

Commission Reveals that Trudeau Government Lied About Nature of Truckers Protests in Ottawa Last February to Justify Invocation of Emergencies Act

Anti-vaccine mandate protesters were falsely accused of being rapists, white supremacists and violence-prone by a liberal prime minister who endangers Canadian freedoms.

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Global Research, March 01, 2023

[CovertAction Magazine](#) 28 February 2023

Region: [Canada](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#)

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A year ago Canadian mainstream media and politicians described an unruly mob headed for Ottawa.

*On January 26, 2022, **Prime Minister Justin Trudeau** told Canadians there was a "fringe minority" with "unacceptable views" coming to Ottawa in a "so-called freedom convoy."^[1]*

A few protesters arrived in Ottawa on January 28, with the majority coming the next day.

On Valentine's Day, Justin Trudeau invoked the Emergencies Act to crush the protest. Bank accounts of hundreds of protesters were frozen. After the police crackdown on protesters, [Bill Blair](#), the Minister of Emergency Preparedness, said it was "textbook" police action: "It restored my pride in my profession."

Blair continued, "what I witnessed [was]...an entirely professional proportional, measured response. They moved slowly, methodically, respectfully....I've never seen it done better than what I witnessed here in the City of Ottawa as they...peacefully as possible, brought this to a resolution."

On February 22 the Liberal-NDP coalition ratified the invocation of the Emergencies Act. But a day later the Act was rescinded. The Emergencies Act legislation of 1988 required that, on the occasion of its use, an inquiry must be held to determine if it was justified.

What Sparked the Protest?

Truck drivers had been designated essential service workers transporting groceries, hospital supplies, factory parts and other critical goods. In March 2021, Trudeau had called them “heroes.” But in November 2021, the government announced that the truck driver exemption from vaccination would end, requiring proof of vaccination in order to cross the Canada-USA border. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Canadian Manufacturing Coalition, Canadian Trucking Alliance and Private Motor Truck Council of Canada were among those urging the government to reverse policy.

The Private Motor Truck Council of Canada (PMTTC) warned that “over 31 thousand cross-border truckers will leave the industry.” The Canadian Trucking Alliance had similar estimates of drivers who would exit the industry. The PMTC estimated that, if the government postponed its regulation until at least April 15, 2022, only “22,800 drivers would exit the cross-border industry if given the extra time” to decide whether to get vaccinated.^[2]

Image is from Uncancelled



The government did not produce any statistics proving truck drivers, who travel alone in their trucks, were a source of Covid-19 infection in Canada. One could infer, by the government’s hard line, there was a solid basis for fearing truck drivers were spreading Covid-19 when crossing the international border, though not when they traveled interprovincially.

When asked in January 2022 by the House of Commons Health Committee, “Neither Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos nor Chief Public Health Officer Dr. Theresa Tam were able to provide any data about COVID-19 and truck drivers.” [3]

It was not enough for the Public Health Agency of Canada to advise all truck drivers who were ill with any symptoms to stay home. It was not enough to simply require truck drivers to take a PCR rapid test before a trip across the border, allowing drivers who tested negative to proceed. It did not matter that truck drivers were not interacting with retirees or seniors in assisted-living facilities, those most vulnerable. Or that the overall [infection fatality rate](#) for Covid-19 was about 0.25% with 99.75% of the population who got Covid surviving.^[3]

The new border restrictions for truck drivers at the USA-Canada and USA-Mexico border were outliers. In Africa, Europe, South America, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, truck drivers were deemed essential service workers. Concerned about supply chains and economic well-being, other nations gave truck drivers the same exemptions that were

suddenly denied them at Canada-U.S. border points.

The Official Story

As truck drivers headed from the British Columbia coast on January 23, 2022, a media narrative instantly emerged. It depicted protesters headed for Ottawa as the worst of the worst. On January 25, a CTV headline screamed: “‘So many angry people’: Experts say online conversation around trucker convoy veering into dangerous territory.” CTV interviewed **Kurt Phillips**, founder of Anti-Racist Canada, who warned that he had

“seen people online calling the trucker convoy Canada’s version of the U.S. Capitol insurrection on January 6, 2021, for the truckers to ram their trucks into Parliament, and people encouraging the hanging of politicians.”^[4]

The Convoy was next framed as an inspiration of Russian President Vladimir Putin. “Russian actors” had instigated the convoy. On January 28, CBC reporter **Nil Köksal** mused,

“Given Canada’s support of Ukraine in this current crisis with Russia... there is a concern that Russian actors could be continuing to fuel things as this protest grows, perhaps even instigating it from the outside.”

