of them and sending them to the local press, which would put these pictures of these

houses on the front page of the newspaper and claiming that super-spreader events were going on. That alerted the local public health authorities, who went in and fined and harassed people there, including chasing down people and their licence plates. So this was a kind of reaction that we never would have expected in any kind of civilized country that calls itself free with rights for the individual. It's almost like all that stuff just got put on the shelf.

Wayne Lenhardt

So what do we do going forward to make sure this doesn't happen again, in your opinion?

Jeffrey Tucker

Well, I think in the first instance we need to find out more truth about why all this happened.

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And why is it that our representative government suddenly became disabled? I mean, the people we vote into office to protect us and serve our interests were silenced and disempowered. We need to find out exactly why that happened.

A major problem, I'm not sure about that in the Canada case, but in the U.S., a major problem is that a lot of this is clouded under secrecy under the excuse of national security. So it was a national security response. This began on March 13, 2020, where the policy rulemaking power was transferred out of the Centers for Disease Control over to the National Security Council. That meant that everything is locked in secret. So this is a major problem. Just finding out the truth about what went on is extremely difficult.

I've got a whole team of researchers that's dedicated to this on a full-time basis. And we've run into all kinds of stops. I mean, even filing Freedom of Information requests have not been entirely successful due to redactions for national security reasons. So that is a major problem. So finding out the truth is one thing we have to keep at it.

The second thing we really need to do is convince our legislatures and the people who represent us to end the possibility that anything like this could happen again. And the only way to end that, to my mind, is to completely repeal the quarantine power of federal governments because we've seen how they've massively misused this. I mean, quarantines in the past have never been used for healthy populations. You would never use a quarantine for a healthy population. That just never happened at all in human history. And then suddenly, whole populations, hundreds of millions of people, were subject to quarantine rules by governments. So that power needs to go away. Most governments in the world never had that kind of extreme quarantine power until sometime in the 1940s. And the reason they didn't have it was because it was so subject to abuse. So I would like to see that completely gotten rid of.

Another thing that we really need to tackle is the inordinate power of the public health bureaucracies. That really has to come to an end. And the only way I know how to do that is to permit our elected representatives to be able to fire employees when they're up to no good or even just dramatically cut their budgets. I think something needs to happen to prevent that from happening again.

On the problem of censorship, we saw many cases, we have vast amounts of evidence, amounting to tens of thousands of pages of documents, that show that governments were cooperating very closely with social media companies, big tech companies, and media companies generally to censor dissenting voices in ways that are contrary to all conceptions of free speech. So that sort of close, collaborative relationship between Big Tech, Big Media, Big Government, and for that matter, big pharmaceutical companies, really needs to come to an end. We need a clear wall of separation between government, media, tech, and the pharmaceutical companies, or else we're going to face the situation of continuing collaboration and abuse of the population's rights in the future. That's extremely important.

Wayne Lenhardt

Is there anything that we could have done in order to do that while this was happening that you can see?

Jeffrey Tucker

I think we were all very naive in the early days. We didn't really want to believe that companies like Facebook or companies like Microsoft and LinkedIn and so on were cooperating so closely with the federal government. I think we've all been shocked to discover this.

We knew that people were being censored or throttled in their reach or just blocked and banned. We didn't know it was happening at the behest of government agencies. So I don't think there was really anything that we could have done. One thing I think we'll know for next time is just to have less trust in our public health agencies and these big social media platforms and the

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major media that served as a mouthpiece for government for the better part of two and three years.

So to my mind, citizens need to start looking at alternative media sources and using different kinds of technologies and getting promises from the companies that we're dealing with that they're not going to cooperate with Facebook and Google and Microsoft and the rest of these companies that have showed themselves to be so thoroughly compromised. I think it's extremely important that citizens get control of their privacy again. That could mean turning to completely different forms of communication between ourselves, bolstering our local communities, in-person meetings, and relying less on these centralized sources.

I hope that happens the next time they try to pull something like this because they certainly have lost trust. Every poll in the United States—I'm not sure about Canada—shows that there's a mass loss of trust in media and Big Tech and in public health, generally in government as a result of this experience. I hope that loss of trust translates into something good, which is that we stop relying on these companies and trusting big media as much as we have in the past.

Wayne Lenhardt

Yeah. Okay, I think I'm going to ask if the commissioners have any questions for our guest.

Commissioner Drysdale

Good morning, Mr. Tucker, and thank you for your testimony.

I have a question. You talk quite a bit about, and there's been a lot of news about the cooperation between the big tech companies and the government. You know, I was raised in a time when every town, every city, had its own little newspaper and its own little set of reporters. And I'm wondering, I haven't heard a lot said about what happened to those traditional media sources, those newspapers with those reporters, working at them in every community, who were competing against each other and telling the story and doing investigations. Can you comment a little bit about what happened, or what you believe may have happened in those traditional print media areas?

