



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Quebec, QC

May 13, 2023

Day 3

EVIDENCE

(Translated from the French)

Witness 5: Lily Monier

Full Day 3 Timestamp: 04:51:13–05:35:06

Source URL: <https://rumble.com/v2vbsoc-quebec-jour-3-commission-denquete-nationale-citoyenne.html>

[00:00:00]

Konstantinos Merakos

So good afternoon once again. I hope everyone had a good lunch. We're going to proceed with our next witness. Her name is Lily Monier and she's with us in person today. Hello, Madame Monier. Are you well?

Lily Monier

Yes, yourself?

Konstantinos Merakos

Yes, thank you very much. If there's any point when you're not feeling well, take your time. We're here for you; we want to make your testimony as comfortable as possible for you. So I'm going to start by swearing you in. Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? Please say "I do" or "I solemnly swear."

Lily Monier

I solemnly swear.

Konstantinos Merakos

Thank you. Could you please spell your full name?

Lily Monier

Lily, L-I-L-Y, Monier, M-O-N-I-E-R.

Konstantinos Merakos

Excellent. So Madame Monier, I'd like to start with you. Tell us about your CV and who you are. And after that, my second question is: Why are you here today? So starting from the beginning, go ahead.

Lily Monier

I have a bachelor's degree in Industrial Relations. I also did my first year of law school, and then I chose to be self-employed and work from home. I transcribed court cases. When people go to court, it's recorded, and when they need an official transcript— So I worked with a stenographer's office. For 26 years I listened to trials. I'm also trained in crisis intervention, particularly with people who are suicidal, and I'm trained in mediation using Nonviolent Communication.

Konstantinos Merakos

Excellent. So we can see that you have an interest in the vulnerable in our society.

Lily Monier

Exactly. I wanted to be a lawyer to defend the poor, the oppressed, the orphans.

Konstantinos Merakos

But you're not at the moment, but maybe one day.

Lily Monier

But I work closely with people who are, and that gives me great joy.

Konstantinos Merakos

Okay, so from your perspective—as you see here, we're trying to get different perspectives from different ages, different regions—and I'm kind of answering my own question: Why are you here today? What's your perspective on what happened during the last few years regarding health measures?

And maybe we could start with your story, which is that at first you went along with the measures that were in place despite having questions, but later you started having doubts.

Lily Monier

In fact, I have a bit of a hypochondriac side, so initially I was a little scared in case there really was a pandemic. I may have been a little scared but I'm also someone who thinks, who questions, who looks at herself. So I faced my fear. I finally said to myself, "Look, if there's a dangerous virus and a major pandemic and if I die, well then I'll die and that's that, and we'll move on to other things." So I sort of made peace with that part of me that was afraid and I observed what was going on.

At one point, I had friends who said to me, "Ah, Lily, the pandemic: there's no pandemic here," and they started telling me things. It made me wonder but I didn't really want to hear it at first. I wasn't sure. I wanted to give it a chance. I watched and waited for

something to happen to confirm or deny the situation. Also, I live in a village of 5,000 inhabitants. If there's a pandemic, we're going to know about it.

For me, a dangerous pandemic means death: lots of people dying, no more room in the cemeteries, the need to make a mass grave. And you take notice. You go to the grocery store, and there—a village of 5,000 people, everyone knows everyone else—you meet someone and the person says, “Did you know that so-and-so is in intensive care or whatnot?”

[00:05:00]

So, I waited to see. What finally happened in June was that—

Konstantinos Merakos

June of what year, please?

Lily Monier

2020.

Konstantinos Merakos

Thank you.

Lily Monier

In June 2020, transcription stopped because the courthouses were closed. I had some time for myself; and in a way, I appreciated having a little more time for myself, to slow down for a while.