The CBC quietly retracted the statement on February 4th.^[5]

On January 29, CTV journalist **Mackenzie Gray** posted a photo of an individual carrying a Confederate flag. Gray tweeted above the photo, “We’ve got our first [C]onfederate flag of the day here on Parliament Hill.” Florida Governor Ron Desantis’s press secretary, [Christina Pushaw](#), responded on Twitter to Gray’s tweet, observing “You claim to be a journalist, so why don’t you interview him? You can ask him who he is—and why he is flying a Confederate flag. If you just post a picture like this with no context, it looks like you’re implying the entire convoy are racists. How do you know he isn’t a plant?”^[6]

The *Toronto Star* reported

“The appearance of a Nazi flag at the ‘Freedom Convoy’ in Ottawa drew widespread condemnation from across the political spectrum. Opponents of the protest said it was proof of white supremacist sympathies lurking beneath the movement’s surface, while supporters said it was unfair to paint the entire convoy as hateful because of a few bad actors.”^[7]

On January 29, it was reported that a woman was yelling “freedom,” and dancing on the tomb of the unknown soldier. The *National Observer* asked the Chief of the Canadian Defense Staff, General Wayne Eyre, for a comment. He responded,

“I am sickened to see protesters dance on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and desecrate the National War Memorial. Generations of Canadians have fought and died for our rights, including free speech, but not this. Those involved should hang their heads in shame.”^[8]

On the morning of February 6, Matias Muñoz alleged two arsonists came to an apartment building lobby in downtown Ottawa at 5:00 a.m. Muñoz tweeted: “One of them taped the

door handles so no one could get out.” This apparently included the arsonists. According to the story, a tenant, who saw the arsonists lighting a fire in the lobby, asked if they were truckers. And then decided to go to bed without calling 911. Which is what you would do if you knew you were in a building that was on fire. Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson held an emergency meeting of city council condemning the “malicious intent” of the convoy protesters. “Yesterday we learned of a horrific story that clearly demonstrates the malicious intent of the protesters occupying our city.”^[9]

Convoy protesters were also accused of being terrorists. Ottawa City Councillor Diane Deans referred to the protest as part of a “nationwide insurrection,” and the protesters themselves as “terrorists” and “mercenaries.”^[10] A repeated talking point was that the protesters intended to orchestrate their own version of the events of January 6, 2021, in Washington, D.C., here on Parliament Hill. Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, Justin Trudeau and others in the Liberal cabinet inferred a plot to overthrow the government was in motion.

In early February, Bernie Farber, chair of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network, decried an anti-Semitic flyer alleged to be the work of Ottawa protesters titled “Every Single Aspect of the COVID Agenda Is Jewish.” It turned out the offending flyer was from a photo taken in [Miami, Florida](#), two weeks before the Ottawa protest began.

Image is from The Post Millennial



In addition, the truckers were painted as delinquent parents whose children should be taken away from them. “I can only say that there have been ongoing reports regarding child welfare concerns, and that we consider all information received to determine the best response,” said a spokesperson for the Ottawa Children’s Aid Society. After the *Emergencies Act* was invoked on February 14, bringing children to the demonstrations was prohibited. If a child were in the cab of a truck, it would result in a potential fine of \$5,000 or up to five years in prison. Ottawa police said roughly 25% of the vehicles in the blockades had children in them.^[11]

In an opinion piece to *The Globe and Mail*, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada Beverley McLachlin wrote “The Ottawa truck convoy has revealed the ugly side of freedom.” McLachlin wondered “what does this vaunted ‘freedom’ mean? The answer is, everything and nothing. Everything: the right not to wear masks in public places; the right not to be vaccinated; the right to hold Ottawa’s downtown residents and businesses hostage; the right to malign public officials and call for the Prime Minister’s death; the right to shout epithets at people of colour.” To date, no protesters connected to the Freedom Convoy have been charged, or face pending legal action, in relation to uttering death threats against Justin Trudeau.^[12]

There were also suggestions in the media that protesters threatened to bomb the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.^[13]

Politicians lined up to rebuke a protest they described as "illegal." Yet, on February 7, 2022, Ontario Superior Court [Justice Hugh McLean](#) ruled the protest was legal. He wrote, "the defendants and other persons remain at liberty to engage in a peaceful, lawful and safe protest." McLean also issued an injunction against honking of horns, with which residents and businesses understandably took issue.

Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino stated that "threats of rape" by truckers in Ottawa was one of the catalysts for the Liberal government invoking the *Emergencies Act*.^[14] He also alleged protester trucks in Ottawa contained weapons.

Public Order Emergency Commission Established

For a majority of Canadians following the mainstream news, the Prime Minister had fended off an insurrection. White supremacists, misogynists, and homophobes had been sent packing. Nonetheless, the nation would have to go through the perfunctory exercise of determining if there was anything to tweak regarding the Liberals' invocation.

Passed in 1988 to replace the *War Measures Act*, the [Emergencies Act](#) legislation states there are unique circumstances by which the act can be invoked. These are that "The emergency must be a 'national emergency,' which means an 'urgent and critical situation of a temporary nature' that either '(a) seriously endangers the lives, health or safety of Canadians and is of such proportions or nature as to exceed the capacity or authority of a province to deal with it, or (b) seriously threatens the ability of the Government of Canada to preserve the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of Canada and that cannot be effectively dealt with under any other law of Canada.'"

A Growing Counter-Narrative

In late April 2022, Justin Trudeau appointed **Chief Justice Paul Rouleau** to head the Public Order Emergency Commission (POEC).

By the time Rouleau was appointed to head the POEC, articles had already appeared in the press calling into question the media narrative about the Freedom Convoy. Indo-Canadian reporter Rupa Subramanya wrote several articles and was interviewed about her experience speaking with the protesters.

[Subramanya explained,](#)

"I wanted to go there and make up my own mind. The reality of these protesters, the truckers, starting from Day One, is very different from the received narrative that was already in place—propaganda—because that is really what it amounted to. These people were a cross-section of Canadians. They were mostly working-class. I encountered people of colour. I saw new immigrants. I saw children. I saw women. I saw the old, the young. Franco-Canadians, Anglo-Canadians. A lot of camaraderie. I spent three weeks at the protest every day, several times a day. I didn't encounter a single racist, white supremacist, or even a misogynist. These were some of the warmest, friendliest, people I've ever met in my life [after] two decades here in Canada. It was quite unusual that my perspective, as a person of colour who went into the protests,

was so different from the mainstream coverage. There was this total disconnect between what was being said and what I personally experienced.”

The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) held a press conference on February 8 stating that no protester was under suspicion for the attempted arson of a residential building in downtown Ottawa. The OPS subsequently charged two Ottawa-area men with the arson in March 2022.^[15]

On March 24, 2022, Interim Ottawa Police Service Chief Steve Bell confirmed there were [no weapons](#) in protesters’ vehicles in Ottawa. These [and other allegations](#) about the protesters were discredited in the months following the protests. Protesters had not called in bomb threats against hospitals, threatened or committed rape. The woman who danced on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier turned out to be from Quebec and was not involved with the Ottawa protests, despite the good luck of the media to catch her “freedom” yells with the cameras rolling. And video of protesters being beaten with rifles, kicked by police, and [trampled by horses](#), put the lie to Bill Blair’s pride in the “textbook” police action to crush the protest in Ottawa.

But, these news reports challenging the initial headlines dribbled out over weeks and months, and were under-reported. The majority of Canadians were still reeling and felt threatened, disgusted and agitated by the news reports about the Freedom Convoy protesters. Watching the nightly news, the specter of seditious, violent, racist, white supremacist truckers trying to topple the sitting government set in stone an emotional scar that has yet to heal. For protesters, and those who supported them, however, the news coverage confirmed a slanted mainstream media bias resembling textbook propaganda.

Sensing the historic importance of this unfolding story, I flew from Vancouver to Ottawa to attend hearings one week in mid-November 2022.

“Lack of Violent Crime Was Shocking”

During the Public Order Emergency Commission, numbers of police were called to testify. It was revealed that earlier on the day the *Emergencies Act* was invoked, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) issued an internal intelligence briefing memo. Titled “Operational Intelligence Report,” it summarized the Ottawa protest, stating,

“The mood today was again [calm, festive, and family oriented](#). Speakers were again telling people to walk away from agitators and thanked the police for remaining calm. Many of the speakers were promoting love and peaceful protest, some even taking quotes from the Bible. Speakers were also wishing everyone a happy Valentine’s.” The memo noted there were “children on Wellington Street playing hockey.”

