



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Regina, SK

Day 3

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EVIDENCE

Witness 5: Donald Best

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Shawn Buckley

So commissioners, I would like to introduce our next witness, who is a Mr. Donald Best. Donald, can we begin this afternoon by having you state your full name for the record, spelling your first name and spelling your last name.

Donald Best

My name is Donald Robert Nelson Best. D-O-N-A-L-D. Best. B-E-S-T.

Shawn Buckley

And Donald, do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Donald Best

I do.

Shawn Buckley

And you're very accustomed to actually spelling your name in court and swearing because you were a former Toronto Police—we'll say police officer, but you were a sergeant. You were a detective from 1975 to 1990.

Donald Best

That's correct.

Shawn Buckley

You're now an independent journalist with emphasis on integrity issues in law enforcement, the legal community, and the justice system.

Donald Best

That's correct.

Shawn Buckley

You have over 45 years experience in law enforcement, complex investigations, undercover investigations, intelligence work and investigation management in both public and private sectors.

Donald Best

That's true.

Shawn Buckley

You have extensive experience in anti corruption investigations, arrest of corrupt police officers and public officials, and you have investigated over 100 individuals over the years in those areas.

Donald Best

That's true.

Shawn Buckley

So because what you're going to talk about, you know, there being corrupt police officers and officials, I think is very germane. You also have extensive experience investigating organized crime, including long-term deep cover investigations into the relationships between organized crime, law enforcement, the legal community, and governments.

Donald Best

That's true.

Shawn Buckley

Now, Donald, you know we're actually not under that tight of fuse. We've got time to fully put this story up. But I wanted to introduce to everyone that basically you're a career police officer, over 45 years of police work and investigation, and you're here today to speak to us about the Constable Grus case. And Commissioners, I will advise you that I had contacted counsel for Constable Grus, Bath-Sheba, to see if we could have Constable Grus attend. But because Constable Grus is in the middle of professional discipline proceedings, which actually were continuing this week, the lawyer was not willing to give the go-ahead for that to happen. So Donald Best has extensive knowledge and he's been following this. So, Donald, we really appreciate you coming. Is there anything else in your background that you'd like to fill in?

Donald Best

No, I think that pretty well covers it. I'm very honoured to be here. I appreciate the work of the National Citizens Inquiry. I think it's absolutely phenomenal, the number of witnesses that you've taken testimony from. And it's not just an archive for—I want to make this clear—I don't believe it's an archive just for historical purposes. I believe that it has real utility and will have increasing utility as more investigations are done into what happened.

And just as Detective Helen Grus tried to do an investigation, I think that this body of evidence, sworn evidence, will become of increasing importance.

Shawn Buckley

And Donald, I'll let you know you had sent me a list of documents in PDF form for us to make as exhibits, and I will advise you and the commissioners. It's just that I had already travelled so they haven't formed part of the record, but we will enter all of those as exhibits so the commissioners will be able to review them. So don't be afraid to refer to any. And they'll also be linked as exhibits when your witness page is up. So I'm wondering if you can perhaps start then by giving us the background on the Constable Grus case and just basically launching into what you think should be explained.

Donald Best

Yes, well I have a bit of a cough today. So I'd like to focus on the Detective Helen Grus case, and I'll make it a very factual chronology at the start. So everything that I'm going to say when I get into the chronology is evidence based. I've seen the evidence. I've heard it. I've seen the exhibits. And when we get to my commentary or my analysis of it, I'll do that at the end.

So this is the case of Detective Helen Grus. She's an Ottawa Police detective, and she's charged with discreditable conduct for initiating an alleged unauthorized investigation into a cluster of unexplained infant deaths in the Ottawa area.

Now Detective Grus developed this investigation in about December of 2021 into January of 2022 due to her suspicions that there was a possible connection between the unexplained deaths of nine infants and the mother's vaccine status—whether or not they had the COVID vaccine. And I will lay out the factual chronology, but at the end I believe that what is being done to Detective Grus and what is being done in terms of stopping criminal police investigations into the potential harms of these vaccines, I believe that this case, Detective Grus, is probably the most important case in law enforcement in Canadian history for 100 years. I do believe that, and I believe you'll see why.

So my reasons for being interested in this case, I learned in March 2022 that Ottawa Police had suspended a highly experienced senior detective, seized her work computer and files, shut down a criminal investigation into the potential connection between the COVID vaccines and the deaths of nine infants. Now when I heard that, I feared that this would deter not only Detective Grus, but other police officers all across Canada from launching any criminal investigations into, well, the manufacturing, approval, purchasing, mandating, adverse effects—everything to do with the vaccines. I also feared that it would cause police officers to not do thorough investigations or do investigations of unexplained deaths properly if there was a chance that the vaccines were involved.

Shawn Buckley

Donald, can I just stop you, because you've got so much experience as a police officer, including in management. I mean, you were a detective. You were a sergeant. I understand if a police officer did an investigation for an improper purpose that you would have, you know, professional misconduct hearings. So if a police officer was basically doing it to harass somebody or have somebody charged fraudulently, I could see professional misconduct. But are you aware ever in your career of a police officer being subject to

professional misconduct proceedings for in good faith undertaking a criminal investigation, let alone one to see what's the cause of death for infants?

Donald Best

No, I've never heard of this before in my 45 years in and around law enforcement. I've never heard of that before. Now most of the police officers who have been charged—and I've charged and arrested one or two myself—for looking in, for gathering information that is confidential for distribution outside the police service, whether to organized crime, whether to the press, whether to corporations, outside interests, and that is strictly prohibited. That is not what we had in the detective Grus case. Not even close.

Shawn Buckley

Okay, continue. Thank you. I just wanted to clarify that, because I think it's important for people to know it is unheard of of a police officer who in good faith starts an investigation to be subject to misconduct.

