



NCI | CeNC

NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

**EVIDENCE
WINNIPEG HEARINGS**

NCI | CeNC

**Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
April 13 to 15, 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>.

TRANSCRIPT TEAM (English)

Managing Editor
Jodi Bruhn

Transcript Coordinators
Debbie Palmer, Erin Thiessen

Formatting and Analysis Leads
Veronica Bush, Melissa Neville

Whisper AI Transcript Creation
Madison Lowe

First Review

Anjum Ahmad-Donovan, Bill Allwright, Lisa Aschenbrenner, Anne Marie Baxter, Vanessa Behrens-Nicholls, Pamela Boese, Yvonne Cunnington, Michael Darmody, Teresa Dockstader, Heather Domik, Rita Mae Ewanchuk, Chantal Gutfriend, Monika Harynuk, Michelle Hughes, Karen Kimmet, Kathy Ladd, Lori Morrison, Ronald Mucklestone, Melissa Neville, Debbie Palmer, Joanne Plamondon, Susan Reh-Bosch, Elisa Rolston, Tanja Shields, Ronald Simpson, Elizabeth Sleight, Al Smigelski, Darlene Smigelski, Barbara Spencer, Dawn Sutherland Dort, Christine Taylor, Evelyne Therrien, Erin Thiessen, Ada VandenBerg, Rich VandenBerg, Sally Williams

Second Review

Veronica Bush, Elizabeth van Dreunen, Brigitte Hamilton, Rosalee Krahn, Val Sprott

Final Review

Jodi Bruhn, Anna Cairns, Margaret Phillips



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Winnipeg, MB

Day 2

April 14, 2023

EVIDENCE

Opening Statement: Shawn Buckley

Full Day 2 Timestamp: 00:42:50–01:30:20

Source URL: <https://rumble.com/v2i6qmk-national-citizens-inquiry-winnipeg-day-2.html>

[00:00:00]

Shawn Buckley

We're very excited that you're participating with us today. We actually are going to have two asks for those of you that are in the audience and those of you who are watching online. We are a band of citizens that just got together with the idea that we needed an independent look at how all levels of government have handled the COVID-19 pandemic because this is the most significant event for most of us alive today in Canada.

We've never gone through an experience that has so shaped our country and so divided us and so shaken us up. And we all know that we're going to be facing the consequences and the changes that it's going to bring forth going forward, for generations. And so we were just passionate about the need for an independent look. But this adventure that we've started, that's growing and growing, is only going to succeed if we can reach all Canadians and, in fact, really the entire world. This needs to be done in every single country: an independent-of-government, citizen-run inquiry into why the decisions were made the way they were and why all the institutions acted the way they did.

Now we're here today. We've run three hearings in Truro, Nova Scotia. We've run three hearings in Toronto. We ran a day of hearings yesterday in Winnipeg. We have had one mainstream media outlet here for maybe 40 minutes in this whole time, and yet on social media, we're starting to have tremendous success. But the reality is the mainstream media is not going to cover us. And there are some clear reasons for that: because if the citizens in Canada get control of their institutions again, get their institutions working for them again, then it is most probable, in my opinion, that the editorial boards of the mainstream media will be facing criminal charges. So why would they cover proceedings such as this?

So how do we get the word out? And this is our call because what we're finding is there are a number of you out there that have a large footprint in social media. Some of you are podcasters, and I'm talking to you all around the world, not just in Canada. We've got to ignite this around the world. If you are a podcaster, start podcasting about the NCI and we'll give you guests, we'll give you our spokesperson, we'll give you witnesses. We'll help you put us out and plug in and tag us. If you've got a Twitter account—or look, we're on every social media—tie into us and push us out on your networks.

Again, this is a citizen initiative and it only works if you the citizens, and not just of Canada but of the world, start participating. Start taking personal responsibility for doing something. Stop watching. Start doing or this fails, and it doesn't fail just for me: it fails for you and it fails for your kids. Time is short for us to get our institutions working for us again and so the time for sitting on the couch, the time for not participating is over. You are here to decide who you're going to be, and it's decision time, and I'm inviting you to make that decision.