Superintendent Patrick Morris,

“the foremost authority in the Province of Ontario regarding Intelligence” with the OPP, testified before the POEC. He said of the protest, “the lack of violent crime was shocking....If there was an actual threat, then there would have been an investigation, and if it was an actual threat, I assume the Ottawa Police Service would have laid a charge for uttering threats.” Morris agreed it was “hard to lay a charge” “or even to ascertain if it’s an actual threat if you can’t identify the individual.”

“Comments made...by public figures...the media...were not premised in fact”

Regarding the media coverage and statements by politicians about the protest, Morris stated “I was concerned by the politicization and I was concerned by hyperbole and I was concerned by the affixing of labels without evidence to individuals’ movements et cetera.” In a letter entered as evidence at the Commission, TDF lawyer Alan Honner quoted Morris’s letter where it states, “But now the public discourse is dominated by political figures and the media, and the commentary is providing a very different picture from what law enforcement collectively gathered. It is painting a different picture. It speaks to extremism. It offers parallels to terrorism. It speaks of sedition.”

Morris elaborated in his testimony that his letter reflected his concern about “comments made publicly, by public figures and in the media that I believed were not premised in fact....I was leading the criminal intelligence collection of information and the production of criminal intelligence in relation to these events. So, I believed I was in a unique situation to understand what was transpiring. So, when I read accounts that the State of Russia had something to do with it; Or that this was the result of American influence, either financially or ideologically; Or that Donald Trump was behind it; Or that it was un-Canadian; Or that the people participating were un-Canadian and that they were not Canadian views and they were extremists; I found it to be problematic, because what I ascertained from my role...I did not see validation for those assertions....I did not see information that substantiated what was being said publicly and via the media. And I found that the subjective assertions sensationalized...and exacerbated conflict....So the labelling was problematic to me.”

Morris further stated in a letter, “I do not know where the political figures are acquiring information or intelligence on the extent of extremist involvement.” He was emphatic, “I want to be clear on this. We produced no intelligence to indicate these individuals would be armed. There has been a lot of hyperbole around that.” During his testimony, Supt. Morris confirmed that at no point did he receive any reliable intelligence that there was any risk to national security due to the Freedom Convoy protests.” In cross-examination with Freedom Convoy lawyer Brendan Miller, Supt. Morris confirmed that at no time did any violence against property take place. No arson, no destruction, no vandalism, no bombing.^[16]

“The narrative about what was happening in Ottawa was being controlled...”

Ontario Provincial Police Superintendent Carson Parady, [testifying](#) on October 21, 2022, stated that the media depiction of the protest in Ottawa was

“problematic. The narrative about what was happening in Ottawa was being controlled and was one-sided.

There were a lot of good things happening. We heard about the bouncy castles and there were prayer meetings in the morning.... This is a family event. Bring your kids. There’s a bouncy castle. We can have fun.”

Parady found media rhetoric about protesters being extremists

“problematic...because I’ve been involved in events from the past, G-summits...where

we had a lot of extremist views. There was fringes of it...that were not a major concern....The profile of the protester at this event was unlike none that I've seen in my 36-year career. We had everything from grandparents. You know, my first day on this assignment, I was shown a picture of two officers that had worked for me in the past, who were retiring, who were in the crowd with the protesters. We saw children. We saw a lot of crestfallen police officers, military, nurses. So it wasn't your normal group of people that you're dealing with."

[Margaret Hope Braun](#), a mother of two from Peterborough, Ontario, was at the protest on Valentine's Day. During her testimony before the Commission, she recalled: "I witnessed hundreds of roses being offered to the police officers. There was a lot of love. There was a lot of trying to heal the divide...being created between us and the police....[T]he streets of Ottawa were covered in roses that day."



Source: [theepochtimes.com](https://www.theepochtimes.com)

OPS, OPP, RCMP, Canada Border Service Agency and CSIS (Canadian Security Intelligence Service) were pointing away from ideologically motivated violent extremist (IMVE) threats. CSIS reported on the afternoon of February 14, "Downtown Ottawa...was [actually quite festive](#)—not threatening to a passerby." CSIS entered as evidence before the Commission that they "had no concern with IMVEs in Ottawa."

In the aftermath of the Valentine's Day invocation of the *Emergencies Act*, Supt. Morris reported on February 22 the Freedom Convoy protest was "not comprised of ideologically motivated violent extremists. The actual leaders are not violent extremists with histories of violent criminal acts."

