



## NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Saskatoon, SK

Day 1

April 20, 2023

### EVIDENCE

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**Witness 10: Marjaleena Repo**

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**Dellene Church**

Next witness today is Marjaleena Repo. Marjaleena, can you please state your name and spell your first and last name for the record?

**Marjaleena Repo**

My name is Marjaleena Repo, and it's M-A-R-J-A-L-E-E-N-A. And last name is Repo, R-E-P-O, Repo.

**Dellene Church**

Thank you. Marjaleena Repo, in your testimony here today, do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help you God?

**Marjaleena Repo**

I do.

**Dellene Church**

Thank you. Marjaleena, you found out very early in the pandemic that wearing a mask posed a serious risk to your health.

**Marjaleena Repo**

Excuse me, I can barely hear you. If you could be a little bit louder.

**Dellene Church**

Okay. Marjaleena, you found out early on in the pandemic that wearing a mask posed a serious risk to your health and you were given a medical exemption by your doctor.

## **Marjaleena Repo**

Actually, yes, that happened. I first became aware that there was a plan by the City [of Saskatoon] to introduce masking, particularly in buses. Of course, I was very concerned about that. I travel on buses. And when I found out that they were going to do that, I knew that I was going to be involved personally because of my health issues.

So I protested to the City. I made a presentation to the City in a hurry, where I documented what I knew already about the health hazards of masks. I wasn't presenting anything about the effectiveness of masks or anything like that, but the health hazards that are already known. Because I know that I was going to be hit with it in a big way. And that presentation I did it in good faith, and I appealed to them to pay attention to all the populations that would be affected by these masks. People with bronchial problems, what I have. COPD [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease] of course. People who had difficulties hearing. Anybody who was deaf would be incapacitated.

And I especially spoke about children. How children's lives would be affected in a long-term way. And damage their capacities to learn and to relate and so on—all the things that happened. So I presented that in good faith. And I didn't get even one question, and they passed the masking order unanimously.

While doing that presentation, preparing for it, I found out that they had no information. They had no data. They had nothing that would justify doing something so drastic. They had no idea of a precautionary principle. Nobody who had prepared that material, the go-ahead, had any knowledge. They didn't introduce it as an issue—no consideration—and suddenly we were in a situation. And I was in a situation that I had to think twice before I go on a bus, what to do. I couldn't wear a mask for long, any kind of length really. I knew that.

And so my protest hadn't worked and I decided, okay, well, I have to cope with this. Try to do the best of it. Try to avoid hospitals. Try to avoid any situation where they make me wear a mask. And try not to go on the bus. At that time, it was September 1st, I could still bicycle, so I could get around. And I could go to a neighbourhood store that didn't have any masks. So I thought I have a certain freedoms left.

And then, you know, the one thing that I couldn't do— My partner and I had to go shopping once in a while. And of course, I couldn't go into a big store. He hated to go in it and he hated shopping too. But I had to send him in. I would sit in the car, and the weather was cold; it was winter, getting to be winter. And he would go in and hate every moment of it. Because he would be told, "Move this way!" "You're walking the wrong way!" "Where's your mask?" "Your mask is not done right!" And that was done by customers and staff.

So consequently, our shopping trips were quite short. I couldn't really do anything. So my life shrank, just about overnight. But I thought, okay, this is going to war. And I'm some kind of a soldier—reluctant, but I'm going to kind of hang out.

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But I couldn't do it very long because I started to suffer from serious pain towards the end of October. And I thought, this is not good because I might have to go to a doctor. And I was in severe pain. I had leg pains, I had back pains. I couldn't even sit I was in so much pain.

So I went back to visit my clinic that I had been a member there since the early 80s. A very nice, lovely clinic—the Saskatoon Community Clinic—that I had really liked and supported.

And I made an appointment to go and see a doctor there. I had just gotten a new doctor I was told, because my previous one had retired.

And when I came to the clinic, I didn't recognize anything. It was like an alien world because it was just masks with people. Masked people, masked patients, masked staff. I could barely hear anybody. I still have big difficulty hearing. I have a hearing aid—a top-notch hearing aid—but I can't hear people behind masks. That becomes immediately a communication problem because I have to repeat myself. I keep asking them, “What did you say? Can you say it again? I can't hear you!”

And so that became the whole clinic experience. I mean, it was absolutely disastrous for me. I cannot possibly cope with these people because I was harassed there. You know, my mask wasn't right on. I was leaking air. I was actually hanging onto air every second.