Donald Best

Never heard of it. Never heard of it. And other reasons why I was very interested in this case— I mean, I've devoted so many resources over the last two and two and a half years, and I thank my family for going along with me for that—I wanted to know the circumstances and the influences that caused the Ottawa Police Service to stop an investigation, to order the stop to an investigation into these infant deaths without the answers that Detective Grus was looking for. She had barely initiated this investigation when they shut it down. She was looking for answers, and those answers have not been found.

Now you know, as a society, as individuals, it should be our instinct and our innate duty to protect life, adults, children, babies in their mother's arms. So if there's any possible connection between the COVID vaccines and infant deaths, that would be important to know. Yet the Ottawa Police shut down that investigation, have not re-initiated it, no one has. And they've charged, suspended, disciplined, sanctioned the one officer in Canada who to my knowledge had the integrity and the courage to go ahead and initiate this investigation, which needs to be initiated.

So many police officers on the job and retired know exactly what I'm talking about. They know that there is reasonable suspicion to initiate a criminal investigation into many aspects of the vaccine. And we heard in court just this week during testimony that the criminal activity that Detective Grus was investigating was criminal negligence causing bodily harm and death. That was the nature of her investigation, and they shut that down.

Shawn Buckley

Donald, I think I should tell you we had yesterday as a witness, Dr. Thorp, who has a long career as a gynecologist and obstetrician and, you know, literally PhD in residencies, and in the last four and a half years has just personally dealt with over 27,000 high risk pregnancies—like a complete expert. And he was sharing with us—he actually put it up on screen for us to see—a document from Pfizer. And in fact, I can give everyone for the record the document number, I believe. No, I put those notes away, but they'll be in Dr. Thorp's testimony. He pulls it up, and it's actually by law so when you run a clinical trial, you have

to basically take adverse reaction reports for twelve weeks after the end of your clinical trial.

And they're reporting just on twelve weeks, but a couple of the reports that they took out—and I'm sorry, so it's not that document, it's another one he pulled up—basically of a couple of babies that died: one died nursing, maybe the other died while nursing too. And Pfizer didn't count them as deaths because it wasn't a direct intervention, it was due to shedding caused by the vaccine. But there's a clear causal relationship being admitted by Pfizer: "The vaccine caused the death, but we're not going to count it as a vaccine death because it was secondary, due to shedding." So we actually have the manufacturer believing that infant deaths even in the clinical trial occurred, let alone afterwards, but it's not being reported. I just thought I would share that background with you.

Donald Best

And it's also interesting from the perspective of the incidents we're talking about here with Detective Grus, her investigation. That was two and a half years ago, and there was enough there for a reasonable suspicion for her at the time. And yet here we are, two and a half years later. Think of the testimony that came out at this inquiry. Think of the medical reports. Think of the progress, the revelation of the Pfizer documents—all of these things an incredible amount of evidence since Detective Grus launched her investigation. And yet, no police investigation.

So I was also interested in this case from a professional standpoint as a former police officer. Detective Grus is charged with launching an unauthorized investigation. Well, in 45 years of being in and around law enforcement, I have never before heard of an unauthorized investigation. In my 15 years on the Toronto Police, I never once asked for permission to investigate anything.

I would ask for assistance. I would ask for resources, maybe some advice. I'd even go to the Crown. But I never asked permission, because law enforcement officers, sworn officers, don't have to ask permission. We have set this system up so that officers have independence—autonomy to act as they see fit under the law and their oath of office. And we do that to prevent outside interests from interfering with police officers, individual police officers, and organizations.

I mean as a squad leader and a sergeant, I sometimes was supervising 50, sometimes almost 100 officers. I never had one come and ask me for permission to initiate an investigation, not once. When I was a new police officer only three years on the job—I was 24, 25 years old, really just a kid—I initiated a murder investigation without telling anyone. And in one hour I tracked down the suspect. Yes, I called for backup at the end, but I never asked for permission. And I never told anyone until I went in to arrest the suspect, which I did, and he was convicted.

So what can have changed? In all this time, what can have changed? Well I think I know, because during my time as a police officer I would often have to resist pressures that threatened my individual autonomy, independence, and authority to conduct, initiate, any investigations I wanted to in accordance with my oath of office, the rule of law. We would always have people coming to us: "Would you drop this ticket? Would you leave this bar alone? Oh, that restaurant over there is the brother-in-law of so-and-so and he gives, you know, to the Widows and Orphans Fund." People would always ask. But if you do that, if you say, "Yes," once then you lose your authority. You lose your autonomy. So we have to fight for it.

We had an incident, and I'll go into it in more detail later, where my squad leader, Sergeant Harry Darcy, was ordered not to enforce the Liquor License Act at certain bars. And he said, "No," and that takes courage. That takes integrity. And so you have to fight for it. And I'm wondering, "Have police officers today surrendered their autonomy and their authority?" I really wonder about that. And as we get to the end of this, we'll talk a little bit more about that.

So the system is set up so that if you're going to order a police officer to not investigate something or stop an investigation, you had better have a legitimate reason for doing that. You had better have a darn good reason for doing that. I have seen a Chief of Police back down. I have seen senior officers, politicians, a member of provincial parliament back down when a police officer stood up with integrity and said, "No, I'm going to enforce the law. How dare you." And one time I saw a very senior police officer threatened with arrest for obstruction of police.

If you don't stand up, if you don't have the courage, then you lose your autonomy and your authority—not because they take it from you, but because you surrender. And that's true in the medical profession, in law. We've seen the doctors and the pharmacists and everybody—all these professional bodies in professions where people are supposed to have rules and autonomy and integrity and courage to stand up—and we have seen constantly, time and time again, these people have been ruined and destroyed and attacked. And I think you'll agree with me there. So it's the same in policing.

So I wanted to know the facts. I've worked with evidence all my life. I want to know the facts. I want to know why Ottawa Police would shut down an investigation into infant deaths before they knew if the COVID vaccines played any part in those deaths or not. That was my journalistic mission.

Now I want to just quickly say there's a publication ban in place. The tribunal that is judging Constable Grus has made a publication ban. Any of the victims, the babies, or their families, their names are not to be published. Also, that's the case with one of the police officers who is a prosecution witness. I understand the reasons for that ban and I accept it.