Former Ottawa Police Chief [Peter Sloly](#) testified before the POEC. He confirmed it was "correct" that at no time before Trudeau invoked the *Emergencies Act* on February 14, 2022, did the OPS issue any form of formal notice to the protesters that they had been

designated an unlawful assembly and must disperse. The protests were not a criminal matter under section 63 of the Criminal Code. There was no declaration that the Ottawa protests constituted a riot.

OPP Commissioner Thomas Carrique, with a certificate from the University of St. Andrews in Terrorism Studies, also testified. He agreed that, “based on all OPP intelligence and the intelligence provided by the RCMP and federal intelligence agencies to the OPP...there was no credible threat to the security of Canada.”

Carrique confirmed it “would be my understanding” that in order to invoke the *Emergencies Act*, there needs to be a “credible threat.” He agreed that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protected citizens’ rights to assemble and protest. He agreed that this includes protesting government policies. Carrique also concurred that the trucks that were arriving in Ottawa in late January 2022 “did so at the direction of police officers.”^[17]

If the protest in Ottawa had become unlawful, as determined by the OPS or OPP, the *Riot Act* could have been enforced and the protest declared a riot. Arrests would have ensued, all under the existing laws of the Criminal Code. But prior to the invocation of the *Emergencies Act*, not a single charge of unlawful assembly was laid against any protester in Ottawa.

Agreement Between City of Ottawa and Protesters to Remove Vehicles

Serge Arpin, Chief of Staff to the Mayor of the City of Ottawa, testified that, by noon on February 14, 2022, 102 protest vehicles had been moved out of a four-block by five-block area in downtown Ottawa. Most of these had left the city.

The protesters were on schedule to remove 75% of the vehicles from downtown Ottawa, and leave the city by February 16. With so many vehicles scheduled to leave Ottawa voluntarily, the need for tow-truck drivers would be moot. Remaining protest vehicles were to be confined to Wellington Street along Parliament Hill, taking up their complaint with the Trudeau government.^[18]

Under testimony, Kim Ayotte, General Manager of Emergency and Protective Services with the City of Ottawa, confirmed that the movement of vehicles onto Wellington Street “got stopped by police.”

Movement out of Ottawa, or over to Wellington Street, was not blocked or abandoned by the protesters. It was the police who blocked the movement of protest vehicles. Freedom Convoy lawyer Brendan Miller pointed out, “the difficulty in moving individuals to Wellington Street after the agreement was announced...was only stopped because the police wouldn’t let them on to Wellington and because the police then also stopped them from leaving the streets they were parked on...”^[19]

Emergencies Act Threshold for “threat to national security” Not Met

The government’s justification for invoking the act was not based on any of the tests of the *Emergencies Act* being met. **CSIS Director David Vigneault** admitted the four criteria for declaring a public order emergency were not met.

- 1) Was there espionage? “No,” said Vigneault.
- 2) Was there foreign interference, sabotage? “No,” said Vigneault.
- 3) Was there any serious violence associated with the protests? “No actual serious violence,” said Vigneault.
- 4) Was there a plot to overthrow the government? “No. Didn’t even investigate. It was so nonexistent,” said Vigneault.^[20]

RCMP officer emails reflected a lack of urgency. “It would be a stretch to say the trucks barricading the streets and the air horns blaring at whatever decibels for however many days constitute the ‘use of force.’”^[21]

“There was no serious violence in Ottawa”

Jody Thomas, the National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister, was appointed on January 11, 2022. A month later she advised Justin Trudeau to declare a national emergency. Canadian Civil Liberties Association lawyer Cara Zeibel asked Thomas at the POEC, “you understand that currently the definition of a Public Order Emergency in the *Emergencies Act* is tied exclusively and exhaustively to the definition in the *CSIS Act*?” Thomas testified, “The Federal Government legal opinion is different, and there will be legal arguments to that end.”

Lawyer for the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms, Rob Kittredge, took Jody Thomas through the *CSIS Act* tests for declaring an emergency. She confirmed there was no espionage, no sabotage, no foreign interference.

But what about serious violence? Thomas replied by swapping the word “serious” for “continual.” Said Thomas, “There was continual violence in the streets of Ottawa...” Kittredge asked her to be specific about what she meant by “continual violence.” Thomas identified “harassment, people being followed, people being intimidated, the noise, the pollution...”^[22] Yet, incidents of harassment, stalking and physical intimidation are matters police address every day across the nation upon receiving a complaint.