We also have a second call out. In Toronto, we had an embalmer who was very nervous about testifying, very nervous about sharing her story about what she was seeing in the bodies after the vaccine was released. But she was brave and did it, and she placed a call out to other embalmers to participate. Yesterday, we had a surprise at the end of the day where it turned out we had an embalmer in the audience and—without us knowing this, just a witness on the stand told us—that embalmer took the stand. We were able to show that embalmer one of the exhibits that Laura Jeffery, the embalmer in Toronto, had shared with us,

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and he confirmed, “No, I'm seeing this in the persons that I'm embalming also.” And so now we have two. Now we're putting a call out for embalmers to contact the NCI because we need your testimony. Can you imagine if we put together a panel of you to have an open discussion amongst yourselves for the public to watch about what you're seeing because your evidence can't be disputed.

You are finding things, at least this is what we're being told now by two embalmers: you are finding physical changes that cannot be discounted in the persons in whom you are embalming. You are finding— I don't even know what to call them because they're not blood clots, they almost look like earthworms to me. And they're making it difficult for you to embalm because they're plugging up the arterial and vascular systems, and you're having to remove them. And this is new. That you've never seen this before, and the public needs your confirmation: You've seen changes in the blood and the blood clot. You have seen changes in the types of death following vaccination, including different changes in pattern for baby deaths. You have seen things that the public, if they become aware of it, will not be able to deny your evidence is crucial. So we're calling on all embalmers to contact the NCI because you have a special type of evidence that we need to get out there.

Now for my opening, I have to just say, because I'm going to be commenting on the legal system, that this is my opinion. And isn't it funny that I have to say that to try and protect myself because we know that when doctors or nurses, any medical professional steps out, they're sanctioned; they basically lose their licence to practise. It's a form of punishment to create censorship and scare the rest of them from actually taking self-responsibility for their actions and speaking out regardless of the costs and acting ethically regardless of the costs. I haven't seen lawyers being disbarred for taking on COVID cases or speaking out, but to borrow the title from Mr. Huxley's book, we truly are in a brave new world today. And so, to try and protect my licence to practise law, I'm just saying this is my personal opinion. I'm hoping that lawyers are still allowed to have personal opinions on the legal system amongst other matters.

Now, there is in my opinion, in my experience, there is—and people in this room will agree with me—a perception that during the COVID crisis, and to today, the court system has failed us. I've heard that time and time again from persons that are concerned about how

governments handled the COVID crisis. There is a perception that the court system failed us and that is my perception also. I have to say that I am personally grieved with how the court system has handled the COVID crisis, and I was called to the bar in February of 1995, so I'm working on my 29th year of practice.

I've tried to focus on constitutional issues. I've done a lot of criminal work, a lot of *Food and Drugs Act* work to try and keep our access to natural remedies available. Probably within the first 10 years of my practice, I had run a thousand trials. I was a high-volume trial lawyer trying to ensure that our rights were protected. That's always been my focus. And so when I give you my opinion of the legal system, I want you to understand that that comes from basically my entire career of practice, working on my 29th year.

The rule of law is simply the principle that the law applies to everyone equally. It's a very simple process or concept.

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You don't have to think long and hard to understand how that is important to a liberal democracy. If we're not all subject to the same laws, if we're not all treated fairly in that the law applies to us equally, we don't have the rule of law. What we have is tyranny. And it's funny, the word tyranny, it conjures up negative emotions, but if you look at the definition, I mean, it's actually not a scary thing at all except in its application. But tyranny is just absolute discretion.

You could have a tyrant that actually made really wonderful decisions for the populace. We could have Plato's philosopher kings making great decisions for the benefit of the populace. That would be pure tyranny, but our experience wouldn't be negative. But why it's negative is because in all of our recorded history with the very rare exception, as soon as a government or a ruler has absolute discretion over our lives, very bad things happen to the populace. So that's why when I use the word tyranny, we react to it actually emotionally. So you understand that the rule of law is our protection against tyranny. Because if the government or our kings or our rulers or our bureaucrats, if anyone who has been delegated power over us is subject to the same application of the law as we are, then we're protected. Then we don't have tyranny, and that is why the rule of law is so important.