So I attended the majority of the hearing dates personally. I've written 30 or 40 articles about it. I was accredited by the Ottawa Police and the Hearing Officer as a journalist and authorized to make recordings and transcripts for my own notes. I can't publish them, and I did so. And I've been interviewed. I've been on several broadcasts and such. I've also been interviewed in the legacy media in the UK, the United States, Canada. So there is great interest in this case, but there doesn't seem to be in the Canadian media.

As part of my research, I also secretly recorded phone calls with Public Health Agency of Canada personnel. And I gathered other evidence showing that the Public Health Agency of Canada personnel interfered with and influenced the Ottawa Police investigation into Detective Grus starting in March of 2022—and even continuing after she appeared before the tribunal.

Now, legal exhibits. I have said that I have several exhibits that I put into evidence here today. Just a few days ago the Ottawa Police, the Tribunal Officer, made an order that they will be releasing so many documents—several thousand pages of documents is what it is. Now for two years they withheld many exhibits and legal documents and motions from the media and the public, contrary to the open court principle. But just this last week, that order was made. When I get that package—and it will take maybe even a month for them to

redact all the names of the babies and such—I will submit it as a package to the NCI, and it will form part of my evidence.

So Detective Helen Grus, a 21-year veteran Ottawa Police officer, in 2016 she was assigned to SACA, Sexual Assault and Child Abuse unit. And this is the unit that is assigned to investigate all unexpected infant deaths that occur outside of hospitals. And so that's part of her duty. And it's a tough unit to work in. They really do put the best of the best there. Just like homicide, you have to be first of all a top-notch investigator—top-notch investigator. But you also have to be very stable. You're called upon to investigate horrific, horrific events, so you need a special type of person in there. And Detective Grus is certainly that.

She's well liked, more than well respected. Her 2021 performance review which forms part of the record at the tribunal: "Detective Grus is a dedicated employee who puts her victims' needs above herself. Well versed in her role as an investigator in SACA, one of the most senior officers in the unit. Detective Grus is a wealth of knowledge and does not hesitate to assist or provide guidance to others. She is a revered investigator in SACA and has a large resumé of experience. I would encourage Detective Grus to pursue promotion and other career aspirations. SACA is lucky to have such a skilled interviewer and investigator as Detective Grus." Unquote.

Shawn Buckley

I'm just going to stop you. This is actually an Ottawa Police performance review of Constable Grus. So this is an internal assessment by the Ottawa Police of Constable Grus and how she was performing her duties.

Donald Best

That's correct. And like every other police officer, Detective Grus has initiated hundreds and hundreds of investigations on her own, self-initiated. It's just what police officers do every day. We heard some evidence that kind of made me smile this week, and it's the truth. If a police officer is driving down the street in a patrol car and sees something out of the corner of her eye and turns around, that's the start of an investigation. I mean, for me it was the start of a murder arrest. So that type of thing happens.

Now in 2017, Detective Grus was praised for a self-initiated investigation. Now let's substitute the word unauthorized. It was unauthorized. None of these investigations are authorized. You can do whatever you want as a police officer, investigate whomever you want. But she self-initiated an investigation into an unsolved historical sex assault upon a child. She hunted down and arrested that suspect. And, you know, the newspapers and the Ottawa Police praised her to the hilt for initiating a criminal investigation and looking into old police records of a case that was not hers—that was someone else's—and she decided to do that, and she solved that case. And that was just wonderful. And she won an award. She was praised both in the papers and by the police.

But that wasn't about the vaccine's impact upon a cluster of deceased infants. Same situation, just something different that you're not allowed to investigate. And that's how I view this. So she was highly valued, Detective Grus, highly valued both in her unit and by the Ottawa Police prior to this investigation.

In September of 2021, Detective Grus wrote a lengthy and widely distributed email to the Chief of Police and her colleagues. It's about three pages long, and it forms part of the evidence that I put in today, the exhibits. In that email she asked questions, including about

the efficacy and adverse effects of the “emergency use authorization vaccines” which were in the process of being mandated at that time, September 2021, in the Ottawa Police. She also asked, “Would the Ottawa Police Service take full legal and financial liability for any injuries, adverse effects, and/or deaths occurring to members following the receipt of any emergency use authorization vaccine potentially mandated?” For asking that, for writing that, she was sanctioned officially and by other officers.

Her immediate supervisors ordered her to never talk again about COVID vaccines—this, in the unit that investigates unexplained infant deaths—ordered never to talk about COVID or the vaccines again. She was ostracized. She was spied upon. They sent out instructions to other police officers that they were to be with her only when another officer was present so they could collect evidence if she broke the order to not talk about COVID or the vaccines.

She was transferred, only Detective Grus was transferred from downtown to the suburbs to a Kanata office far, far from downtown. She, a senior detective with 20 years plus on the job, was ordered to work during the Christmas party. Now look, in every factory, in every job across this nation, it’s the young new employees without families who work during Christmas. That’s just the way it is. For them to assign a 20-year veteran to work during Christmas and the Christmas party, well, that was a message. It was punishment. It was ostracization. It was despicable in my opinion. Sorry for giving my opinion. She was not welcome at home parties. Any of the Christmas parties that occurred that the police gave at Christmastime 2021, she wasn’t invited or she had to show proof of vaccine before she and her family would be allowed.

Now about this time, December 16th, 2021, Detective Grus went to a town hall meeting with the Chief of Police and Deputy Chief about the vaccines and about vaccine-injured personnel and the mandates, because there were several officers even by that time who had testified that they believed that they had been injured by the vaccines. One of the topics of discussion at that meeting and at the SACA unit and throughout the Ottawa Police Service was a spike in unexplained infant deaths two to three times the annual normal rate—nine noted deaths, a cluster. And of course people, especially people in SACA, were talking about this: “Whatever could it be?” And there was also a cluster of infant deaths since the vaccine release. And this discussion was taking place in December of 2021.

