



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Truro, NS

March 18, 2023

Day 3

EVIDENCE

Witness 6: Scott Stephen Spidle

Full Day 3 Timestamp: 05:28:30–05:48:58

Source URL: <https://rumble.com/v2dou14-national-citizens-inquiry-hearings-truro-day-3.html>

[00:00:00]

Ches Crosbie

Thank you, Mr. Spidle. You affirm that you will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Scott Stephen Spidle

I do. Yes.

Ches Crosbie

Thank you.

Alison Steeves

Can you state your full name and where you're from?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Scott Steven Spidle from Annapolis Valley here in Nova Scotia.

Alison Steeves

Scott, I understand that back in early 2020, you had a very bad case of COVID. Is that correct?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Yes, that is correct.

Alison Steeves

And when exactly did you contract COVID?

Scott Stephen Spidle

It was about the first or second week of February.

Alison Steeves

What were your initial symptoms?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Initial symptoms were just normal flu-like symptoms.

Alison Steeves

How did you know it was COVID?

Scott Stephen Spidle

After the first week, about when those flu symptoms went away, I started experiencing shortness of breath and chest pain and also of course spoke with my family doctor about this. And the testing at the time had just started, and even in the mainstream media they reported issues with the testing, including both false positives and false negatives. And so, she expressed concern with the accuracy of the testing. So that wasn't really relied upon.

And also, upon one ER visit, the doctor who was seeing me—at that point it was basically standard protocol to test anybody in the ER, especially if they exhibited these symptoms. When the nurse started to prepare the test kit, the doctor turned to the nurse and said, "Don't bother with that." And at that point I was consulting with them with my symptoms, and along with the self-treatment I was doing. And he agreed that the treatment I was using was good; he reiterated that and that he believed I had COVID as well.

Alison Steeves

So your family doctor and also an ER doctor assessed that you most likely had COVID. I understand that these symptoms persisted off and on over a long period of time. Is that correct?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Yes, that is correct.

Alison Steeves

So how many trips did you end up making to the emergency room with these symptoms?

Scott Stephen Spidle

The symptoms continued to get worse. Shortness of breath, mainly. I got to the point where I could hardly breathe. And so, yeah.

Alison Steeves

At any point where you offered any treatment?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Not really. Like I say, that one doctor in the ER, he basically just said to keep using the self-treatment I was using.

Alison Steeves

What was the self-treatment?

Scott Stephen Spidle

I was using vitamin D, vitamin C, vitamin E, zinc, honey and green tea, and tonic water with lemon juice.

Because at that point, hydroxychloroquine was beginning to be spoken about as a treatment and it appeared quite evidently that that was not going to be available to us here in Nova Scotia or myself. So through my own research and people I know in the military, they suggested tonic water, as it contains quinine, which is basically a predecessor of hydroxychloroquine.

Alison Steeves

And did that help with your symptoms?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Yes, once I started putting those kind of meds and treatment to me, it still kept getting worse but not as rapidly.

Alison Steeves

So did your COVID go away?

Scott Stephen Spidle

It did eventually. I did also receive a rescue inhaler on another ER visit, which was basically a shot in the dark by the doctor. That doctor had actually believed that I was experiencing anxiety and gave me Ativan pills, sent me home with those. And I was so furious with that visit that I actually used the Ativan pills that night because I was so upset with how I was taken care of at the hospital.

Alison Steeves

So how bad did your COVID get? This was going on for how long?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Approximately four to five weeks from beginning to end. Like I say, it got to the point where I literally couldn't breathe. I only live about five, ten minutes from the hospital and one night I end up calling 911 because I didn't feel like I could drive that far in a car.

Alison Steeves

And after several months, what ended up happening to you?

Scott Stephen Spidle

I ended up having chest pain and shortness of breath slowly start to come back again, off and on. And then I woke up one morning and I could hardly get out of bed because of back pain. The shortness of breath was not as severe like it was previously, when I was very ill. So I wasn't sure what to make of it. I sort of just sat outside in a lawn chair in the morning for about 10 minutes and see how I felt with some fresh air. And the pain was still there significantly. So I drove myself to the hospital that morning.