Now what shocked me with this COVID experience and I think what shocked so many people is that we were expecting the court to basically be a mediator between ourselves and the government. I mean, I know I was expecting— Okay, the government's doing things. I'm going to expect that the court is going to be between the government and myself and if we are going to have the rule of law, then both parties have to be treated equally in the courts.

Now we have a fundamental problem in how our court system and how our justice system has been designed. And that is that we have built into it a conflict of interest that is not consistent with the rule of law, and when we get control of our institutions again, we are going to have to get rid of this conflict of interest. So I just want to speak a little bit about how this played out and how unfair it was. And one thing I've seen in trial after trial where I've had clients that said, "You know, I didn't know that was illegal; like, I didn't know that was a problem—" And invariably, the court will say, and I've heard it time and time again: ignorance of the law is no excuse. Early in my career, I would just accept that as a reasonable proposition.

Actually, I agree it is a reasonable proposition. Because if you have laws and somebody could just say, “Well, I didn’t know it was there,” and that was some reasonable excuse, then basically you don’t— The law is invalid, like you basically can’t apply it. There’s actually a good policy reason for ignorance of the law not being an excuse into whether or not you’re culpable. It could speak to what should flow from a penalty.

But why I’m going into this is— You know we have an inner voice? As time went on and I watched how the legal system was applied to government and I watched how courts would allow our police system to get away with breaking the law over and over again,

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and just who was charged and who wasn’t charged, it came to me that whenever I would hear a judge say to one of my clients, “ignorance of the law is no excuse,” that inner voice would add “except for the government and the police.” This has happened because of a conflict of interest that I’ll explain. But what disappointed me about the COVID experience was kind of a complete abandonment of the law by both the police and the government.

Now we all know about our *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. We all know about our Charter rights, and actually there are some really wonderful rights in that document. You know section 7: Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and the security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice. What a beautiful right. Courts have made it clear: that includes rights that we already had under the common law to autonomy over our own bodies, where, you know, you can refuse a medical treatment. Prior to COVID, that was sacrosanct in our legal system, in our medical system—the right to deny a treatment—and it’s guaranteed in our Charter.

We have freedom of conscience, we have freedom of expression, we have freedom of religion, we have the Charter right to freedom to assemble. I mean, it’s a fundamental right to be able to protest. It’s a fundamental right to be able to go to church and worship. It’s a fundamental right to have your own opinion according to the Charter. Now what’s interesting is, here we are in Winnipeg, Manitoba, second day of the National Citizen Inquiry hearing in the year 2023. And the year’s important because in this time in 2024, will it be legal in Canada to hold proceedings like this? Will it be legal for me to share this opinion in a year? I don’t know and if I’m a betting man, I wouldn’t know how to bet.

But we have these wonderful Charter rights and then we have section 52 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, the same British statute that includes our *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. It sets out that the Charter is the supreme law. I mean, it basically reads: the Constitution of Canada is the supreme law of Canada, and any law that is inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution is, to the extent of the inconsistency, of no force and effect. And what that means is, if you have any law— Let’s say a mandate saying you can’t assemble, you can’t have a group of more than 40 people outside, you can’t go to church. Well, that law is below our constitutional right to worship. That law is below our constitutional right to assemble.

So one of the things I learned—probably about a year and a half ago—I was involved in an organization that was forming to start looking into crimes that were committed in the COVID pandemic. I got segued into this NCI, I want to call it an “experience.” It’s really a movement. This is a movement because this is just Canadians getting together.

I mean the strength of this is that it doesn’t depend on any person or any groups of persons. So when I’m inviting the podcasters of the world to get involved, when I’m inviting every listener to push us out, I don’t care if your social network is 10 people, push us out because

that's how we're going to make a difference. And that's what we are. We're a movement of people that are basically demanding to know what happened so that we can collectively decide how we are going to manage our affairs in a peaceful way going forward. That's what this is about. We're not here to grind an axe. We're here to find solutions so that our children's future is protected and that Canada once again becomes a beautiful place to live where we treat each other with respect and kindness. That's why we're here and that's what this movement is about.

