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Canada: The so-called Freedom Convoy was never about truckers, or border mandates

Friday 4 March 2022, by [MENZIES James](#) (Date first published: 30 January 2022).

Truckers who participated in a cross-country convoy culminating in protest at Parliament Hill this weekend have been duped into believing the convoy was about them.

It never was. It wasn't about your rights to continue crossing the border unvaccinated. And by the time the convoy rolled through Ontario it had already fully morphed into something much bigger - and more dangerous - than what truckers were ever told.

I raised alarms early in a blog '[The murky matter of protests and the donations that drive them](#),' when I noticed who was behind the convoy. These weren't truckers organizing a GoFundMe that at the time of that writing hadn't yet surpassed \$1 million, on the way to \$8.5 million just a week later.

The principal fundraiser was Tamara Lich, the secretary of the federal separatist Maverick Party in Alberta. Prior to that role, she was active with other far-right movements such as Wexit Alberta - a party whose founder advocated for Alberta to separate from Canada and join the Trump-led U.S.

The blog fueled a lot of anger. How dare you question the motives of the organizers? Why don't you support the revolution? How much money did Trudeau pay you to write such drivel? Take your job and die.

It also brought a lot of attention to the fundraiser and the people behind it. GoFundMe froze the funds for a time until it was satisfied the money would be disbursed appropriately.

I received many calls from mainstream media outlets, asking me what the protest was about. I couldn't bring myself to call this a trucker protest. I opined it was an anti-vax, anti-mandate, anti-government, and possibly even pro-separatist movement that's attached itself to the frustrations of a small segment of the trucker population.

And then Canada Unity, another of the organizers, posted a ludicrous Memorandum of Understanding/Manifesto on its website, which it plans to present to the Governor General of Canada. It essentially calls for the resignation of everyone within the federal government, the formation of a new government comprised of the Governor General, Senate, and members of Canada Unity, and the removal of *all* Covid-related measures - even those put into place at the provincial level. The trucks will remain until the document is signed, organizers said, dubbing its mission Bearhug.

I understand the frustrations truckers feel over the border vaccine mandate, I really do. You've done your jobs safely for two years going back and forth across the border keeping our economy moving and our stores stocked, and were declared heroes as you did so.

Canada bungled the communication around its Jan. 15 vaccine mandate, creating confusion and for

24 hours giving truckers false hope they'd be exempted. But the reality is, Canada's arrival requirements for unvaccinated Canadian truckers are completely moot now that the U.S. has put into place its own requirement.

It matters little what you have to do upon re-entry when you can't travel into the U.S. in the first place. And if you think the Biden Administration is going to reverse that mandate over a trucker protest in Ottawa, well, that's about as likely as the mass resignation of all our federally elected politicians in Ottawa.

I feel bad for the truckers who thought this was about them. It never was. There was never any discussion around the real issues you face every day. Lack of safe parking. Poor road conditions. Access to clean restrooms. Unpaid detention time at shippers and receivers.

You were taken advantage of, because you were frustrated and you have big, loud machines that can be quite disruptive. You became the rallying cry of an anti-government group whose ambitions went well beyond the reversal of the vaccine mandate.

The true objectives of convoy organizers became clearer as they neared Ottawa and are now on full display. The unruly behavior in Ottawa - the waving of Swastika and Confederate flags, dancing on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and desecrating the Terry Fox memorial - were shameful and were not the doing of truckers. But anyone who participated in or promoted this convoy is guilty by association. You were duped.

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