Now Sergeant Major Peter Danyluk and Chief Sloly acknowledged Detective Grus’ suspicions that perhaps the COVID vaccine might have had something to do with it. So they acknowledged that she was saying that. And in a private meeting with Sergeant Major Danyluk—and he worked directly for the Chief—Detective Grus informed of her research, the developing investigation, and she was using sources like the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Centers for Disease Control, the vaccine manufacturers. And interestingly enough, Danyluk later testified for the defence, for Detective Grus. And he stated that there was nothing wrong with what she was doing and it was perfectly acceptable, this research and investigation she was doing.

Then early in January we had an unprecedented event. On January 11th, 2022, an infant under one year old died in its mother’s arms. This was the second one in the Ottawa area in six weeks. Now we heard expert testimony at the Detective Grus trial by an experienced police detective who has investigated or supervised over 600 infant death investigations. And in those 15, 20 years he’s only seen one—so 1 in 600, and he wasn’t really sure about that—that died in their mother’s arms.

Usually they put the children to sleep and they’re not alive in the morning. But to have a child apparently healthy, animated, alive, die in its mother’s arms—so rare that he had only

seen that 1 in 600 times, yet we had two in Ottawa in six weeks: healthy, in their mother's arms, and then dead. One of those two deceased infants had an enlarged heart, which is a condition noted in the possible adverse effects of some of the vaccine manufacturer's literature.

So on January 13th, just two days later, Detective Grus had another meeting with the Chief of Police and other officers, and she updated the Chief on her investigation. And so this means that in early January, the command officers, SACA, Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Unit, and throughout the Ottawa Police Service knew what Detective Grus knew: knew that there was a spike in deaths, knew that there was a cluster since the vaccines came out, and knew that instead of 1 in 600, they had two in six weeks, infants that died in their mother's arms. That was known.

Detective Grus examined the SACA files for the investigations that had been done for the nine deceased infants. Now Detective Grus had not been assigned any of those. We heard evidence, and it's quite true from my background that you can look as a police officer, you can look at any reports throughout anything if you have a legitimate reason—and Detective Grus did. Two dead babies in six weeks is a legitimate reason for looking into those nine infant deaths. And what she found, what she discovered, was that the police records of these investigations into these nine infant deaths, some of them were complete, some were not—I'm talking about the investigations—but there was no record of the vaccine status of the parents and the child.

Now there's a coroner's form that is designed as a guide to assist police officers in investigating infant deaths. And one of the questions that is asked is about the vaccine status of the mother, the father, and the child. And this as an investigative question goes back to at least the 1980s when I was involved in investigations of infant deaths. And that was one of the things that was asked, along with, you know: "Any of the parents drug addicts?" All sorts of things: "What kind of environment does the mother work in? Does she work in a chemical factory?" All sorts of things that would be asked. And one of them, even back in the 1980s was: "Any recent medical treatments? Any vaccines for the child? What about your medical treatments or vaccines? Any prescription drugs for the parents?" Totally normal to ask that. And it was not answered in, I think, eight out of the nine investigations that Detective Grus looked into.

Now Detective Grus also learned by talking to some of her compatriots that they deliberately didn't ask the parents of the deceased infants about their vaccine status for fear of upsetting the parents. Now let's just consider that. We have officers from the very unit of the Ottawa Police that is assigned to investigate unexplained infant deaths. We have a police procedure that goes back decades, and we have a form that comes from the Ontario Coroner's office. And the Ottawa Police procedure is it must be filled out. It must. That's what must be done. But officers, they said out of concern for the parents, didn't want to upset the parents. Why? Because they didn't want to the parents to think that maybe it was something to do with the vaccine? Since when do essentially homicide officers not ask questions that are relevant for fear of upsetting the relatives of the deceased?

Shawn Buckley

Donald, I'm just going to break in. I'm looking at the time and I know what you want to cover. So we're going to have to pick up the pace if you want to get through everything.

Donald Best

Okay. January 30th, 2022, Detective Grus called one of the fathers. It was a cordial and appreciated call. She wanted to know the vaccine status of the parents. Colleagues complained that Detective Grus had looked into the files and essentially had revealed that the investigations were not well done. And so Detective Grus found herself suspended on February 4th, 2022 by the Professional Standards Unit. They suspended her for an unauthorized investigation, insubordination, disobeying an order. Now that was later dropped because no one gave an order for her to not investigate anything. And they ordered her to stop the infant deaths investigation. They seized all her evidence. They searched her desk, her personal laptop. And then they wiretapped Detective Grus and her family in mid-February. She had nothing to do with the con—

Shawn Buckley

I'm sorry.

Donald Best

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

So they wiretapped the police officer and the police officer's family.

Donald Best

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Are you aware of that ever happening for a police officer that is not alleged to have committed a crime?

Donald Best

No. First of all, I was injured in work, a police motorcycle accident, and I worked nothing but wiretaps for a year. I'm very experienced with them. And the type of wiretap, there's various ways of getting a wiretap. And we know that this wiretap against Detective Grus and her family was obtained under the section of the criminal code where no evidence has to be given. The officer just goes in and says, "I need it." Now this is reserved for abductions, child abductions in progress, hostage situations, murders about to occur, active terrorism. That's what this is about. And the police basically get a free license for 36 hours to wiretap a suspect. We don't know what they told the judge. They didn't have to do anything in writing or present any evidence at all, but they got that warrant for 36 hours.

When it was over they didn't come back with more evidence. They didn't extend the warrant. It was just because they could, knowing that by law they had to notify Detective Grus that she had been wiretapped. She gave evidence on the stand how devastated she was to know that she and her family were wiretapped. And don't forget, that's not just the phones anymore. It's your email, it's your conversation, it's your chats, it's everything.

And I know, because I did this for over a year, that it isn't just the subject of the investigation who ends up being wiretapped. And I listened to people plotting murder. I

listened to just terrible things. But I also listened to their daughter talking to their boyfriend, explaining that she was pregnant. I knew she was pregnant for three months before her parents did. I knew that the grandmother was a methamphetamine addict and kept vodka and methamphetamine in the garden shed. I knew all the secrets.

