

Inquiry into the Government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic

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YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

I attended Treasury Gardens on October 31st with one other person. When we arrived organisers of a peaceful assembly had been arrested. I noticed an independent journalist we knew and we went to speak with them. He was standing near a few civilians and a lot of police. As we talked the organisers were released by police and the few people there, who had been standing with police and media, were told they could gather and listen to the organisers talk as long as people social distance. About 17 people gathered in a radius of 30 meters, or approximately 3000 square meters. Half of those people were independent journalist. Before the organisers had begun to even talk, police from all over the gardens began to form a large circle and slowly move in. No one was sure what was happening and everyone was quite intimidated. Nothing was said by police to anyone, and when they came closer, people asked if they could leave the "circle" including myself. Nothing was said and the police moved in closer and closer. Eventually over a loud speaker a voice said "You are in breach of the Chief Health Officers direction. Place your hands on your head if you do not wish to be arrested" I could not believe it as at no stage was I in a group of 10 and was wearing a mask and social distancing the whole time. The police had in effect set us up and then entrapped us. They lied. In my opinion it was a practice run for later assemblies. My partner was quite distressed and suffered ill health for a number of weeks. She is a nurse of 10 years, and has worked as a palliative oncology nurse for half that time.

We were fined \$1652 even though we had broken no directions.

I have included a video compiled of the event which that actually shows the lunacy of the situation. I feel watching it sums the event much better than I can.

The video is edited together showing real time events from different angles. At one point it is sped up as people go from "the circle" to be fined.

In my opinion this was completely disgusting behaviour by the police. This video has been shared 1000s and 1000s of times on social media, and 99% of 1000s of comments on the Reignite Democracy page were of abject fear for the city we live in, and complete disgust. Worst still the media were there and reported nothing on the overzealous reach of the police.

Here is a the video of the incident. I feel it illustrates things much better than my word can.

<https://youtu.be/SBLGR7MdUSs>

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:

If you do not watch the video it may be easy to have the impression this tale is exaggerated. In fact it

probably under sells how bad the police behaviour was that day. The look on the police faces that day (I'm no fool) was that many of them looked ready for violence. The fact that one man (excluding the organiser) was subject to that violence attests to that.

After this event I feel somewhat scared to give my submission, but the police behaviour that day, and others, was so overzealous I feel I must.

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