Then along came Bill 61. Of course, I have a legal background. I've often read legislation; it interests me. I read Bill 61 and was outraged: outraged that my government—I won't say “my” government, but “the” government—was abusive. For me, it was an attempt to abuse. Well, there were several elements in that bill that I won't mention, but there was the aspect where it [the government] gave itself the right to indefinitely renew the state of health emergency. That was unacceptable to me. For me, that was abusive overreach. People are down, they're vulnerable, and you want to do that? To me, that was a big X. [*She traces an X in the air with her hand.*] That was it, the case was settled.

And then from that point on— Two women from Val-David organized a demonstration two days later because things were moving fast at the start. We had to do something quickly. So we got together in our little village and I gave a speech. There were about 300 people in front of the church, and people were giving each other big hugs because they could no longer bear not being allowed to do it.

Konstantinos Merakos

And did you participate in—

Lily Monier

I gave a speech and hosted the protest. I didn't know I was going to host it. I spontaneously offered to give a speech. Afterwards, I regretted it. I said to myself, "My God, I've got a day-and-a-half to prepare," but I did it and it was a great pleasure. And I quoted Gandhi's phrase: "Civil disobedience is a sacred duty when the state becomes lawless or corrupt." Well, I've become an expert in civil disobedience. I've decided to not obey unjust laws.

And I'd also like to mention Rosa Parks, the black lady who got on the bus. Apparently, she was too tired that evening so she didn't go all the way to the back of the bus. She decided to sit at the front and that was prohibited. And that woman changed the course of events because she chose not to obey that day.

Konstantinos Merakos

So despite the fact that the details are different in each situation, what matters to you is the principle or the idea behind the act. In other words, depending on the situation that arises with the laws that the government decides to pass, you feel that the citizen's role is to ask questions. And one way of asking questions is through, for example, a demonstration or civil disobedience, et cetera. Do you agree?

Lily Monier

Yes. And that's also what I did when they imposed masking. It just didn't work for me. Then Dr. Arruda held a conference, and he said, "Ah well, it's useless in a community setting. People are going to wear it crooked; they're going to play with it; they're not going to use it properly, it's absolutely useless. Wash your hands." Then two weeks later, it was the opposite. I don't like that. It doesn't make me feel respected. I'm an intelligent person. You can't tell me the opposite two weeks later and expect me to trust you.

Since I always see things from a legal point of view: I read the decree, and then I saw the exemption: "Unless they have a medical condition." So I said, "Well it doesn't say 'unless they prove they have a medical condition.'" And I did some research. I went and looked at all kinds of things, and I printed out the decree. I called the owner of the Metro [grocery store] in my village and said, "Monsieur Vincent, I have a medical condition that means I can't wear the mask." I asked, "What are you going to do?" He was in a panic, "Can you put on a veil or a scarf?" I said, "No, nothing."

[00:10:00]

So he says, "What's your medical condition?" I said, "I don't think you've read the decree and that you don't know the law because medical records are confidential. Would you like me to send you the decree?" Then he said, "Yes, I'd like that." I knew he was going to forward it to Metro's legal department because I'd worked in big law firms in Montreal, I knew how these things worked. And that's what he did. And the next day, he called me.

Konstantinos Merakos

Sorry to interrupt, but were you working as a secretary?

Lily Monier

Yes.

Konstantinos Merakos

Thank you.

Lily Monier

He got back to me the next day and said, “Well, you were right.” I knew that I was. And then I suggested that, like at Costco, customers with a medical condition had a little something on the basket. And then I said, “Maybe that could make your life easier.” Because I’m not a confrontational person. I refuse to allow my fundamental rights to be restricted unless it is justified and justifiable, but all the while I will behave with respect for those around me.

You know, the Metro owner wasn’t responsible for what was happening, and I understood his panic regarding the other customers. And that’s what was really problematic. What also struck me was that I could go to the Metro without a mask, but the other customers were— Anyway, it was an intense experience. I felt the inner satisfaction of having respected myself. But it took a lot of courage to do that. And afterwards, I took part in a lot of demonstrations.