Think of all the things that you say to your spouse. Think of all the things you say during business deals, and your son, and that your teenagers talk to each other. Think of all that. That is all heard and all learned, and that is what they did to Detective Helen Grus and her family, knowing that it's just like that and knowing they would deliver a written notice to her that would be devastating, saying that on that weekend—and she gave evidence to this—there were family members over, there were cousins and uncles, and all of them would have been wiretapped, too. This was just sheer intimidation.

And while I'm at it, I might as well cover some other intimidation, briefly. In January of 2024, this year, there was a court date. Detective Grus would have taken the stand in her own defence for the first time. And a short time before she was due to testify, Inspector Hugh O'Toole of the Ottawa Police Professional Standards Unit, the same one who charged her and initiated the investigation, he sent an email to her—not to her lawyer, directly to Detective Grus—threatening her that if she gave certain evidence and used certain exhibits in her defence, she would be investigated and, the inference is, charged again.

The defence team, you can imagine, they stated that it was witness intimidation under the Criminal Code, obstructive justice—which in my humble opinion it is. They left the courtroom, and they filed a complaint out at the front desk of the police station for this criminal offence. And I don't know what happened, but I know we heard evidence this week that there was a private prosecution in play or finished, I don't know, of Inspector Hugh O'Toole for witness intimidation under the Criminal Code.

Now, Inspector O'Toole has not been in charge of that unit since I think about February of this year, and I understand he is off for some reason. And I was just stunned to hear that—everybody was stunned—a witness going on in a few moments, and she receives a threat in writing by a man who has a law degree? Wow. That was no accident. So that's what happened in January. And you want to talk about intimidation. I'll just continue going on here.

So that was the wiretap. And then we had in late March, 2022, rogue police officers in Detective Grus's squad contacted the CBC, Canadian Broadcasting Company, a reporter named Shaamini Yogaretnam. And they illegally, unlawfully revealed the confidential information about the babies, about the investigation, about the cluster of infant deaths, and what Detective Grus was alleged to have done. But they also put in a few other things which we know now from testimony were untrue.

Detective Grus never went to the coroners to get the coroner's report, and yet the CBC reported that. Detective Grus never unlawfully called parents and upset them; they reported that. The CBC reported a lot of items that were not true. But before that report came out—and it came out on a Monday—on the Friday, the CBC reporter, Shaamini Yogaretnam, delivered an ultimatum to the Ottawa Police Service.

Now every investigation, including the investigation into Detective Grus, has a plan. And I don't know what the plan was, but I can tell you that in the plan they probably would have been going to inform the parents of the infants, or not, because they didn't know. After everything else was investigated, that plan went out the window because of the ultimatum from the CBC: "We're publishing this story on Monday."—or actually, they gave them 24

hours on Friday. And CBC said to the police, “Have you notified all the parents?” which means: “We’re going to notify them in the story.” They didn’t know anything about this. There was no upset.

And so on Friday, members of the Professional Standards Unit started phoning each one of the parents, upsetting some of them. And the parents were told that Detective Grus had done an unlawful, unauthorized investigation and violated the privacy of the parents and the infants. That’s what they were told. Incredible. So the Ottawa Police allowed the CBC to take over the direction of that investigation, and they did. So that article was published on Monday, I believe it was March 28th, 2022. There was also a radio show. I recorded that, I have the transcript. It’s in evidence here today.

And there was a second article that came a few days later where one of the mothers who had been upset by the call went to a lawyer, complained, threatened. And in that article, Detective Grus was called rogue. None of this would have happened except that these actual rogue officers violated the confidentiality, violated their oath, I believe, in my humble opinion, violated the Criminal Code, but certainly violated other laws to do what they did. And yet when Detective Grus asked Professional Standards to launch an investigation into who those officers were, Professional Standards refused. Inspector Hugh O’Toole refused to launch a criminal investigation, any investigation into the source of that terrible leak by those rogue officers.

Ah, but they charged Detective Grus and blamed her, saying—and they did, it’s in the court documents—they blamed her that that CBC series of articles discredited the Ottawa Police, brought the Ottawa Police into discredit and disrepute, and that Detective Grus was to blame for that—not the corrupt police officers who briefed the CBC. So why was that not investigated? I don’t know. They wiretapped Detective Helen Grus.

Shawn Buckley

And Donald, we’ve got about five minutes.

Donald Best

Okay. So they charged Detective Grus with discreditable conduct. They interviewed her May 12, 2022, three-hour compelled interview. Detective Grus turned over all her evidence of the criminal investigation to the Professional Standards Unit, and the Professional Standards Unit with that evidence—which included the Pfizer documents and all sorts of evidence that provided a foundation for the suspicion of criminal negligence which she said she was investigating—and they took that information and they did nothing. Not one thing.

And so she was charged. The Police Union abandoned Detective Grus. The Police Union had been for the mandates. They abandoned Detective Grus. They would not pay her legal fees. Her legal fees are now exceeded a quarter million dollars, as I understand it. But they have paid the legal fees for officers accused of rape, sexual assault, taking bribes, and assault causing bodily harm. They paid all those officers the legal fees, but they wouldn’t pay the legal fees for Detective Grus.

I tried to interview the president of the Ottawa Police Association, the union, and he refused to be interviewed or answer any questions as to why the union would pay for all those criminals—some of whom were convicted in uniform—and would not pay for Detective Grus. Bias.

The tribunal is not a criminal court. It runs by its own rules. It's run by the Ottawa Police. The Tribunal Officer who is like a judge, except he has no legal training and he's paid by the Ottawa Police Service, so it's conflicted. There are no rules really. They make them up. The rules of court are not the rules of a tribunal. I'm sure you could expand on this much more than I could, sir. But some of the decisions that have been made have really been unusual.

