

14/12/2023

It is with great hope that I invest time into this submission that the nominated people who are paid to read this will actually listen to the accounts of everyday Australian citizens and understand the brutality of Federal and State government behaviour that they engaged in, in response to the 'threats' of Covid-19. I do worry that the scope of the inquiry being limited to federal responses and not the actions taken by State and territory governments, will again provide an opportunity for state governments not to be held account for their crimes against their citizens.

Role of the Commonwealth Government, responsibilities of state and territory governments, national governance mechanisms (National Cabinet)

I would consider myself a law-abiding citizen who has dedicated my life to support children in schools for most of my career, always advocating for student and disability rights – always referring back to the policies and laws around Human Rights. When rumours began circulating that the States were going to implement vaccine mandates, particularly in schools, I instantly felt sick to my stomach. My thoughts were consumed by this, I was unable to sleep and was very unsure, for the first time in my life, unable to fathom what was going on and how to keep safe. Knowing that my government (State and Federal) was throwing out my basic Human Rights, to choose what medicines go into my body, I was in a state of fear and anxiety symptoms overtook my daily life. This sounds a bit dramatic to people who were happy to take the Covid vaccination, however there is a population in Australia who, for their own reasons, knew that the vaccinations could not have possibly undergone rigorous, long-term studies for their efficacy and safety and those who simply live with a healthy lifestyle and are not reliant on pharmaceutical medications. Knowing that we'd lost our ability to choose to body autonomy was a devastating prospect to me and to be monitored so closely everywhere we went was like my worst nightmares and took me straight to George Orwell's novel, 1984. I despised having to read this in high school, and could not fathom a world like the one described, but now I have lived through it. As I've said above, working hard on my career and raising my family, being a wife and community member – I have strived to do the right thing for those around me, and when National Cabinet/Federal government and state governments brought in vaccine passports, restrictions on where I could go, who I could see and what I could do e.g. sit in a café, visit nursing homes or a hospital, attend my workplace – I was then relegated to a dirty unvaccinated member of society with limits on my freedom. I am not going to quote statistics or data to prove an argument – I need you to understand that the actions of government made everyday Australians feel like they lost their basic freedoms. This is what you need to understand. People's basic rights should never have been taken away.

In order to keep my freedom to choose to be unvaccinated, I made the decision to utilise my long service leave that I'd accumulated so that I could continue to pay my mortgage. I consider myself, lucky, that I had this option and back-up plan to utilize as I know that thousands of my fellow Australians did not have these savings to rely on. This meant though, that I was isolated to my family home, unable to maintain the social aspects of my work, unable to meet friends for coffee etc. Can you really believe that this could happen in Australia?

Throughout the period of vaccine mandates, I actually wrote to the Prime Minister at the time, raising my concerns over mandates. In a return letter from Scott Morrison, he identified that the Federal Government did not have any vaccine mandates in place. So technically, it was the States mandating the vaccine. Okay, so I rang the Premier of Queensland's office. I was told that I had choice to take the vaccine or not. Choose to keep my job, or not take the vaccine. Arguing that this is not really a choice in a free society fell on deaf ears and it seemed that there was a government-wide, formulated response to such questions... that we ultimately had a choice to not take the vaccine. Can I tell you, these were very difficult choices and costly to each individual. Costs were not only monetary, but also impacted on our mental health as we were then isolated from those who did take a vaccine.

Key health response measures (for example across Covid-19 vaccinations and treatments, key medical supplies such as personal protective equipment, quarantine facilities, and public health messaging)

In the depths of my horror and isolation at home, the mainstream media and government messaging was relentless with daily updates from politicians and chief health officers. It needs to be raised, that the over-reporting and focus on Covid contributed to the deterioration of the mental health and well-being of the citizens of Australia. It also never allowed an alternative view or alternative options for those of us that were cautious of the new vaccines. One strategy employed by the media and our politicians was to ridicule anyone with a differing opinion, calling us 'conspiracy theorists' or 'ant-vaxxers'. This isolated us further from 'normal' society and increased 'fear' in the population that believed what they were hearing on their tv's. Can I tell you again, I'm an ordinary citizen who vaccinated her children, went to work, paid taxes, strived to own her own home etc. These labels were used to isolate us and keep our concerns unheard. The messaging that did get 'air' was that the vaccines for 'safe and effective'. This messaging was repetitive and deliberate. Now, we do know that pharmaceuticals such as █████ did not even test for efficacy, however we were not told this information until the 'emergency' was over. Many Australians would have made a decision to try and protect themselves due to this false messaging. This messaging also contributed to citizens turning on each other. I actually had a friend jump away from me when she heard I was unvaccinated. For someone like me, who has always taken pride in my appearance, my work ethic and my personal values – to be treated like a lepper and not allowed to move 'freely' was utterly devastating and shameful. The federal government response contributed to this. The messaging also led to private companies and individuals to make horrid decisions e.g. my doctor and dentist refused to offer any treatments to individuals not vaccinated – these were not state recommendations, but they just went that extra step forward and this type of behaviour was not penalised. Can I tell you, that I have not seen a doctor or a dentist since and unless I'm driven to hospital in an ambulance, I can't see a situation where I would visit either again.

Now, in 2023, I would say that I am still feeling the mental side effects of what I went through in the Covid lockdowns, mask wearing and vaccine mandates. It has changed me forever. Hopefully you will hear other impacts, such as those families who were separated by states and families who could not have access to loved ones in hospitals and nursing homes, families effected by vaccine injuries, families impacted on business closures/bankruptcies, families who lost their homes – all due to the over-reaching government policies and responses to Covid-19.

The idea of Australia, a free country with opportunities for all has been changed forever in my mind, and unless this inquiry can provide some clear guidelines for planning another pandemic response,

we will continue to emanate '1984'. When will governments realise what they've done and offer some sort of apology to the crimes that they have committed? If not, we will continue to slide into a country that does not value 'Freedom'. I worry for my children in a country that so quickly took away our freedom.

Kind regards,