I spoke on the phone with Freedom Convoy protest leader Tom Marazzo. Expanding on his testimony before the POEC, Marazzo told me he was continually in contact with the OPS Police Liaison Teams (PLTs) during the protests in Ottawa. He told me the PLTs would alert him if there was anyone blocking an emergency lane. Protest leaders, police and City of Ottawa officials all agreed that these needed to be cleared.

Yet, on one occasion it turned out an emergency lane in downtown Ottawa was being blocked by the City of Ottawa’s own equipment vehicles. Marazzo confirmed that any protesters intimidating or harassing Ottawa citizens would be counterproductive to the aims of the protest. But the PLTs never brought to any protest leaders’ attention even one instance of a protester intimidating or harassing local residents. The disconnect between the rhetoric of protesters being violent and what was happening on the ground was problematic.

Eventually, Jody Thomas conceded, “No, not serious violence.” In a February 21, 2022, email, RCMP Deputy Commissioner Brian Brennan wrote “There was no serious violence in Ottawa, the main reason for the *Emergencies Act*.”

Expanding the Definition of Threat

Considering the lack of serious violence, Jody Thomas quickly reframed matters. She stated, “A Public Order Emergency is broader as defined in the *CSIS Act*.” She elaborated: “There’s a range of threats that need to be considered when you’re talking about this country, economic security; The threat of IMVE; The rhetoric of threats against public figures; The inability to conduct a livelihood in the City of Ottawa—as an example, the Coutts border blockade...; The threat to public institutions and the undermining of the confidence in public institutions.”

Thomas identified “economic security” as a national security threat. Yet, in contrast with the border point blockades in February 2022, the Liberal government dealt with the 2020 protests differently. From January to mid-March 2020, First Nations protesters variously blocked construction of a BC pipeline, disrupted BC Ferry sailings, shut down CN Rail freight and VIA Rail passenger service for over a month, blockaded an Ontario highway and more. Through eleven weeks of economic disruptions, Prime Minister Trudeau maintained the importance of engaging in dialogue with protesters to resolve matters.^[23]

The Coutts, Alberta, border blockade and arrests of persons in possession of weapons were handled by the RCMP under existing Canadian law. However, the “threat to national security” was becoming fungible, an elastic term the government could shape for its own purposes in order to invoke the *Emergencies Act* at will.

Legal Opinion to Expand Definition of “Threat Remains Secret

The Liberals, on a legal opinion to expand the definition of threat, invoked the *Emergencies Act*. Asked about the basis for the legal opinion, Justice Minister David Lametti, testified, “For reasons of solicitor-client privilege [he] could not describe the various kinds of legal analysis relied upon by cabinet.” Justice Rouleau told Lametti that, by taking this position, the government is asking Canadians to “just assume (it) acted in good faith,” to just “trust us.” Asked if he agreed “that Section 2 of the *CSIS Act* has a different meaning...a different scope based in its reference in the *Emergencies Act*,” Lametti responded “I will neither [confirm nor deny](#) that.”

In addition to David Lametti and Jody Thomas, another person who recommended that the Prime Minister invoke the *Emergencies Act* was Janice Charette. Named Interim Clerk of the Privy Council in March 2021, Charette was confirmed in her role in May 2022, three months after the Ottawa protests. She has a B.A. in Commerce and served in a number of capacities as Deputy Minister of Human Resources, as well as for Immigration and Health Canada. However, Charette had no background in national security. She said under oath, “I’m not an expert in any of these domains. My assessment from a layman’s point of view was it [the protest] was not legal.” Charette’s assertion contradicted Ontario court rulings on February 7, and again on [February 16, 2022](#) that the protest was legal.

“A meaning can have different meanings at the end”

Ms. Charette fretted that the government “didn’t really have a full 360-degree view” of the protest. She urged her Incident Response Group to “really think outside the box.” Yet, this did not include meeting with some of the protest leaders. Since early February, protest leaders sought a meeting with senior Public Health Agency of Canada staff and politicians. Still, the government declined to meet with protest leaders, even to gain a more expansive

view of the facts on the ground.^[24]

Deputy Clerk of the Privy Council, and Associate Secretary to the Cabinet, Nathalie Drouin, explained one of the reasons the Prime Minister was advised to invoke the *Emergencies Act*. “[We] couldn’t wait to invoke the *Emergencies Act* because then it would have been a national security threat.” By waiting any longer, Drouin explained, “we would have been in a situation where the threat would have materialized.” By underscoring her panicked reasoning, Drouin made clear no threat to national security had actually materialized. Asked about the definition of “threat” in the *Emergencies Act*, Drouin stated a “meaning can have different meanings at the end.”^[25]

Drouin took part in Justin Trudeau’s February 14, 2022, phone calls with the First Ministers of the Canadian provinces and territories. It was clear to her that a majority of provincial premiers opposed the looming federal government decision. Drouin summed up that viewpoint, “that there is a risk that invoking the *Emergencies Act* can inflamate [sic] the situation.”

