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NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

**EVIDENCE
TRURO HEARINGS**

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**Truro, Nova Scotia, Canada
March 16 to 18, 2023**

ABOUT THESE TRANSCRIPTS

The evidence offered in these transcripts is a true and faithful record of witness testimony given during the National Citizens Inquiry (NCI) hearings. These hearings took place in eight Canadian cities from coast to coast from March through May 2023.

Raw transcripts were initially produced from the audio-video recordings of witness testimony and legal and commissioner questions using Open AI's Whisper speech recognition software. From May to August 2023, a team of volunteers assessed the AI transcripts against the recordings to edit, review, format, and finalize all NCI witness transcripts.

With utmost respect for the witnesses, the volunteers worked to the best of their skills and abilities to ensure that the transcripts would be as clear, accurate, and accessible as possible. Edits were made using the "intelligent verbatim" transcription method, which removes filler words and other throat-clearing, false starts, and repetitions that could distract from the testimony content.

Many testimonies were accompanied by slide show presentations or other exhibits. The NCI team recommends that transcripts be read together with the video recordings and any corresponding exhibits.

We are grateful to all our volunteers for the countless hours committed to this project, and hope that this evidence will prove to be a useful resource for many in future. For a complete library of the over 300 testimonies at the NCI, please visit our website at <https://nationalcitizensinquiry.ca>.

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NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Truro, NS

March 16, 2023

Day 1

EVIDENCE

Opening Statements: Ches Crosbie and Commissioners

Full Day 1 Timestamp: 00:42:37–00:51:53

Source URL: <https://rumble.com/v2ddo8a-nci-truro-day-1.html>

[00:00:00]

Ches Crosbie

Thank you, everybody, for your patience during this little bit of delay. We had some technical things to work out. As you can see, we've got a fairly big array of equipment here and talented people working it. Apparently, the Wi-Fi was not quite as muscular as we might have hoped. That was one problem. But I think we've got the bugs worked out of it. And the reason we have all this, of course, is we want to reach a bigger audience than the people in this room.

I've been walking around and chatting with some of you, and I get a real sense of excitement and anticipation from the folks I talked to, that they want a process that is going to bring the truth out. And that's what the NCI—the National Citizens Inquiry—and the commissioners are here to deliver to the people of Canada. And that's the truth.

So this is the first of nine hearings that are going to be held across the country: the first one being here in Truro, National Citizens Inquiry. And they're each three-day hearings, and I want to welcome the commissioners. I want to welcome the witnesses, on-site guests, all those following the proceedings from home. My name is Ches Crosbie. I'm a long-time lawyer in Newfoundland and Labrador, and I focused on medical malpractice and class actions. I have a King's Council designation, and I was Leader of the Opposition in the House of Assembly in Newfoundland and Labrador. That's when I chose non-practicing status, so I'm not a practicing lawyer. This means I can't give legal advice or act as a barrister and solicitor in the courts. My position under the rules of this Commission is Administrator.

The Commission is consensual, it makes its own rules, and has no legal powers based in statute. It's based on the desire of Canadians for the truth. Now I'd ask commissioners, in light of this truth-seeking mission, to just say a few words about who they are and why it is they've chosen to devote such substantial volunteer time to the mission of this Commission of truth-seeking. Perhaps we could start on this side, Ken.

Commissioner Drysdale

Hi, I'm Ken Drysdale. I'm a professional engineer with 41 years of experience. I spent a lot of that time preparing forensic engineering reports for various technical issues, and so

that's kind of the background that I bring to this. On a more human side, I have six children, four grandchildren, two godchildren, and that's the reason I'm here.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

Good morning. My name is Janice Kaikkonen. I am here for all sorts of reasons like you. I really believe that the truth must prevail in all our discussions. I'm hoping for open discussion and debate to come back into this country and that our freedom of expression, or constitutional rights and freedoms, are honored once again as the bedrock of our foundation. I have seven children and seventeen grandchildren. I often have to think about how many there are. I work with vulnerable populations, the people who are most at risk, in my day-to-day. I'm an academic and I'm also a researcher. And most recently I was elected as a school board trustee in Ontario.

I live on a farm. I raise turkeys as well. So, I kind of have all the bases covered. And I'm here to hear you. I'm so thankful that there's so many of you who are willing to step up and to speak. I think it's very important. And we will do you justice and we're going to listen. Thank you.

Commissioner DiGregorio

Hi, my name is Heather DiGregorio. I am a lawyer from Calgary, Alberta. I've been practicing at a regional firm in Alberta for close to 20 years. My area of law has been tax, so a little bit different from what we're talking about here. I've appeared at all levels of court for tax:

[00:05:00]

the Tax Court of Canada, the Federal Court of Appeal, most recently at the Supreme Court of Canada.

But why I'm really here is, my wish is that we have an honest and open inquiry here with a group of people who are all committed to be open-minded and to hear from Canadians and really get to the bottom of what it is that we did as a country in our pandemic response, and what effect did it have on us. And we want to determine, was there anything we did that worked? What can we do different next time? And we're here to listen, we're here to learn, and we're going to come up with recommendations on how to deal with the next one that comes along. And that's why I'm here.

Commissioner Massie

[In French] Hello everyone. Hello everyone, I'm Bernard Massie. I'm a consultant in biotechnology. I retired as a scientist at the National Research Council, where I worked for 35 years in biotechnology with expertise in therapeutic antibody development and adenoviral-based vaccines. [In English] I'm going to translate that immediately. My name is Bernard Massie. I'm a retired independent consultant in biotechnology. I've been working at the NRC for 35 years, in the area—to simplify—of therapeutic antibody development and adenoviral-based vaccines.

So I'm bringing to the table, I would say, scientific expertise in therapeutic antibody development. And, as with the other members of the Commission, on a human level I was really—I would say—amiss with all the stories I was hearing from the scientific community and medical community, which to me didn't jive with my understanding of the science. And

I wanted to go to the bottom of it. So that's why I thought I could join the Inquiry and listen to people that can actually bring their perspective on what happened during this crisis of the pandemic.

I have five children, two grandchildren, and I'm really concerned world we're trying to build for them. And I'd like to see something different for the future. And I'm hoping that, with this inquiry, we're going to let truth emerge and we're going to try to find ways to do better next time.

Ches Crosbie

Thank you kindly, Commissioners. There's a fifth Commissioner, Christian Grebe, who has a very distinguished track record. She has a PhD in history. She knows a lot about war crimes and crimes against human rights. She's a practicing lawyer in Alberta, and she'll be able to say a bit more about herself when she appears at the next hearing.

Our rules provide for commissioners, in case of necessity, to not attend. But they have to either be present virtually, so that they can be taking in the evidence as it comes out, or they can review it later. It gives us that bit of extra flexibility.

Now, given the time thing that's gone on here, as much as I might like my own opening remarks, I'm going to suspend them for right now. I think we'll go straight into the evidence. I might get a chance to make these remarks anticipating the evidence that the commissioners should expect to hear sometime later in the proceedings.

Right now, I guess we should really go to our first witness. Are we okay with that? Are we ready to go?

Okay, let's go!

[00:09:27]

Final Review and Approval: Jodi Bruhn, August 3, 2023.

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