Konstantinos Merakos

That’s the subject I’d like to pursue a little. On the subject of demonstrations, you’ve been a witness and you’ve taken part. I’d like to get your perspective on the ground. Was it peaceful? Was it done with love? Was there any violence? I’d like you to relate the facts you observed.

Lily Monier

That’s right. I’ve spoken several times as well, given speeches. And I often talked about the legal aspect and what I knew about it because I have lots of lawyer friends to whom I asked questions. And I took part in many demonstrations which were completely peaceful. I didn’t meet a lot of “anti-vaxx” people. I met a lot of pro-choice people. What’s important to me is that people should be able to give free and informed consent. And that we should give them the right information, explain the risks involved in experimental injections, and let them decide for themselves.

Konstantinos Merakos

What was the atmosphere like at the demonstrations? The people, the families—were there any families? What were the reactions like? Because earlier you talked about hugs.

Lily Monier

It was wonderful. It’s like I have a new family. I have lots of new friends, and they’re people with the same values as me. And we got together and it was like a party. Our goal was to be seen and heard in peace and harmony. But they were opportunities to meet each other and to give each other support. And then to see that there were so many of us with the same point of view that something wasn’t quite right.

It wasn’t the protesters who were the problem. I observed police brutality. I even talked to police officers and told them, “Listen, there is no sense in what you are doing. People are super peaceful. You pick someone up and he’s ready to follow you, yet you put their hand up behind their back like this.” I say, “If you use more force than necessary—you are

subject to the Criminal Code—don't you think that could be considered assault? And you're going to have an ethics complaint." It hurt me deeply.

Konstantinos Merakos

Yes. Were these questions you asked the police?

Lily Monier

Yes.

Konstantinos Merakos

But one very important subject: Can you tell us about one or two incidents of police brutality that you observed as a witness? You mentioned, for example, people who wanted to follow the policeman but were handcuffed behind the back. Were there any other—

Lily Monier

And, you know, it was quite hard. For two years I— You have to understand that from the moment I got involved, I was incapable of sitting back and doing nothing.

[00:15:00]

I chose to get involved. I started doing Facebook Live videos, explaining, "Okay, here's the decree. Here's how I work within it." I wasn't giving advice because you aren't allowed to if you're not a lawyer. But I was saying what I did when I wanted to go without a mask. Then I'd talk about the demonstrations and about police brutality, and then people would call me. When people saw that there was someone who could be a point of reference, who knew lawyers, who was looking for answers, well listen, for two years it was 24/7.

Konstantinos Merakos

Basically, you were helping people.

Lily Monier

Distress calls . . . It was very difficult: difficult because what should have functioned normally—I'm a person of action, of solutions—and what should have worked, didn't. It was as if the ceiling had become the floor and the floor, the ceiling. The government wasn't respecting its own regulations and was maintaining a state of confusion. That's the feeling I got.

They frightened shopkeepers with fines if they let people in without masks. Yes, but if you had a medical condition, you wouldn't be fined. It was extremely difficult for people to assert their fundamental rights.

Starting on December 20, 2020, the police brutality began. And in La Fontaine Park, there was a woman on that day—I don't remember if it was December 2020—who phoned me following a demonstration where she had been dragged off by the police. A 72-year-old man was dragged off by the police. These people were not resisting. It was like intimidation.

I spoke at a demonstration in Val-David and told people, “If you see someone being arrested and being led away by a policeman, please follow him. Follow him and yell, ‘We’re with you, and we’ll stay with you until it’s over.’ And take note of the policeman’s badge number. Write it down, and then exchange contact details. And when you get home, talk to others and make several police ethics complaints.” I said this because I was speaking with a policeman who told me, “You know, one complaint doesn’t bother the police officer, but four or five complaints start to become tiring.” So I passed this on during a demonstration and I knew that the police were there, listening to me. I was sending a message to the police. I’m a vigilante at heart. It follows me everywhere and stays with me all the time.

Konstantinos Merakos

I have one last question about the demonstrations. Before the police started arresting people, were there any warnings? Were there any warnings to say, “If you don’t leave this place, we’re going to start arresting you”?