Alison Steeves

And what happened at the hospital?

Scott Stephen Spidle

They quickly identified one of the lungs had fully collapsed. So the doctor told me that he would have to perform a chest tube.

[00:05:00]

And he strongly stressed that my informed consent would be required for him to do the procedure. And so, he did that, and shortly thereafter, he said that he wanted to send me back home with the chest tube. And I live alone, so I expressed to the nurse that I did not feel comfortable going home alone with this chest tube. And at this point, there was a shift change happening in the ER, and the nurse had spoken with the doctor coming on shift about my situation. He then shortly came to speak with me and said, "No, we're not going to send you home. We're going to transfer you to Halifax for emergency lung surgery in two days."

Alison Steeves

So you were admitted to the hospital at that time, in the Valley?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Correct.

Alison Steeves

And can you tell us about your experience in the hospital after that?

Scott Stephen Spidle

I was in the ER at Valley Regional for about three to four days. I was on morphine and meds at that point, so my mind was a little cloudy. I don't remember exactly how long it was. But on, I believe it was Day 3, my eyes began to hurt and I just by chance happened to wipe my forehead and it was just slime from sweat accumulating on my forehead. I did not receive any personal care at all. The only time a nurse or anybody came to see me in my stretcher bed was to provide morphine or medication. I had to request a face cloth to clean my face.

And then, I believe it was the next day—because I was only there three or four days—they requested an X-ray. And since getting physical medical records from my doctor, where it stated they requested a mobile X-ray, where they bring the X-ray machine to your hospital bed or stretcher, and that's not what happened. The nurse was a student nurse, I guess she

overlooked it or didn't understand the request, but she unplugged my chest tube from the vacuum line on the wall and then took me in my stretcher, ER stretcher, to the X-ray department.

The wait in the hallway alone—sedated, unplugged from my chest tube—it was only a few minutes, but within that short time I could feel in my chest like the air being let out of a balloon. And when the X-ray tech came out, he looked at me and I looked at him and I said, "They just unplugged my chest tube and I think my lung just collapsed." And he said, "Are you serious?" I said, "Yes." And I was just, you know, on morphine; it didn't seem like a big deal to me at that moment. So he rushed me into the X-ray, did that, rushed me back to the ER, then the nurse came, plugged my chest tube back into the wall.

And then after about five or ten minutes, what had just happened sort of registered in my mind, okay. And I started yelling, "Help me, they're going to kill me, I need a doctor." And after yelling that three or four times, it was only a few moments, the ER supervisor and a respiratory specialist came to my side. They assessed me and realized the lung had collapsed and, despite being plugged back into the vacuum line, it was not coming back up. So they just decided that they'd have to do another chest tube, which is a very painful and horrifying experience, really. And they had to do another one because they had to use, I guess, a larger diameter one so they could create more vacuum in my chest cavity to allow the lung to come back up.

After that, I had a very serious conversation with the two of them about how that should have never happened, which they agreed. It was shortly after then, maybe an hour or two, actually before then, the supervisor called a meeting at the nursing station—because of my condition, they had me right in the section there in my stretcher, right there in front of the ER nursing station, so they could keep close eye on me. And so, she called a meeting with the nurses after this happened and basically told them, "You know, if you have questions, have patience, wait and ask; take your time instead of making mistakes," more or less.

Alison Steeves

So when you were admitted, Scott, to stay, you were told in two days you'd be going to Halifax for lung surgery?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Correct.

Alison Steeves

How long did you end up staying in the hospital before going to Halifax?

Scott Stephen Spidle

More than two weeks. And just add to that meeting, when that was said and my situation was mentioned, the nurse who had unplugged my chest tube said, "Oh, well." And I almost flew off the handle. Except immediately a nurse, an elderly nurse who clearly been a nurse for a long time, turned to her and said, "You can't be like that."