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Now one of the things that grieved me, though, is when I'm talking to police officers—in fact, you know, it might have been Vincent Gircys, who testified in Toronto; he might have even been one of them that told me. In fact, it might have been him who first shared it with me, saying, “You know when I talk to police officers, a lot of them don't understand that actually the Constitution is the supreme law of Canada. They're not familiar with section 52. They actually haven't been trained.” So you, literally, could have police officers that, to their core, want to enforce the law—who are dragging people out of church, who are pulling veterans out of a line and throwing them on the ground and kicking them—who don't actually understand that they are not upholding the law, that the supreme law of Canada is the Constitution. If they had been trained in this, if they had truly understood that for us to continue to be a free nation, free of tyranny with equal application of the law, and that the supreme law was our Charter—were the rights that were being encroached upon by the police— And you know what? It's not an excuse to say you were following orders.

We established that at Nuremberg, and I explained this principle on an earlier opening address. People in authority that want other people to do bad things understand that if they take away your personal responsibility that you can get people to do terrible things. So it was Himmler that was the head of the SS and he was giving a speech to a group of SS that were about to go out and murder a whole bunch of people. It might have been the speech given before the Night of the Long Knives, but it was a speech given before they were basically to go out and murder a list of individuals. And he literally said, “It's not you. It's not your finger on the trigger, it's not you pulling the trigger. It's me.” And he was saying this because he understood if he took the responsibility for what they were doing, they would follow orders.

And so when we had the Nuremberg trials, and I say “we, the civilized world,” “we, the citizens of the world” had to establish the legal principle that it is not an excuse to harm and kill other people that you were following orders. And so, police officers that dragged people from church services, that threw protesters into cars—it's not an excuse that you were following orders. And doctors that are following orders from your colleges, whatever those are. In Alberta, there was a direction that you were not to treat early COVID. It's not an excuse for you legally that you were basically following directions from your college. If we get control of our institutions, there will be inquiries into criminal liability for the actions of a lot of players here. So police officers didn't understand that in enforcing the mandates, they were violating the law.

But let's turn to the courts because we have just experienced the most significant government intrusion into our lives that any of us have experienced—and more significant intrusions than many would have experienced during wartime in Canada. I used to have clients that did pretty terrible things and would be subject to house arrest with conditions that were more favourable than conditions that you and I were subjected to by our government. And we had not committed a crime.

So here we have the biggest government overreach in our history, and we're all expecting, "Well, okay, but surely the courts are going to step in and be that mediator between the government and the citizen—not treat the government with any privilege because we can't have the rule of law if one side is privileged over the other." Because remember, the rule of law is the equal application of the law to everyone including governments. We have court cases where citizens are saying,

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"Well, the government went too far; the government encroached upon my rights." We don't have the rule of law if the government position is privileged in any way. We have tyranny, by definition.

It is April 2023. I cannot think of a single court decision in Canada that will, if the government does a similar thing— Let's say monkey pox. Remember we heard that one? We're being told that there might be another pandemic. So let's say something else comes along and they do the exact same things: They lock us down. They force us to wear masks. They do everything they can to coerce us into taking a vaccine or some other treatment. I cannot think of a single court case that will act as a brake on government actions going forward. Now there may be one that I'm not aware of. But I can tell you, I ask other lawyers whenever I have a conversation, "Can you think of a single case?" And no one can.

And there have been a few tricks that have been used by the courts to do this, and one of them is mootness.

So here we have this supreme law of Canada, these Charter rights, and people would start court cases saying, "Wait a second, I have the right to assemble. Wait a second, I have the right to get on a plane without a passport." They start these court proceedings and a whole bunch of resources goes into them on both sides. I mean, affidavits are sworn. People go through examinations for discovery. Arguments are made. There's motions, blah, blah, blah. They get all the way down this path and then the mandate is dropped. Then the Crown prosecution service applies to court saying, "Well, throw this out. It's moot because they can get on a plane now. They can get on a train. They can assemble however they want. They can go there right now to the park and assemble." You can't grant them any relief and case after case after case is thrown out, dismissed by the court.