Lily Monier

This happened in Rimouski. They did it in Rimouski. It was like a recording. I was supposed to speak at a demonstration in Rimouski. I think it was in October 2020. And then I sensed that we were heading in that direction. I’m a courageous person in general, okay, but not one to take a beating. It scares the hell out of me. I don’t want to go through that.

I was ready to demonstrate. I was ready to talk to the cops. I was ready to do a lot of things. The fact is, I feared for Rimouski. I sensed where it was going and chose not to go after all. And that’s what happened, in the sense that the police were there in huge numbers and they did warn the demonstrators. They gave a warning and the people were forced to disperse. But as far as I know they didn’t do that again at the other demonstrations I’ve been to.

Konstantinos Merakos

Yes, there were no warnings at your demonstrations, just immediate arrests.

Lily Monier

Well, there were times when there were arrests. Listen, we were in Montreal and we were demonstrating. There were a lot of us; we took up the whole street. And I managed to get in the middle. I tried to get close to certain influencers who sometimes had bodyguards. I was careful. I’m careful.

[00:20:00]

So it happened that I saw people being taken away by the police to a side street. This was getting serious. If you’re going to arrest someone, arrest them there. Why are you taking them off by themselves, what’s the deal? Because these people were just walking down the street. I mean, no criminal acts were being committed. Maybe they didn’t have a mask, but then issue a ticket—which I consider illegal—but at most, leave it at that.

Konstantinos Merakos

Another important point I’d like to make: we spoke earlier about your interest in helping vulnerable people, or helping the world in general. I know that some people see you as a

mother, as a grandmother; you're very approachable. And I saw that in our brief preparation when we introduced ourselves.

Lily Monier

I'm not a mom.

Konstantinos Merakos

Okay, no, but I mean you are perceived as being approachable. You're—

Lily Monier

Kind.

Konstantinos Merakos

Yes, you're very calm. It's been very easy to communicate with you for this purpose, and I can see you're doing very well here. But then there are some people, for example, for whom what you're doing right now is very difficult.

So some people have called you. While respecting the confidentiality of these people, has there been talk of suicide, depression, or other hard subjects that have been discussed with you during these phone calls?

Lily Monier

A case that particularly touches me . . . I'm telling you, it does me good to cry. I allow myself to cry because it's a release. This man couldn't wear a mask, but it wasn't a physical condition, it was psychological: his father had tried to suffocate him when he was a child. Do you think that a rag on his face—? He wanted to kill himself. He couldn't take it anymore; he wasn't being heard. I suppose that sounds a bit out of proportion, but I think there's an element of post-traumatic stress. It was huge and he couldn't get anyone to listen to him, and then he couldn't get a note from his doctor. There is that too: the doctors followed the narrative. And then there's the Collège des médecins [College of Physicians]—we're not going to put them on trial here, but I can tell you that it wasn't easy. He finally convinced his doctor to give him a note because it didn't make sense for him to continually go through all that. This touched me deeply.

I have a lot of stories, a lot of people who phoned me were about to lose their jobs. This just floored me. A person in a very large law firm in Montreal—impressively large. I won't name them, that's not the point. But it just floors me. It's like: "Hello? What's going on? You're a lawyer." If I am able, I have an obligation as a citizen to know my rights and responsibilities. I can't go before a judge and say, "Oh, Judge, I didn't know about that law." He'll tell me, "No one is supposed to ignore the law." Well, a very large law firm sends messages to its employee: "When you come back, everyone must be vaccinated." The person working from home said, "Hey, I'll be returning soon, and [suddenly] they are demanding vaccination."

Konstantinos Merakos

And in several industries, but we'll come back to that subject.

Lily Monier

I've heard from people from all kinds of industries: unionized and non-unionized. I was referring them [to lawyers]. At one time I arrived with a group of lawyers, of which there weren't many. The group wasn't very big because it's too risky—it's too risky to stand up both as a citizen and as a lawyer, to be crucified in the public square, as a professional.