And finally, in my doctor's office, just before she came, I was given a blood pressure measurement by a very anxious nurse who was correcting me and pulling me and telling me to put the mask on. And my blood pressure was 208. It went up very quickly, it didn't come down for a long time. And when my doctor came in, she saw that. And she heard I was sweating, I was puffing, I thought I was going to fall. And she said at one point, “You're in stroke territory.” And this is what I felt: I could easily die on the spot. It became that kind of experience for me.

And the new doctor that I had was conscientious and compassionate, and she confessed that she couldn't stand the masks herself. And she tried to help me get out of the place by giving me her shawl so I can kind of just hide behind it so nobody would attack me, I think. And she said, “The next time when you come, just come straight to my office and sit there.”

Of course, the next time I couldn't really come. But she did send me for tests. So now I had to go to three hospitals to get tests. And they were both—all—nightmares in terms of getting in and being treated like a human being. Because already the corruption had set in. And the thing that they should have gone by, which is “first, do no harm,” had evaporated. There was no sign of it. So everywhere I felt I was being harmed personally. I was attacked personally. I became an enemy in no time.

Even having the test was so stressful that I stressed about it the day before. I stressed during it happening and I was stressed the following day. You know, I'd been captured by the enemy aliens. And I couldn't shake them because I needed those services.

So anyway, I did get my tests done. And on October 23rd I got the results. I went to City Hospital to see the breast cancer doctor.

And he came to his office and he sounded sad, but he had his mask on. And I asked him, “Whatever you're going to say to me, I want you to take the mask off because I cannot hear you.” And he did take it off. And he was momentarily a human being because he also felt sad for me.

[00:10:00]

And he told me that my breast tumor had spread to my bones, and I was not operable. I had stage four. And he comforted me. He touched me. He hugged me. He probably had to worry about somebody walking in and seeing him without the mask. And he invited me to come back any time to talk. So he had what was left of the humanity. He still had it.

And I walked out of the City Hospital and I didn't know what to do. Where should I go and cry? I thought, I can't go on a bus, so I'm going to go to the nearby coffee shop. City Perks, it's a nice place. I could go there and get a cup of coffee. I could have a scone and I would go in a corner and I would cry.

I went in. And the two women who were working there— It was very early in the morning. I was the first customer. And before they said, “good morning,” “hello,” or something to that effect, they said, one of them, “Where's your mask?”

I said, “Well actually, I can't wear a mask.”

“Well, here we have to mask. Didn't you see the notice outside?”

And I said “I actually didn't.”

And she said, “Well, if you can't wear a mask, then you at least have to sign this. You have to sign your name and the address.”

And I said, “Well, that's not mandated yet. That's been talked about. It's not happening.”

She said, “Well, these are our rules. This is a private business. And these are our rules.”

And that was the end of that, except I left very distraught. Maybe I had hoped that I would tell them my story and then cry some more and they would comfort me. They would be human beings.

I left and wrote a post on my Facebook, telling about my experience. I didn't mention why I had gone there and why I wanted to cry. But I just told about the treatment and said that I felt I was bullied. And I would never go to such a place. And that was on the 23rd of October 2020.

The next day, I woke up, I had hundreds of hostile messages on my Facebook. I was totally flooded. There were people that hated me so much they wanted me to go into a— They wanted me to get COVID and die. They wanted me to go to a hospital where they wouldn't treat me. They just wished that I would disappear. And, you know, incredible phenomenon.

It turned out that there was a radio station in the city that had discovered my posting and considered it an attack on the little café. But more than that, an attack on public health measures and therefore I had to be punished. And this radio station—which I've never heard of called Bull 92.9—had decided to mobilize these people to go after me with incredible insults.

It took me a while to even be able to cope. I couldn't talk to my family about what had happened to me health-wise because I had to basically fend off hostile elements. Names of people I've never heard of, they were not anybody I ever knew anything about.

And with this event—having a terminal prognosis, devastating prognosis—then being attacked at the same time by fellow citizens.

[00:15:00]

I mean, they're supposed to be fellow human beings. They didn't know me and they had decided to undergo a full attack on my person, personhood. I had to worry about whether

they would come to my house. I mean, would they come and throw stones through my window? What else would they do?