What they've done then is they haven't made a decision that would put a brake on the government going forward. I'm sorry, when I'm locked in my house for not doing anything wrong, I want a court to decide whether that's okay or not. If you're told you can't go on a plane and fly within Canada or a train, it doesn't matter that you can now. You want to know, was that legal? Did that violate our constitution? Because, otherwise, they can do it again. I mean these are the most fundamental decisions that need to be decided by a court and they have not decided them.

Now the few that have allowed— This has proceeded, either the mandate is still there or the court had said, "No, I'm not going to throw this out for mootness." They have agreed, "No, there's been a Charter violation, but the government's action is okay." We've got this silly clause, section 1 of the Charter, which is kind of a safety valve. Section 1 reads, "The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it," and here's the mischief, "subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society." What the courts do is basically say, "Well, yeah, there is a Charter breach, but the government was okay, in this instance; it's demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society."

So basically, those decisions tell the government, “Not only is there no brake on you the next time this happens, but you are justified in doing this.” So basically, rubber stamping what the government has done. Now this is part of a systemic problem and that’s indisputable because in all of Canada, I can’t think of a single case. We’re in a situation where we cannot deny to ourselves that the court system is giving deference to the government.

Many of you have heard—and I know there’s going to be a witness today who might speak about it—Ontario Court of Appeal case *CG v. JH*. For anyone watching, the site is 2023 ONCA 77. So there was a family court case.

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Basically, one parent wanted to get a child vaccinated and the other didn’t. They’re having a fight in court and at the trial level, the family court judge didn’t side with the father who wanted to vaccinate and just said: “Listen, we shouldn’t give deference to government, so I’m not just following the public health authorities.” Well, it goes to the Ontario Court of Appeal and the Ontario Court of Appeal has said “No, courts, you can take judicial notice,” is the term. “You can consider it as fact, without proof, that if Health Canada approves a vaccine that that is prima facie evidence that they have considered it safe and effective. And you can then draw the inference that it’s safe and effective.”

It is clear that the Ontario Court of Appeal had no idea that the legal test for the approval of the COVID-19 vaccines didn’t require proof of safety and efficacy. In fact, the word “safety” and the word “efficacy” isn’t even found in the test, and we had Deanna McLeod speak to us about that yesterday. So the vaccines didn’t have to be proven to be safe and effective and they weren’t. And yet, we have the Ontario Court of Appeal directing lower courts to take judicial notice that if Health Canada has approved a COVID-19 vaccine, it’s been proven safe and effective. But let’s say they had been proven to be safe and effective, the problem is that the court is giving deference to the government line and that is not consistent with the rule of law.

So there are three things inconsistent with a court system that protects its citizens. I’m just going to speak mostly about the third one. Judges funded and appointed by the government are not consistent with the rule of law long term. A professional government prosecution service is not consistent with the rule of law. And if you want to hear an Orwellian term, I can’t think of a better one than Department of Justice. The big problem is, and the elephant in the room is, the conflict of interest caused by the fact that the Attorney General, federally and in every province—that directs our justice system; that sets the priorities for the police; that set the priorities for the prosecution service, which is a government prosecution service—is a member of the Government.

Think about that. We want the courts to not treat the government any differently than us. But the person who sets the priorities for enforcement, the person that sets the priorities for the police, the person that sets the priorities for the prosecution service is the Government. The Attorney General is a member of cabinet. This is a clear conflict of interest that is inconsistent with the rule of laws, and in my experience, the Attorney General is almost a hundred per cent of the time against citizen rights and for Big Government. I told you before, it was probably within the first 10 years of my practice, I’d run over a thousand trials. I have time and time again been in court arguing that there’s been too much government power and that rights have been encroached.

I can tell you that unless it's just so clearly obvious that the prosecutor would be embarrassed not to admit that there was a Charter violation and something should be done, where you just simply can't deny it, a hundred per cent of the time they have argued against rights.

Let me tell you about a case that has haunted me for a long time, just to illustrate why I've refused, although I've been asked several times. I do a lot of circuit courts and courts in small centres in BC, and I've been asked if I would be the prosecutor. I've refused a hundred per cent of the time in my career because of the culture of the service.