Konstantinos Merakos

Excuse me for interrupting. When you say, "crucify," with respect to the media and the image that they could— Define this word.

Lily Monier

All the words used: for example, "conspiracy theorist," "covidiot"—

Konstantinos Merakos

Do you have any experiences like that with the media where you have been placed in a negative, derogatory category?

Lily Monier

They didn't dare. On Facebook, I experienced something from a group that attacks influencers, that searches for things in order to attack people who do a bit of what I do.

[00:25:00]

And they searched for a really long time because I'm very careful when I speak, as I'm sure you've realized. Having listened to court proceedings for 26 years, I'm rather conscientious of what I can and can't say. So I was very careful and they could hardly pick up on anything, but they found something in my past and they broadcast it publicly. They didn't dare use the "c" word, which I detest, and the day it happens to me—I'm saying it publicly—I'll sue for defamation and have that word defined, and then they'll have to say how it applies to me.

I haven't taken that action yet. It wouldn't be very difficult for me using a procedural model. It hasn't happened and I hope it doesn't because I wouldn't tolerate it. Some people accept it and then say, "Oh, that's okay with me," but not me. Not me. I don't label others and I don't want it done to me.

Konstantinos Merakos

So we were talking about actions, and we'll move into the next subject with that word. In the beginning, we said that you were reading decrees, consulting lawyers, and taking part in peaceful demonstrations in keeping with democracy, as is your right in a democracy: it's one of the fundamental rights. And after that, you undertook other legal activities since you wanted to get some answers to your questions. So what was one of the questions you posed to the government through the—?

Lily Monier

A legal action in which I am a plaintiff. There are five plaintiffs.

Konstantinos Merakos

And we're about to discuss this. Excuse me for interrupting, but unfortunately, we won't be able to go into details. We'll just stick to the general themes of the conversation. But go ahead, excuse me.

Lily Monier

I have been with the Fondation pour la défense des droits et libertés du peuple [Foundation for the Defence of the Rights and Freedoms of the People] since October 2020. An appeal was filed: an appeal for judicial review. A lawyer had written it, but eventually withdrew from the case for all kinds of reasons. At that point, we had five expert reports from world leaders. A lot of money had been spent: about \$700,000. Then, the lawyer withdrew. I said, "Well, listen, could we represent ourselves?" I suggested we represent ourselves. At the same time, I thought that was very fitting.

What I've been longing to do for the past two years is to help people regain their power. That's what it's all about. And so I became like a spokesperson. Our procedure, our objective, was to say that there wasn't really a pandemic. They exceeded their authority with these measures. We're asking that the decrees be annulled, and that we talk about the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. And we'd like the government to show us that it has met the Oakes test because, while there is a right to infringe fundamental rights in an exceptional situation, a crisis situation, there is also an obligation to show that those four criteria are met. And I'd like to name them, if possible, so that people are aware.

Konstantinos Merakos

In a word, briefly, because the point I want people to understand, is that you have questions for the government. You've taken the legal route. And in essence—confirm to me if this is correct—you've asked a judge: whether a pandemic existed; if so, what are the reasonable limits of invasion on private life; and whether these measures are proportionate to the situation at hand?

Lily Monier

Exactly.

Konstantinos Merakos

I'm summarizing some of the technical elements because it is easy for people to get lost in the details. What are the criteria?

[00:30:00]

Lily Monier

We tell the judge, "As far as we're concerned, there was no pandemic, as is demonstrated by our experts in their report. And if you decide that there was a pandemic, we would at least like to be able to examine the measures in the light of these criteria: Was it reasonable? Was it effective? Was it a minimal impact? Were there alternatives to a curfew?"

Personally, I don't call them measures; I call them outrageous and totally incoherent. You're allowed to walk a dog after eight in the evening but no more than a kilometer. I could name plenty of examples here, but I think people know them. It's probably not necessary.