Detective Grus was not allowed to see her own handwritten duty memo book for January 30, 2022. You remember that's when she made that phone call, she made notes. They won't allow her to see that book, her own written notes for her defence. The tribunal allowed a prosecutor's conflict of interest. The prosecutor from the Ottawa Police Service, one of the main witnesses is her sister-in-law. And when that was announced in court, the entire gallery gasped, because if that happened in a criminal court, that would be it. The charge would be thrown out and both the prosecutor and the judge who allowed that would be under investigation.

Shawn Buckley

Can I just stop you, because I want to make sure I understand. So you mean the officer that is acting as—we'll call it not the judge, but what are they called?

Donald Best

Okay, the prosecutor is a lawyer, part of the legal team. They're an employee of the Ottawa Police Service Legal Department. The prosecutor is a lawyer. Her name is Vanessa Stewart. And the judge, if you like, the trials officer, the adjudicator, several names, he is— I'm sorry, I'm gapping right now. In any event, he is a retired—Chris Renwick, a retired police superintendent from the Ottawa Police. And so he serves as a would-be judge. He has no legal training. Most of his cases are maybe an officer got drunk on duty and is pleading guilty. This case has been going on now for some 20 days of hearings.

Shawn Buckley

Right, but there's a connection between the prosecutor and the adjudicator, is that what you were saying?

Donald Best

No. No, between the prosecutor and one of the primary prosecution witnesses, who is a police officer named Stewart. So we have the prosecutor, Stewart, and the witness, Stewart, who are sisters in law.

Shawn Buckley

Oh, okay. Yeah, no, that's really not something you allow because it just appears to be unbiased.

Donald Best

Right.

Shawn Buckley

And prosecutors actually have a duty not to get a prosecution, but to put all evidence fairly forward. So that's very interesting.

Donald Best

Yeah, and the agreement was that the girls wouldn't talk to each other when they went shopping or a barbecue or dinner about the case.

Shawn Buckley

And we're getting down to about 1 minute.

Donald Best

All right, fair and fair enough. But also the prosecutor weaponized objections, especially when defending her sister in law. And it just goes on and on and on. Expert defensive witnesses were not allowed. And this is really something: On November 26th, 2023, Hearing Officer Renwick rejected all five defence expert witnesses—four out of the five because they were associated with, or testified for the National Citizens Inquiry. And that included yourself, sir.

The names are Dr. Eric Payne, Dr. James Thorp, Dr. Gregory Chan, lawyer Sean Buckley, and Ottawa Police Staff Sergeant Retired Peter Danyluk. None of those witnesses were allowed. It was said that they were biased because they put in statements that defended Detective Grus. For instance, Dr. James Thorp had an expressed opinion that the Ottawa Police Service should be investigated for their political prosecution of Detective Grus. So no testimony from James Thorp. Sergeant Daniluk ...

Shawn Buckley

That wasn't a public statement. That was a statement in his affidavit in support of Constable Grus.

Donald Best

That's correct.

Shawn Buckley

Right. So he's not being disqualified for anything he says in public. He's being disqualified for voicing something in an affidavit in those proceedings.

Donald Best

Yes, all these people put in affidavits and were rejected because of the anticipated evidence that they were going to get. Staff Sergeant Danyluk was rejected because he said that the disciplinary system is being used against Constable Grus, and leadership failed in not investigating the media leak to the CBC. So no testimony from him.

Lawyer Shawn Buckley "was a moderator at the April 26, 2023 National Citizens Inquiry and put questions to a witness, a former RCMP Corporal Daniel Bulford, on Detective Grus's

actions and charges.” And also Dr. Eric Payne and Dr. Gregory Chan were witnesses at the inquiry. So none of you are allowed to give defence testimony whether—I mean, you believe what you said; you swore in an affidavit, but that was disallowed. And we can go on and on and on.

I believe that this case is critical for two reasons: One, we had an experienced senior detective investigating on reasonable suspicion, reasonable probable grounds, a cluster of nine infant deaths that were so unusual, two of them, that not even 1 in 600 had been seen before. And she was wondering about the connection between the vaccine, the mRNA vaccines, and these infant deaths and the mother’s vaccine status and breastfeeding. And the Ottawa Police shut that down without getting those answers.

And number two, I’m thinking of police officers and their lack of integrity and their lack of courage for standing up. Their independence has not been taken from them—they have surrendered it. Their authority has not been taken from them—they have surrendered it.

Quick story. Police Sergeant Harry Darcy, my squad leader back in the eighties, was told not to touch any of the vessels in Toronto Harbour that were operating without a liquor license. They were operating as gambling dens, brothels, drug distribution units. One that operated with the Chinese triads, organized crime as a gambling den with a brothel downstairs, was owned by a member of Provincial Parliament in Ontario. And Sergeant D’Arcy got so much pressure, it ended up he was in the office of the chief, Chief Jack Marks, and Harry D’Arcy said to the chief, “You can transfer me, you can fire me, but you can’t order me not to enforce the law and to do my duty.”

Where are those police officers today? If Detective Grus were here, I’d ask her to stand up. But she’s not here. I understand why not. But retired Staff Sergeant Harry D’Arcy is here, and I’d like him to stand up now so we can all have a look at an honest copper—where are you, Harry, stand up—who had the integrity and courage like Detective Grus has the integrity and courage. It’s a leadership problem. Top down. I don’t know how we’re going to fix this in policing, but I know that Detective Grus is being railroaded. And the question we should be asking is: Why did they stop that investigation?

Shawn Buckley

Donald, why did they stop that investigation, in your professional opinion?

Donald Best

In my professional opinion, it was to deter any other police officer in this country from launching an investigation into how these mRNA vaccines were developed, licensed, distributed, mandated, who made money, who mandated it that made money—and as we’ve seen the evidence in the last four years, it just keeps coming. So Detective Grus is a message to other police officers in Canada to stop them from investigating. It’s worked.