But I had a case when marijuana was still illegal,

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and this would be, probably, a good 15 years ago. We hadn't gotten even to our debate forced upon us by the compassion clubs, which led to legalization. So according to the Federal Department of Justice this was really serious stuff. I forget now whether it was just a neighbour smelling cannabis while they're outside barbecuing. But the police came to believe that that my clients, a young couple—they were probably both around 26, 27— young married couple, no kids, had some personal use cannabis in their house. I know this is a shocking crime.

So the police get a search warrant that they execute in the middle of the night. It was like one or two in the morning. So this couple actually wakes up with the police turning the light on in their bedroom, surrounded by SWAT people with machine guns pointed at them in bed, with the police's faces covered, and everything. They're just shocked because they're being screamed at to not move. And the husband tells the police, "Let me slip out of bed and get some clothes for my wife so that she can dress under the covers because she's naked." But "for officer safety, we can't tolerate that," so they rip the bedsheets off and embarrass the hell out of her. I'm just upset talking about it. I get to watch the Crown counsel explain to the Court why this is okay. And you know what? It's not okay.

Time and time again, just go sit in a court, whenever there's a Charter argument, and you will never see the Crown counsel argue for our rights. That is because the person directing Crown counsel, the person directing the priorities for our justice system is in cabinet of the government. They are not directing the prosecution service—they are not directing the police—to privilege our rights. And slowly and slowly and slowly our rights have been reduced and reduced and reduced. Our Charter came into force in 1982, and with a splash, courts were creating all these rights. We've got this machine: this prosecution service is a machine. I remember on one constitutional case it was me against 12 DOJ lawyers. There's unlimited resources and they just wear you down. But this machine is in there, time after time with all these resources.

You know, for most of my practice in legal aid for a criminal file— So from picking up the file to when you finish the first day of trial, and most of them finished in the first day of trial, you get paid five hundred and forty dollars. It's hardly enough to run your office, but the Department of Justice lawyers are getting their benefits and big salary and yet, ask the police to jump, and you have every expert you want. Legal aid, you have to beg and beg and beg and beg, and you might get an expert in 10 per cent of your cases. It is so unfair by design, by the government that controls the justice system, deliberately allocating resources so that they can slowly and surely grind away our rights. And what happens is, we've now seen the cage door shut. That's what we saw with COVID. It's been a slow and

steady erosion, and now we've seen this cage door shut. And it's because of a conflict of interest.

So I'm going to end there. We're going to have a witness later today who's a retired judge, who is— I don't want to be a spoiler, but the way this person put it kind of just encapsulates how far down we have gone and how much we need to get that institution working for us again.

I wanted to, before we call our first witness, just briefly watch a video of some of news clips that we experienced during COVID. We just thought this would be appropriate to bring us back to the type of experience we had. So, David, if you want to run that video; then, we'll march into our first witness.

[00:40:00] [Video is missing audio from 00:42:50–00:42:58]

[A video of news clips was played announcing emergency measures, including school closures and restrictions on indoor and outdoor public gatherings. Below are transcripts of the audio content.]

[Video clip] Kelvin Goertzen, Minister of Education

Today we are announcing that we will be suspending classes in Manitoba effective Monday March 23rd for a period of three weeks, a week before spring break and a week after the regularly scheduled spring break. We believe that our schools are safe. However, the experience in other provinces and other parts of the world tells us that proactive measures lessen the impact of the spread of COVID-19 and lessens the negative impact on individuals.

[Video clip] Dr. Brent Roussin, Chief Provincial Public Health Officer

I've recommended the closure of all Manitoba schools effective March 23rd. It's hoped that these proactive actions will help limit the impact of COVID-19 on our communities.

[Video clip] Brian Pallister, Premier of Manitoba

Manitobans are stepping up and they are doing what they can to help flatten the curve, and we thank them for that. Manitobans have led the way by listening to the advice of experts, and I commend all Manitobans for recognizing the critical needs for social distancing and for proactive measures to keep themselves and others safe. We are taking further decisive action by declaring a State of Emergency in the province. This will be valid for 30 days and prior to the end of that 30 days, of course, we will evaluate to see if there's a need to continue.