And I'm very proud. The Attorney General's lawyers filed a motion to dismiss our proceedings, saying the usual thing: that it had become theoretical because there were no more measures. But we countered, and I pleaded on January 4.

Konstantinos Merakos

It's under advisement, so we'll stop here as we are awaiting that decision.

Lily Monier

We're waiting for the decision. That's what "under advisement" means.

Konstantinos Merakos

Exactly.

Lily Monier

I'm very proud. It took a lot of courage. I was a little stressed, but I had great support. It's the most extraordinary thing I've done in my life, honestly, and I'm so very proud. I believe that everyone should use their skills to make a difference in their own way. I have skills in this area, so I put them to good use.

Konstantinos Merakos

Okay. So for you, it was essentially an exercise in democratic citizenship in order to receive answers in a reasonable fashion. And you mentioned earlier that you might want to slow down the machine.

Lily Monier

The bulldozer. It is a big bulldozer. Like in the cartoons, you have to throw wrenches or something into the wheels to slow it down. And me having legal recourse is no fun for them, to have this hanging over their heads. And it sends a message that: "You can't just do anything you want."

Konstantinos Merakos

The government.

Lily Monier

Yes. It's important that I do that, and to disobey. For me, civil disobedience is a relatively easy approach. It doesn't take a formal lesson: you just don't obey.

Konstantinos Merakos

One last question: I'd like to get your perspective because there are words that have been spoken in political speeches by the top ministers from different levels of government. What

is your opinion on these words that have been said? If we're talking about the words, I think you know.

Lily Monier

Yes, well, one thing that really struck me—and I couldn't believe it; I fell out of my chair—was when I heard Monsieur Legault say, "If you have employees who haven't been vaccinated, you can fire them." I thought, "Wow!"

Konstantinos Merakos

Can you tell us exactly if you've heard this on TV or radio?

Lily Monier

I don't know if it was at a press conference or— In any case, I definitely envision a photo of Monsieur Legault and a newspaper article. I think it was at a press conference but I'm not absolutely sure. That really blew me away.

Konstantinos Merakos

But you can confirm that it was negative?

Lily Monier

First of all, he's not a lawyer. If I'm not allowed to practice law illegally, I guess he's not either. And how can he say such a thing? They say that vaccination is not mandatory, but that's contradictory.

And then Monsieur Trudeau— What particularly struck me lately is that he seems to be saying that, well no, he didn't force people to get vaccinated. But there were all the threats. There were job losses. Well now, you didn't force them? That's nonsense. It's all nonsense. It's black and white, white and black. It changes from week to week. I just don't get it.

Konstantinos Merakos

Thank you, Madame Monier. We'll now continue with questions from the commissioners. Commissioners, go ahead.

Commissioner Massie

Hello, Madame Monier. Thank you for your testimony.

[00:35:00]

I see that during this health crisis, you've evolved on a personal level. You've faced up to your fears—which isn't the case for everyone. Because even today there are still people who are somewhat in the grip of fear, which isn't easy to manage because they lose their capacity for discernment at that point. But you've managed to do it, and it's a fine model to follow.

I see that you have basically pursued two paths: civil disobedience—which according to your testimony is based on ethical and moral principles inspired by Gandhi and many

others who have followed this path—and also you said to yourself, “Well, as I have expertise in legal procedures, why don’t I go this route?” And indeed, it’s a big adventure and it requires expertise to bring it to a successful conclusion.

But it may be that civil disobedience or demonstrations have their limits in terms of what they can achieve. The same goes for legal proceedings, which I think we’re approaching rather timidly in Canada, including in Quebec. When I hear about the procedures currently underway in the United States, it is not remotely the same. And I think that in the United States, this approach will probably end up having an impact.

My question is: If they rule against you—we know that it isn’t over yet and it is good to keep up the pressure for as long as possible, that sword of Damocles is good—do you envisage any other way of specifically changing the situation? Because at the political level, politicians who feel they have sufficient support from the population to continue along this path are not going to change; they’re going to continue along the same path. So how do you see this situation evolving? How do you see breaking the deadlock if your legal approach doesn’t produce the desired results?