[00:10:00]

Alison Steeves

Had you been hospitalized before, Scott?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Yes, I actually have two autoimmune conditions, which put me at high risk for COVID and one of those is ulcerative colitis. So I've been hospitalized two or three times for that for quite an extended period of time.

Alison Steeves

How would you compare the level of care you experienced and witnessed in this visit that we just spoke about compared with in the past?

Scott Stephen Spidle

It was a black and white difference, totally different. A lot of the doctors, but mainly the nurses: they seemed scared or apprehensive of being near patients. It was very odd and, like I said, that was right at the beginning of all the hysteria and all the hype.

Alison Steeves

So Scott, you've had this horrible experience with what you and your family doctor and at least one ER doctor felt was COVID, and it resulted in significant lung damage, correct?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Yes, they actually end up having surgery on both lungs because the other lung was in the same condition, on the edge of collapsing. And the surgeon had said that it took about 30 years off the life of my lungs.

Alison Steeves

So then when a vaccine emerged against COVID-19, were you eager to take it?

Scott Stephen Spidle

No.

Alison Steeves

Did you take the vaccine?

Scott Stephen Spidle

No, I did not.

Alison Steeves

Why not?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Well, numerous reasons. One being that I had survived COVID, and I believe natural immunity was longer lasting, more effective than the vaccine. I also had concerns about the safety of the vaccine, even before it was rolled out. And also, in the fall of 2021, when it was really getting rolled out, I had two loved ones die shortly after receiving their injections: one within 48 hours, massive heart failure with no previous heart conditions, and the other one over the span of about a month in the hospital, with all their organs shutting down and the doctor saying they didn't know why. So I was quite apprehensive to getting the shot.

Alison Steeves

How did you feel when provinces across Canada and the federal government started implementing vaccine mandates and passports?

Scott Stephen Spidle

I thought that was extreme. I'd even use the word tyrannical. I mean, it was a clear, extreme violation of our basic rights and freedoms. And it caused, I mean, we've heard numerous testimonies here: the effect it's had on people's lives, their families, relationships, employment, you name it.

Alison Steeves

Are you familiar with the truckers' Freedom Convoy that went to Ottawa in January 2022?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Yes.

Alison Steeves

Can you speak a bit about your experience with the convoy?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Yes. I missed the convoy here from Nova Scotia to Ottawa in the first week due to continuous lung issues with long-term problems. And eventually, a few friends here from the province returned after being there and participating in the convoy. And at that point, I was starting to feel better. I was no longer short of breath, no more chest pain, and wanted to go. And they said, you need to be there because they knew my position and how I felt about things.

So they went back up and took me up there with them. And we booked reservations at an Airbnb for a week. Of course, at that point, nobody knew how long it was going to last. And it was probably the greatest time in my life, especially after the previous two years. There's so much love and joy, as I cry and hug every single day. A friend of mine who's had numerous friends who were truckers out there, and one of them told me— The first day I got there, he's chatting with me. And he said his eyes hurt from crying so much, of just happiness and just relief and being around people and just a sense of normality again.

Alison Steeves

How long did you end up staying at the convoy?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Right till the very end, that Sunday morning.

Alison Steeves

So you were planning to stay a week. Did it end up being longer than that?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Yes, well, like I say, we had reservations for a week. And it was time to go home and they were heading back, and I told them the night before that I had to stay. It meant that much to me. And to that point, prior to that, a few days before— When I arrived in Ottawa, the fencing was still up around the War Memorial. And I was there when the veterans took down the fencing. And it wasn't like the media said, it wasn't a bunch of protesters tearing it down. It was basically all veterans: people stood back and allowed the veterans to do it. And they orderly removed the fence and stacked it neatly to the side and then negotiated with the police

[00:15:00]

in terms of carrying out a watch duty at the War Memorial to make sure nothing happened to it. Because of course, at that point, the police were quite lacking resources in terms of men on the ground. So the veterans agreed to take on that role.

Alison Steeves

Did you find that the media portrayal of what was happening in Ottawa was accurate?

Scott Stephen Spidle

Not at all, not at all.