The next part of that is that I had decided I have to do something about it. I found out what this man had written in his Facebook, on his program. He mentioned my name; he had my posting there. He wrote, "She has also been a regular on the radio page of this station before we banned her for spamming misinformation and causing a general ruckus."

So what he was doing there, he was describing somebody else. He put my name on it and attached this description. Then sent it off to his fanbase, who then decided that they had to do something. They were also told that there was going to be a protest—also anti-vaxxers and anti-maskers would be surrounding the café—and therefore everybody has to get busy to do something. And everybody got busy to do something which was directed at my person.

The only thing I could do with that—after recovering from it—was to say, "I have to get a lawyer to do something about this. I will get a lawyer."

And I found a lawyer. I said, "You have to clear my name. I don't know how long I'll live. I have been smeared. My name has been scandalized. I want that cleared."

And he took that on. I wanted him to write a tough letter and demand that Pat Dubois—was the name of the fellow, and he is part of the broadcasting family—that he would be made accountable for his actions. The lawyer wasn't very confident that we could get anything. I was very convinced that we would win this case and we went ahead—at least the first letter, which produced results. He agreed to take off the description, but he did not give an apology. I wanted a full apology. I wanted that done so that he would have maybe paid some compensation also for what he had done to me.

At that point—just when I thought that we were now moving to the next phase, which is making more demands—my lawyer quit on me without talking to me. And he said "I don't want to continue. And I don't think you're going to get anyway anything." He basically withdrew without consulting me, saying "You wouldn't be able to prove anyway that you weren't that woman who caused the ruckus." So he basically ceased to be a professional lawyer right in front of me.

So that case— The reason why I have been bringing it up is because it's been festering me ever since. I've had so many other things to deal with and confront with and take on that it's festered. But I've finally decided to find out if I can still put in a complaint about him. I did find out just yesterday: I can. Because you can go after with a complaint about the lawyer as long as they practice. So that's in the works, so that I at least get some satisfaction along the lines that I have planned to do. Some satisfaction.

Anyway, that was a little bit long story, but I needed to have it out because it has been like the poison in my system. It was created by the same mentality that the clinic had and the hospitals had: that you are an alien, you don't belong to humanity, you can be abused, you can be controlled, you can be not listened to, not respected, et cetera. It has been the full story.

The next serious humiliation that I had, after I had received my medical exemption—

[00:20:00]

I received that from the same doctor that had been very good with me. At the end of November, I got a medical exemption and I started to use it wherever I could. And it was never—about 95 per cent, 99 per cent time it wasn't accepted—but I carried it with me on buses particularly, because I went back on bus travel.

And I had it, and sometimes the driver would ask for it or say, “Why don't you have a mask?” And I would say, “I have a medical condition, I can't.” And they would accept it. It was uncomfortable, because there could anytime be a driver who would be gruff, who would insult you, and you never knew what you would get. Maybe a customer would come to you and say, “Put the mask on,” or throw a mask at you. So it was ongoing. And I knew that I wasn't alone. Because luckily, I connected with protests in the city and I would go there. And at least we could commiserate and exchange experiences and horror stories. And they were all horror—similar things.

**Dellene Church**

And it affected every area of your life.

**Marjaleena Repo**

Pardon me?

**Dellene Church**

It affected every area of your life. That exemption did not protect you.

**Marjaleena Repo**

It didn't! It was, it was like nothing. I still have it somewhere here too. I also carried with me what the public health regulations said: that if you have a particular medical condition and you are signed in by your health professional, you don't have to wear a mask. Basically, it was there. I had both that and all of it was swept aside by people who became the judges and juries of my existence.

After my prognosis, I had to actually attend the Cancer Center here in the city. That was a nightmare of the nightmares. Because I have to now deal with masked and gowned and gloved people, who basically only wanted to know where my mask is. Or why. Mask was the only topic! I didn't get a kind word there; I, in fact, got threats. Threats like when I was measured for radiation treatment and the technician that measured me, when I said to him “I can't”— I was telling them— All the professionals, I was telling them “I can't breathe. It makes me feel panicky. I think I might faint if my blood pressure goes up.” And I said “I can't wear a mask to this!” He said, “Then you're not going to get radiation.”

And he meant it! It was it was that kind of control. It's life and death, you know? It could be trivial, and it could be life and death. That all had to do with the mask becoming the king. And no basis for it. Absolutely no basis for making it that, and no—

**Dellene Church**

Marjaleena, we're running close to the end of our time, so I'd like to ask the commissioners if they have any questions for you.