Vulnerable to Challenge

Janice Charette was shown a memo where she commented on the legal advice the government was relying on as a basis to invoke the *Emergencies Act*. She stated, “In our view, this fits within the statutory parameters of the *Emergencies Act*, but this conclusion may be vulnerable to challenge.” The *Emergencies Act* states that it is to be a measure “of last resort” when all other options under the laws of the land are exhausted.

Yet, not all other options had been exhausted. By February 14, OPS, OPP and RCMP did not view the protest as unlawful. Had it been deemed unlawful, the *Riot Act* could have been used to declare the protest a riot. As well, the OPS had signed off on a detailed 73-page plan with the RCMP and OPP to de-escalate the protest. Under testimony, Prime Minister Trudeau referred to it as a “so-called plan.” When shown the plan during his testimony, Trudeau stated he had never seen the plan. Nonetheless, he asserted he had “no confidence” in the plan.^[26]

During Charette’s cross-examination by Canadian Constitutional Foundation lawyer Sujit Choudhry, she confirmed that CSIS Director Vigneault was not asked to speak during the February 13 Liberal cabinet meeting regarding the need to invoke the *Emergencies Act*. Choudhry said to Charette, “I would like to put this point to you....[I]n a constitutional democracy, to prevent the abuse of executive powers by an elected government, it is imperative that the views of a professional non-partisan and expert security services be front and center and that they not just be a factor, but that they be at the core of whether a government decides to invoke emergency powers.”^[27]

Nathalie Drouin jumped in, responding to Choudhry’s point by stressing other threats to the nation: “We saw kids, you know, being used as [human] shields.” Children were sitting with their parents in their trucks to keep warm. Children were making snow sculptures, playing in bouncy castles and playing hockey.

When pressed under cross-examination to substantiate allegations of rape committed by Ottawa protesters, Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino said, “The absence of a criminal charge doesn’t mean it doesn’t happen.” Freedom Convoy lawyer Eva Chipiuk [tweeted](#) in

reference to a riot in Vancouver on June 15, 2011, after the Vancouver Canucks lost to the Boston Bruins, “Compare 1 night of Stanley Cup rioting where 268 people were charged with a total of 814 charges to 3 weeks of Freedom Convoy and 11 charges, ZERO hate crimes, and we don’t know how many of those were protesters because @OttawaPolice did not provide those details.”

Preceding the Liberal cabinet retreat on January 24, 2022, Alexander Cohen, Director of Communications to the Minister of Public Safety, and Mary-Liz Power, Issues and Policy Advisor in the Prime Minister’s Office, were sending texts to each other. Their [text messages](#) discussed the best ways to exploit a narrative to frame the protest traveling to Ottawa as a “January 6-style insurrection” and as “extremists.”

Vaccine Mandates and Canadian Charter Rights

Justice Rouleau was petitioned to have the Right Honorable **Brian Peckford** testify. Peckford was one of the speakers at the Freedom Convoy in Ottawa, and the last living person who signed the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which was enshrined in 1982.

Image: Brian Peckford screenshot/YouTube/ CBC NL – Newfoundland and Labrador



The protesters were not only challenging the rationale for the vaccine mandates in Canada, but the infringements on Canada’s charter.

This included the right of all Canadian citizens to mobility. Quoting Section 6 of the Charter, [Peckford said](#) to the protesters, “Every citizen of Canada has the right to enter, remain in and leave Canada.”

As stated in all Canadian passports, “The Minister of Foreign Affairs requests...all those whom it may concern to allow the bearer [of the passport] to pass freely, without delay or hindrance, and to afford the bearer such assistance and protection as may be necessary.” But the Commission was not interested in having such an eminent person involved with the protest give testimony.