So I’m appealing every police officer who’s watching this. And I know there’s many of you still on the job. You’ve spoken to me, many off the job, but it takes less courage when you’re off the job. All those police officers who know what’s going on: Do your duty. Obey your oath of office. Regain your authority and your autonomy. Because right now you’ve surrendered it.

Shawn Buckley

Thank you, Donald. I'll ask the commissioners if they have any questions of you.

Commissioner Drysdale

Good afternoon and thank you for coming out. You talk about the duty of a police officer, and you talk about the oath. Let me ask you a question. To what people in Canada do our laws apply? Do they only apply to a certain group of people? Do they apply to politicians? And do they apply to police? Or do they just apply to a certain class of people? In general terms.

Donald Best

The rule of law means that every person is equal before the law. Before the police, the police are supposed to treat everyone equally. The courts are supposed to treat everyone equally. The law is supposed to be applied to all equally. That is no longer true. The rule of law is quite absent in Canada. I know we see it all the time. We see law enforcement officers favouring certain political groups at a protest, bringing coffee to one group, yet dragging away the other. We've seen police cars painted with the political slogans and the social slogans of the day. So they have abandoned their universality. They are giving a message that we favour this group and that group.

Now look, whether you like Black Lives Matters or not, they marched and the Chief of Police for Toronto knelt with them as they were marching. And they were in violation of some of the COVID laws when they did that. But I guess that was okay. We had a situation where a terrible, terrible terrorist attack occurred in London against the Muslim family. Terrible. And at that time, the rules were, the COVID rules were that only twelve people could go to the funeral. So our Premier, Premier Ford, changed the rules for an afternoon so 1000 people could go to the funeral. But that was okay for that funeral, but not others. And we had other nonsensical rules. We had police—

Commissioner Drysdale

I understand, sir. My time is short, so I need to condense the questions and answers a little bit. Otherwise they'll pull me off the stage in just a few seconds. From what you've talked about, you know, you're talking about alleged corruption at the highest levels in the police force in Ottawa. But you've also talked about alleged corruption right down into the ranks—you know, the officers supposedly who leaked the story to the CBC, those officers who would not stand with Helen Grus.

We don't have to look back far to remember the beatings during the convoys, the lack of videotape evidence during the convoys, all kinds of things—you know, the alleged political wranglings that were going on within the upper regions of the police service which have been the subject of the Emergencies Act investigation. In your opinion, when corruption is allowed to continue and they get a free pass, does that corruption heal itself and go away? Does it get worse? Does it spread to other organizations? Or does it just go away and heal itself?

Donald Best

It never heals itself, sir. There have to be people in every profession—and you see it in the medical profession, law, law enforcement, and judges sometimes—standing up, and they have to say what they have to say and stop it. I view it like this: Only 1% of any profession

are absolutely, ruthlessly corrupt. Only 1% have the integrity and the courage to say anything about it. And the other 98, while they may not be corrupt themselves, it's their silence that empowers the corrupt.

Commissioner Drysdale

You had mentioned that you felt that the message here isn't necessarily about Officer Grus, but it's a message to other police. I ask you, sir, you've told us about wiretaps that are granted in this country without written authorization, without an argument. Because of course the intent of these things, according to your testimony, is to address issues such as an imminent danger, like somebody's going to be murdered or kidnapped. But we see that, or at least it appears from your testimony that certainly wasn't the case here. And yet someone granted a wiretap to these people. So my question is: Is this not also a message to everyday Canadians they may be being monitored? As a matter of fact, are they being monitored? Are their public interactions being monitored? How many Canadians are subject to these types of wiretaps or their social media monitored by the police?

Donald Best

Well the answer is, I don't know, but it's part of the larger question. I will be very brief. Over the last few decades, we've seen our police turn from community-based policing into more of an occupying army, militarization of police. That happened very gradually, also the police surrendering their autonomy. But when the response to COVID came, it was like it just went into overdrive. And we had police officers handcuffing visibly pregnant women behind their backs—which is just a no no; I could go on for hours about that—for the egregious crimes of watching their son playing hockey while being unvaccinated, for pushing their three-year-old daughter on a swing in a closed park, and for walking in Quebec City, walking down the street without a mask out in the open.

And these women were brutalized. You don't handcuff pregnant women behind their back. You don't do that. That's lesson number one in use of force, first day of police college. And yet there we go, 200-pound thugs dressed as military, paramilitary. Oh, we had evidence in the Grus case. One of the officers described the Ottawa Police that he worked for as being a paramilitary organization. So this has infested our law enforcement throughout Canada. It's been coming for a long time, but it just went into overdrive.

Commissioner Drysdale

But isn't this coming from on higher? Isn't—

Donald Best

It is. It's a lack of leadership.

Commissioner Drysdale

Well, no, I mean beyond the police. Did we not during the COVID issue—correct me if I'm wrong here—did the Supreme Court of Canada not come out with masks on? Did the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court not say that the protests were an illegal protest when there had not been a ruling that it was an illegal protest? Have I remembered that wrong or have I remembered that correctly?

Donald Best

That's correctly, sir. That's correct. But one of the big things I remember is when the Commissioner of the RCMP, our National Police Service, Brenda Lucki— There was that mass murder where the man dressed as an RCMP officer down in Nova Scotia. And early in that investigation, Commissioner Lucki called the homicide officers and asked them to release information about what kind of firearms were used—and this is almost a quote—to further the government's political agenda. So we had the highest police officer in the land of our National Police Service corruptly inserting a political agenda into a homicide investigation of mass murder that had just gotten started.

Commissioner Drysdale

Well let me ask you another question. If I was to go speak in the public square and a police officer was to follow me out to the public square, not speaking to me but watching me and looking me over the shoulder, do you think that would be harassment or intimidation? You think I would feel intimidated?

Donald Best

Look, I've worked undercover, in crowds.

Commissioner Drysdale

No, in uniform.

Donald Best

In uniform. Well you know, police officers in uniform can stand there, and they can be members of the community that protect everyone, uphold the law, keep people safe, protect lives and property. But at a certain point, whether in uniform or plain clothes, they can be a political force enforcing political agendas, and that's exactly what has happened to our police services in Canada. They no longer operate under the rule of law and without influence so that everybody can trust them and depend on them. I don't know how we're going to get that back.