This puts us on an emergency footing and gives us a readiness that we need in these uncertain times. Understand that this is a temporary measure. Understand that we do not enter into this lightly, but this is part of our need to respond to ensure that we can continue to assist Manitobans in doing our part to protect the well-being of all of us here and all Canadians and global citizens. We respect the rights and freedoms of our citizens. We have stood above throughout our history in protecting the rights and freedoms of others.

Recently, of course, we have stood out and up on behalf of the rights of people who we feel have their rights threatened in another Canadian province by legislation that's been put forward there. And so we respect rights. However, we must continue to use every tool we have in our possible availability to flatten the curve here and to protect, do our part to

protect all Manitobans. The measures that we're taking today will enshrine, quite frankly, what has already been happening in Manitoba. We have not had reports of people violating the advice that Dr. Roussin and others have been giving. And so I want to say clearly that my promise and our government's promise to Manitobans is that these measures will end as soon as possible and will only be used if absolutely required.

[Video clip] Heather Stefanson, Minister of Family

Our government is continuing to take unprecedented steps in response, to respond to COVID-19 in every sector across all government departments. Based on the advice of the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer, licensed child care centres are suspending services at the end of the day and for the next three weeks. During this uncertain and challenging time, we need Manitobans to rise to the challenge.

[Video clip] Brian Pallister, Premier of Manitoba

We now have the mandate through law to be able to ensure the 50-person gathering. But I would ensure, I would ask Manitobans to participate. The best defence we have isn't just a government officer going and trying to stop a restaurant from opening. The best defence is if you come across a situation, and I encourage Manitobans, if you come across a situation where people are not observing the social distancing rules, I'd like you to go on the internet and tell everybody not to shop there.

Don't go there. Do the necessary things right now, the short-term pain that we have to, we know we all have to share in to make sure we have a longer-term gain. So we're not making the decision today that it will not change because we have to be nimble. We have to be ready. But we think we're taking the right steps based on science, and Dr. Roussin is the more qualified person to speak to this.

Know the penalties are onerous, and they're there, and they're there for a reason. They're there to deter behaviour that's unsafe, unhealthy, and that, frankly, is not in keeping with Manitobans' reputation as good citizens. So we don't make laws for the majority of people. We make laws as a consequence of the behaviour of some in the minority. And that is not something we've seen yet, but if we see it, we want people to know we're serious about clamping down on it, and that is what these measures are there for.

[Video clip] Dr. Brent Roussin, Chief Provincial Public Health Officer

As you have just heard the province has declared a State of Emergency. Today I am issuing orders under the *Public Health Act* to reinforce

[00:45:00]

the social distancing measures that we have already been applying. The following measures will be in place effective 4 p.m. today and will be in place for a period of 30 days.

We are limiting public gatherings to no more than 50 people at any indoor or outdoor place or premises. This includes places of worship, gatherings, and family events, such as weddings and funerals. This does not apply to a facility where health care or social services are provided. Retail businesses, including grocery stores or food stores, shopping centres, pharmacies, and gas stations can remain open, but must ensure separation of two metres between patrons assembling within the business. Public transportation facilities must also

ensure that people are reasonably able to maintain a separation of one or two metres from each other.

We are limiting hospitality premises where food or alcohol is served, or any theatres offering live performances of music, dance, or other art forms as movie theatres to 50 people or to 50 per cent of the capacity of these premises, whichever is less. These establishments must also be able to ensure social distances of one to two metres between their customers.

I'm ordering the immediate closures of all bingo and gaming events. All wellness centres offering physical activities, gyms, fitness centres, and athletic clubs and training facilities will be closed. We are taking these steps to ensure people make changes to their day-to-day lives, which you have already seen many Manitobans do. This is to strengthen our message regarding the need for social distancing and the need to act now. With these orders in place, Manitobans have a clear message on the roles that they can play to protect themselves, the people around them, and our communities.

Pharmacists are being required to limit the number and quantity of prescription drugs being dispensed. This is being done to ensure continued supply and prevent the stockpiling of prescription medications. Only a one-month supply will be provided at this time. Stay home if you're sick, cancel events, and very important, use reliable sources for your information. The Act makes it an offence to contravene any order, and so it can be fines or even a term of imprisonment under the Act.

[00:47:31]

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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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