Testifying before the POEC, Prime Minister Trudeau stated,

“We have a robust, functioning democracy and public protests are an important part of making sure...Canadians are getting messages out there and highlighting how they feel about various issues. But using protests to demand changes to public policy is something that I think is worrisome.”^[28]

As someone who previously voted for Justin Trudeau in a federal election, I find his apprehension of the right to public assembly and free speech worrisome.

Trudeau is saying Canadians have the right to protest. But if those protests are used to demand changes in government policy, the current Canadian government will tell those protesters that they have crossed a line. It seems the prime minister thinks of democracy as something that citizens engage by keeping their heads down, watching what they say, and not publicly questioning government action. The invocation of the *Emergencies Act* by Justin Trudeau on February 14, 2022, was political theater.

It was not a last resort. It was a choice made by a government that would not countenance public debate about the basis for its continued pandemic measures. And by January 2022, by expanding pandemic measures, Canada was now an outlier. Where dialogue was the solution to address eleven weeks of national protest in early 2020, Trudeau closed the door to any possibility of discussion with protesters in January 2022 before they arrived. Documents entered as evidence before the POEC suggest the Liberals were restless to invoke the *Emergencies Act* many days prior to February 14, 2022. When asked under oath at the inquiry “when did the *Emergencies Act* come into play as a possibility?” Trudeau replied “from the very beginning.”

Under cross-examination by Freedom Convoy lawyer Brendan Miller, Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland conceded that the regulation to force cross-border truckers to get vaccinated was to compel “as many Canadians to [get vaccinated](#).” This was the real purpose.

Another indicator of the trajectory Canada is on is the matter of **Dr. Jordan Peterson**. Back in mid-February 2022, on social media, Peterson questioned the wisdom of interim Ottawa police Chief Steve Bell. At the time, Bell was threatening protesting parents in Ottawa with having their children removed. Peterson commented,

“‘Children removed’ how exactly? Why, exactly? By whom, exactly? Sent to where, exactly? And for how long, exactly? Think this through, Canadians. This is a bad decision.”

For this, and a handful of other political opinions unrelated to his work, it was announced on January 3, 2023, that Dr. Peterson faces a mandatory six-month re-education by the Ontario College of Psychologists. Otherwise, he will lose his license to practice.^[29] The message to all Canadians when exercising free speech? Stifle your dissenting political opinions.

Did the Liberal Cabinet Break the Law?

In early February 2023, Attorney General David Lametti lost a key Federal Court ruling on his use of emergency powers against the Freedom Convoy. Justice Richard Mosley ordered internal emails, contradicting Liberal cabinet claims of a national crisis, must be admitted into evidence in a court case with the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. Mosley found “Evidence of the cabinet proceedings that led to the decision to invoke the *Emergencies Act* was not disclosed despite repeated requests.” He concluded the internal emails were “essential to the just and proper determination” of whether cabinet broke the law.^[30]

Over the decades, progressive and “classic Liberal” voters in Canada—like myself—have looked over our shoulders nervously at attempts by conservative governments to reign in

democratic freedoms. Thirty years after the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was adopted into the Canadian Constitution, Justin Trudeau [warned](#) citizens to “listen very carefully to those who choose to divide, or play up fears and insecurities as a way of advancing a political agenda.” Ironically, Trudeau’s present Liberal government in Ottawa offers up a sobering lesson. An autocratic trajectory can also be instigated by political parties in the middle of the political spectrum, as well as on the “left.” This is no time for Canadians to be complacent.

Citizens in other countries should pay attention. What other governments might now feel emboldened by Trudeau’s actions, opt to freeze their citizens’ bank accounts?

Note: Justice Paul Rouleau, a former executive assistant to Liberal Prime Minister **John Turner**, released his Report on February 17. He concluded, “reluctantly,” that the Trudeau Government was correct in its decision to invoke the Emergency Act.

Rouleau explained

“I do not come to this conclusion easily as I do not consider the factual basis for it to be overwhelming. Reasonable and informed people could reach a different conclusion than the one I arrived at.”

Rouleau recommends the tests named in the existing Emergencies Act for declaring a state of emergency—espionage, sabotage, serious acts of violence, plots to overthrow the government, foreign influence—be omitted.

He recommends that perceived threats be the measure for invoking the Emergencies Act in the future. His report will be considered by the Trudeau cabinet as it crafts revisions to existing legislation.

Global Research Video Produced by Jean Francois Girard

Are the protesters really what he claims them to be?

I was there for four days with my camera, I never saw or witnessed anything close to what he describes.

Is it possible this is all made up? If it is, what is the purpose?

*

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