**Commissioner Kaikkonen**

Thank you for your testimony. When you said you the people around you only wanted to know where your mask is, do you ever remember society—a place in society—where our greeting to one another would have been honed in to just one simple question, “Where is your mask?” Do you ever remember a time where society would be that abusive to one another?

**Marjaleena Repo**

I had a hard time hearing you. I mean, it's very blurry. Can somebody repeat that? I'd like to hear it.

**Commissioner Kaikkonen**

I don't know if I could repeat it all. You made a comment, “only want to know where my mask is.” That other people who were speaking to you would normally greet you and say “How are you?” or “Good morning,” or something to that effect prior to COVID.

What happened to our society? Or maybe that's not the right question. Have you ever seen a part of society where the only thing that mattered to people around you was: Where is your mask?

[00:25:00]

**Marjaleena Repo**

I didn't quite completely hear you. I wish I could. But that's almost like an example of my experience when people had masks. You don't have a mask, but you're at a distance there and the sound distorts.

But getting back, just the essence of my story is the dehumanization— Medicine disappeared as a human practice. And it did it so quickly. And then the masking just became a method to punish you in every which way. It was just incredibly fast! And my head was constantly, “How can this be? How can it happen? Who are these people? What happened to them? Did they all get processed somewhere that they came out this way, that they can't— They don't hang on to their humanity?”

And I'm talking now about health professionals. They absconded. I didn't see any resistance. They didn't have kindness. You're in a cancer clinic and you feel abused by everybody. Because they didn't want to know of you. They didn't want to know you! They wanted to know your mask. They wanted to make personal contact with your mask. And that was the horror of it.

It's kind of a whole, total distortion very quickly of the whole society. And I don't see how it can get back, how these people can get back to that. How can they find their previous selves—if they had them—and become human beings again and treat others with essential respect? And this is what I've lost systematically, a sense of feeling that I'm respected. I'm respected. Because any time, I can be questioned by total strangers.

And then the nameless strangers, you know, hundreds. There was maybe 300 abusive emails orchestrated by a disc jockey who had nothing better to do. And he actually praised the event, what they had done: “We kicked ass.” Well, the only ass that they kicked was me. And he got away with it because my lawyer gave up on his own profession. Everything is,

like, giving up on humanity and knowledge that we've accumulated over a hundred years and become totally primitive people. You know, with the mask, that is exactly being at the receiving—at that end. It's like you're back into a primitive society.

We still are there, and it might be around the corner. It's not going away because the same people who are in power, they haven't been pushed away yet. And they pine for this power. Actually, during that period, anybody— Powerless people become powerful. Because they can exercise power over me, just like the bus driver did that banned me from a bus. I was actually banned from a City of Saskatoon bus that wouldn't open the door. Just waved a mask in front of me and took off and left me.

And I complained about it to the Human Rights Commission because it was rank discrimination. And the Human Rights Commission basically didn't want to touch it. And complained to the Ombudsman—complained about the Human Rights Commission to the Ombudsman—and the Ombudsman said “Well, they have their own rules.” So these institutions, one afternoon, collapsed internally and became enemies too.

So that has been our collective experience. And I think that I've lived it. I've lived it with others and for others.

**Commissioner Kaikkonen**

Thank you for your testimony. And do know that, after today, I'm quite sure there's a lot of people in Canada praying for your healing.

**Commissioner Massie**

Thank you very much for your very touching testimony. I was wondering:

[00:30:00]

How is your health right now?

**Marjaleena Repo**

How is what?

**Commissioner Massie**

Your health.

**Marjaleena Repo**

It's not very good. The only thing I'm getting right now, I've been getting one pill a day, chemotherapy. So I'm hoping to continue. I'm hoping that I can last. And I hope that I can live long enough— I've lost three years now. All the different things that I had wanted to be and do, I can't get them back. But I'm hoping that other people can make the changes that I would have wanted to make. I wasn't able to because we have an immense thing to deal with. My prognosis health-wise is still the same. I'm inoperable. I rely on the pill and I'm just hoping I last.

**Commissioner Massie**

Thank you very much. Take care.

**Marjaleena Repo**

Okay.

**Dellene Church**

Marjaleena, I'd like to thank you very much for your courage through the last three years as well as your testimony here today.

**Marjaleena Repo**

You're welcome.

[00:31:49]



***Final Review and Approval: Jodi Bruhn, August 21, 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.*

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