Jeffrey Tucker

Yeah, everything changed over the last 25 years. Print media began to be replaced by the internet. And then, the industry became entirely reorganized so that even local media was entirely dependent on centralized media sources, to the point that they no longer really had much independence, and that remains true today.

Another problem is that a lot of the reporters— And this became a huge source of frustration for me over the course of three years. A lot of these local reporters know better than to report things that are contrary to what the dominant mainstream media is saying because they don't want to harm their careers. Because every local media essentially wants to be bought out by a more centralized media, and the reporters want to hang on to their jobs and then experience advance.

So these days, we really are having more and more to rely on citizen journalism, which is taking place at places like Substack and Twitter, ever since Elon Musk took over, and other venues. It's really the only place you're going to get kind of independent news because the entire industry has gone through such a dramatic upheaval to the point that local news is not really local news anymore. I mean, I know this myself. I remember one time I got a call from CNN to talk about some economic subject, and I was surprised over the following week that my one clip appeared in thousands of local venues all over the country, all branded by the local station. I mean, it wasn't local news, but it was all branded under the local station. So this is how it works. It's all become industrially centralized and canned, and therefore, easy to control by government.

Commissioner Drysdale

You know, we always talk about, in Canada and the United States, the free market, free market of business, free market of ideas. It sounds to me like you're not describing a free market of information.

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Jeffrey Tucker

Yeah, not at all anymore. It became very important during the pandemic years especially for centralized government powers to control information flows. And that impacted everything from early treatments to opinions on lockdowns. You know when groups in the U.S. and Canada protested, the media swung into action demonizing them as disease spreaders without any evidence. So you know, controlling the news has become very important to corrupt bureaucracies and governments.

Commissioner Drysdale

You know I'm old enough— Perhaps I shouldn't bring this up, but I'm old enough to remember the Vietnam War and the coverage that the American and Canadian press had of that event. And to my mind, that was not quite comparable; this is an order of magnitude different. But it was something that tugged at the very fibres of the American society. And can you comment a little bit about the difference between the way the press either challenged or did not challenge the government narrative and how they reacted at this time?

Jeffrey Tucker

This time, it was almost a universal agreement that these actions, we should be clear, are without precedent. I mean, in our lifetimes, they're really— In hundreds of years, really, we've never seen anything like this. It was as if rights and liberties that we had won over the course of a thousand years of historical progress suddenly didn't exist. You'd think that it would have been a greater source of controversy, but it was just the opposite. I mean, the media was acting as if this is just the way you do pandemics. I can promise you: this is not the way you do pandemics.

The actions of governments all over the world, which basically are copying the China model, had no historical precedent whatsoever and should have been enormously controversial. But instead, the media just completely fell into line. And now, you see what's going on: They just basically stopped talking about it. Media these days will report on things like ill health, or the loss of education on the part of students, or growing amounts of teen and young adult mental disorders and problems, and the rise of depression and drug abuse, and all these things that are a fallout from the lockdown years. And yet, never mention that it has anything to do with the public health response. So the censorship, some of it self-censorship, is still going on.

Commissioner Drysdale

In Canada, and I believe the United States is the same, we have legislation, and in Canada it's called the *Anti-Combines Legislation* [sic]. I believe that's not quite the real name, but the intent is to prevent monopolies from removing our free market. The reason I say that is because when I listen to what you say, and you being an economist, I listen to what you say and I believe what you're describing is a monopolization of these venues, and that is supposed to be illegal in Canada and the United States.

Jeffrey Tucker

Well, when the monopolization benefits a very powerful people, apparently there's nobody left to object to it, which is why I think the ultimate solution to this is a kind of decentralization citizen journalism. I mean, it's a very painful process. People have to wean themselves from their attachments to national media, you know, turn off those notifications, delete those apps. It's the only way we're going to get from here to the truth. I don't think the antitrust authorities in any country are interested in busting up big media at this point because it's serving their interest too much, sadly.

Commissioner Drysdale

Is there not precedent, particularly in the United States, for antitrust laws to be applied to large industries?

Jeffrey Tucker

Yeah, there is. But not usually when those large industries became monopolized with the cheers of themselves. And so we've seen over the pandemic period that these monopolies have served very powerful interests. So they don't have any interest in busting them up, unfortunately. There's plenty of antitrust to do these days. But it's not likely to happen. And in fact, I'm not even sure how it really would happen. I think the most important thing we could do right now is to unplug national security from its controls over our big media venues. And we're nowhere near being done with that, unfortunately.

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Commissioner Drysdale

Thank you very much, sir.

Wayne Lenhardt

Are there any other questions from the Commissioners? No. Okay, well, thank you very much for your interesting presentation.

Jeffrey Tucker

It's my pleasure. Thank you so much for having me.

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The evidence offered in this transcript is a true and faithful record of witness testimony given during the National Citizens Inquiry (NCI) hearings. The transcript was prepared by members of a team of volunteers using an "intelligent verbatim" transcription method.

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