Lily Monier

I don’t know. Sometimes I come up with other ideas, other plans for action. It’s in my nature. But I think what we’re doing here today is fabulous. And for me, what we’re doing today may not produce results next week, but the results are now. And I believe there’s more than the eye can see. I also believe in energy. Words resonate.

I’d like to thank everyone who has come here and all those who are taking part. I believe deeply in what we’re doing here. I think of the repetitions. You know, I think of the very old movies when I was little in which there was a castle gate and a group of people who got together and took a battering ram to that gate. And then, after 72 or perhaps 36 blows, the door gave way— I believe in that.

I often have ideas for other ways to proceed. I also think about the number of times you try again, when you don’t let go. When your child pulls on your sleeve and won’t let go, at some point you’re going to give in. I think it takes a lot of perseverance.

There are times when I’m disgusted. You know, I said to myself this morning, or yesterday, that if I weren’t involved in concrete action, participating and doing what I’m doing today—I’ve been accompanying Myriam, who will be testifying later, all week—I don’t know what other form it would take, but I need to be involved. And if I weren’t, I think I’d be in a depression with the world being as it is today. I need hope. What gives me hope is concrete action. I have ideas as I go along. Maybe I’ll have some tomorrow. I’ll say, “Ah, I could have answered that.” Right now, I’m waiting for the decision. That will tell me what to do next.

Commissioner Massie

Thank you very much. Do you have any questions here?

[00:40:00]

Lily Monier

I understand English well.

Commissioner Massie

No, it's for the people in the audience.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

Hello. [In English] The Charter of Rights and Freedoms in Canada includes the right of accommodation. And for me, what that means is accommodation for persons considered to be vulnerable within our society. So I'm going to ask you a question.

Commissioner Massie

[In English] Allow me to translate, otherwise I'll have to remember. I'm getting at the lower level of functioning.

What Janice has just said is that the rights of our society include the right to make accommodations in order to take into account the condition of people who are more vulnerable.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

[In English] So what recommendations would you make or suggest as to how we, as a society, can bridge reconciliation and compassion between the needs of people who are without against authorities—for example, the policing, the legislatures, the judges, the public service—who may not, for example, necessarily understand how eight o'clock curfews might impact someone who's already living on the streets?

Commissioner Massie

So the question is, how can we suggest ways of operating that will enable police, judiciary, and institutional authorities to implement or seriously deploy measures that will reconcile the specific needs of vulnerable people, including the homeless, for example? What can we do?

Lily Monier

People who were already suicidal before this crisis and who experienced lockdown— When I spoke to a police officer at one point, I asked, "Are there many more suicides?" He said, "There is no end to them." And listen, I'd like to give you an encouraging answer, but I get the impression that for our government, these people aren't important. I don't know if it's because these people don't contribute. I don't know what we can do about it.

I think we could stop the anxiety-provoking messages because I look on the internet, or even on MétéoMédia [The Weather Channel], when you look for the weather forecast and they announce that the summer is going to be horrible so don't think all is well. It's everywhere. It's in everything. It seems like these continual anxiety-provoking messages are to keep people in fear. I think that would be the first step. I find it criminal to do this because you cannot ignore the impact it's going to have, and it's your responsibility as a manager. You have no right to not know.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

[In English] You answered the question very well. Thank you. Merci.

Commissioner Massie

[In English] Are we okay?

Konstantinos Merakos

So Madame Monier, the Inquiry would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your testimony, and we wish you a pleasant evening. Thank you very much.

Lily Monier

Thank you, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for what you are doing. Thank you very much.

[00:43:53]

Final Review and Approval: Erin Thiessen, November 18, 2023.

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, and further translated from the original French.

For further information on the transcription process, method, and team, see the NCI website: <https://nationalcitizensinquiry.ca/about-these-translations/>

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