Commissioner Drysdale

Well you know, let me take that just one step further, because I think you've agreed with me that if a police officer was following me into the public space and I was giving a speech and they were there, it would be an intimidating issue to me. Why is that different when the police without warrant monitor our social media posts, which are now the public space? You know, the social media forms the basis of the public square today, whether we like it or not. And the police services, from what I understand, are monitoring a lot of our Canadian citizens' social media presence with no warrant, no warning, not necessarily any probable cause. Is that not intimidation, just like it would be if I stepped into the public place and they followed me out and watched me?

Donald Best

It is, if their intent is to monitor your politics, your religion, your opinions. If they are indeed preserving lives and protecting property, and that's why they're doing it— Don't forget I spent a year wiretapping people, all with warrants, okay. But when we see police

officers and organizations taking sides, doing surveillance on people who are our political opponents—when we see the police ordering the banks to seize bank accounts, freeze bank accounts, stop credit, destroy businesses, homes, lives, you can't get a mortgage anymore—when we see the police doing that to put forward a political agenda and please the political masters—we are in big trouble. And, yes, we are.

So my answer to you is: If the police are there to monitor you about what you think and what you say and how you're in opposition to something peacefully, then yes, tremendously intimidating—and it may well be done for exactly that reason.

Commissioner Drysdale

We had testimony last year from Judge Giesbrecht, a retired judge in Manitoba, and I asked Judge Giesbrecht, "What might be the result of the people coming to a realization that there is no rule of law, that they can't go before the courts and get a fair hearing." And I believe he said that you get anarchy or you get revolution. I am certain he said that the outcomes were not good. I know I've drifted a little bit off of Helen Grus directly, but I think the story—

Donald Best

I don't think so, sir.

Commissioner Drysdale

Well, the issues here are so much larger.

Donald Best

Yes.

Commissioner Drysdale

And what's your opinion about if the people of Canada can't— What will happen if they can't trust their police? And what we've heard earlier, we don't seem to be able to trust the medical system, and their money's not safe in the bank because the police can shut it down. What's the inevitable outcome of that?

Donald Best

I think it's a complex outcome, and it's no one outcome. Certainly, absolutely, mistrust of police. People are afraid of police now, and is it any wonder. If you have to worry about what you say and think in public, is this Canada? I have said, and this is my opinion, that we are not only on the threshold of a police state, we've crossed that threshold.

When the police, in order to punish political opponents of the government, contact the banks, freeze accounts, wiretap the families of good, decent Canadians, we're here. We're here. I don't know how we take it back. We are here. Canadians are not violent people. I expect that there will be all sorts of efforts to regain municipal politics, provincial, federal. There will be a walking away from certain institutions, parallel economies. We see these things happening.

You know, you asked me about revolution and such. I think the biggest revolution is to not comply when they drag pastors out of their churches in front of their screaming children

while the liquor store is open across the street. When Adamson's Barbecue in Toronto, they sent the police unit in there, basically trampled the people who were waiting to buy a sandwich, dragged them away. But Costco was open down the street and Walmart was open the other way.

And, you know, you had to wear a mask if you stood up going into a restaurant, but when you sat down you could take it off because there's no virus there—I guess just like there was no virus in the liquor store, but there was in the church, obviously. But this is just insanity. And I think somehow people have realized that. I wonder if they would be able to impose such things on us again. They want to, but I wonder if they could.

Commissioner Drysdale

Thank you, sir.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

I'm deeply disturbed that the Ottawa Police thinks they can write off the legitimate concerns of the Canadian people and that they can do so in such a way that just—we're not important in their minds. I think that when we think of the NCI, we travelled to Ottawa, we were there. If the Ottawa Police had any concerns whatsoever about ordinary hard-working Canadian taxpayers raising their concerns, asking questions, providing sworn testimony, they should have come and listened. They would have found a lot of information and enlightened them and informed their practice. I wondered about in the Helen Grus case, was there ever a request for a change of venue that the case could be heard in a place that wouldn't be as toxic—is that a right word to use here—because of the irregularities that have been happening in her particular case?

Donald Best

Well, there was. The venue where it's at holds only about 20 seats for the press and for citizens who want to see it. And in March of this year, 75 people showed up, so there was an overage. There was quite a situation in the lobby. The police threatened the citizens who had showed up that they were going to tow their cars. Many of those citizens were retired police officers and calmed the police down. So the Ottawa Police announced they had rented a 200-seat conference venue in downtown Ottawa to have the hearing so that everyone could hear it. And then they secretly changed it back to the small place.

They said that they would broadcast it on the Internet, which they have done before, all the fall of 2022. And then they stopped. And then at the last moment they announced, "No, there would be no large venue and it would not be broadcast." And it's now just back at that Kanata little community boardroom, 20 seats. And this goes along with everything else: restricting the public and the media access to all the documents. The open court principle says it should all be public, but they're not doing that.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

Quickly, do you have any points that would help ordinary Canadians to just create their own stance here? Any recommendations that would allow Canadians to move this forward so that we can move towards judicial rule of law principles?

Donald Best

I think it's up to people who hold positions of power and authority in every profession. Uphold your oath, have the courage and the integrity to do the right thing. And if we do that as individual Canadians, they won't be able to do what they've been doing to us. But it takes just a few people to stand up. Courage is contagious. Courage really is contagious.

But look, I understand. People have families. They have mortgages. Yeah, so do a lot of people who testified here. So do a lot of people who gave up their police jobs, and who are being attacked as medical doctors. They had a lot to lose, too. Some of them lost everything. So that's how we're going to do this: individuals with integrity and courage.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

Thank you.

Shawn Buckley

Donald, on behalf of the National Citizens inquiry, we sincerely thank you for coming and sharing your testimony today.

Donald Best

I'm honoured. Thank you for having me.



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