Alison Steeves

So reports that the protesters were racist, white supremacists, hateful people. For example, Ottawa City Councillor Catherine McKenney, in an article—and this is Exhibit TR-14—one article in *Ottawa CityNews*: “Ottawa City Councillor Catherine McKenney issued a statement on January 26, 2022, that stated, in part, ‘several members of this group are connected to militant, racist, sexist, and homophobic groups, and they are not here to only raise voices against vaccination mandates, but to also fuel hatred against the very fabric of our society.’”

Do you feel that is an accurate characterization of what you observed and experienced at the convoy?

Scott Stephen Spidle

No, I would say that is the complete opposite of what the atmosphere and the people that were there are doing. There's actually a very large presence of Christians, religious people there, along with Indigenous people. And leading up to that point, we had dozens of churches across the nation being burned and vandalized. And to have those two communities come together, it was very nice to see. And there was people there from every walk of life. And also, the professional class: I met with numerous doctors and lawyers there. Actually, at the War Memorial, I actually spoke with a— He didn't say what sport, but

he was clearly, he was like seven feet tall, built, you know. And he said he was a professional athlete; I assume a hockey player. I sort of know the image; I played hockey for 25 years. And he said he was fully supportive of what was happening.

Alison Steeves

Do you have anything to add about the people that you met at the convoy?

Scott Stephen Spidle

It was— sorry.

The veterans were like the heart and soul largely of what was happening on the ground. That moment when they removed the fence and I was there and helped a veteran remove the flowers from the fence. And—personally, and to a lot of others—that was the highlight of the whole event. They, actually, because of long family history, they took me into the fold of the watch duty afterwards and I participated in the night watch duty, which was a very surreal experience being in the nation's capital. It was very quiet, dark, with the monument lit up and yeah, it was pretty special. Like I said, there's a lot of doctors, nurses; there's just everybody you could imagine.

Alison Steeves

What did this experience mean to you?

Scott Stephen Spidle

A great deal. Personally, I'm the kind of person— I believe, you know, our forefathers, fathers, and grandfathers, they fought and died to protect and preserve our rights and freedoms. And here we were as a nation and across the world largely sacrificing our rights and freedoms to save lives. So it was like everything was upside down.

Alison Steeves

Thank you, Scott. Those are my questions. I'll turn it over to the Commission.

Commissioner DiGregorio

Thank you for sharing your story today. I just have one question around the vaccine mandates and I was wondering if you ever asked for or obtained an exemption?

Scott Stephen Spidle

No, I did not. I did not have a need for an exemption.

Commissioner DiGregorio

Thank you.

Scott Stephen Spidle

I did not have a need for an exemption for myself personally. But I did help others with the religious exemptions, providing them with the sources to acquire that.

Alison Steeves

Thank you, Scott.

Scott Stephen Spidle

Thank you very much.

Oh, if I could just say one more thing. When I was in— They moved me up to a step-down unit when I was in Valley Regional. And I was there for an extended period of time. And there was a nurse who'd come on shift after being off for a weekend. And this was about a week and a half into it. And when she came in, she said, "What are you still doing here?" And then we had a chat. She went to go find answers. And I could hear her outside the room, just outside the door, right, speaking with who I assume is her supervisor. And she asked why I was still waiting. And her supervisor said that was an inappropriate question for her to ask. And she responded by saying, "If he ends up in ICU, it's not my fault."

[00:20:00]

And if that nurse is out there, thank you. And please reach out to me if you can.

Thank you.

[00:20:27]

The logo for the National Citizens Inquiry (NCI) and the Canadian Evidence Network (CeNC). It features a stylized blue maple leaf with a central emblem resembling a sun or a flower. Below the leaf, the text "NCI | CeNC" is written in a large, light blue, sans-serif font.

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

The evidence offered in this transcript is a true and faithful record of witness testimony given during the National Citizens Inquiry (NCI) hearings. The transcript was prepared by members of a team of volunteers using an "intelligent verbatim" transcription method.

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