



Diagolon Participation in the Freedom Convoy 2022 and Beyond

Freedom Convoy 2022

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The 2022 Freedom Convoy is part of the broader anti-public health measures movement. The convoy drew thousands of protesters to downtown Ottawa beginning at the end of January. While supporters are not homogeneous in either their grievances or organization, the majority oppose the federal

government's proof of vaccination policy for cross-border drivers as well as broader public health mandates related to COVID-19. Prior to the actions of law enforcement on February 19-20 to clear the convoy in downtown Ottawa as a result of the enactment of the *Emergencies Act*, many demonstrators had stated that they planned to continue occupying Ottawa until all COVID-19 mandates are removed.

The convoy has attracted significant media attention and support from those who share their grievances and frustrations with the federal government, s.38

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Key Assessments

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What is Diagolon?

Telegram user and online personality, Jeremy Mackenzie, created Diagolon in January 2021 as a fictitious country to inspire unity among like-minded individuals. It represents a symbol of defiance against the government's COVID-19 restrictions and mandated vaccinations. Diagolon members also voice grievances against increasing restrictions on firearms and promote a variety of conspiracy theories related to the government at large. s.38

Throughout 2021, Diagolon has expanded from an online presence to a real-world community that conducts in-person meetings across the country. The Freedom Convoy 2022 allowed for a number of Diagolon members to congregate in Ottawa, where some members met in person for the first time. s.38

In addition to Mackenzie, Derek Harrison and Alexander Vriend are also known and vocal members of the Diagolon community. s.38

For further information on Diagolon, consult the "Diagolon Dictionary" s.38



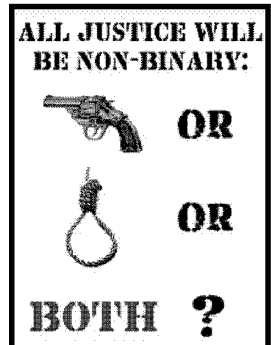
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The Violent Rhetoric of Diagon

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In Jeremy Mackenzie's Own Words

"This is the good guys versus the bad guys [Canadian government]. The showdown has finally fucking begun and it has begun in Canada... you could go be a part of the story now."

"This is the beach, get yourself out there."

Mackenzie discussing protests against COVID-19.

The Beach' is a common saying in Diagon to reference their own version of World War II D – Days. **s.38

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Leaders of Diagonon did not call for violent participation in the Freedom Convoy 2022 and specifically asked that members attend to peacefully support the convoy. They believe that any attempt to label demonstrators in the Freedom Convoy 2022 as extremists would reduce the legitimacy of the demonstration and would allow for further police and government intervention against demonstrators.

During the first weekend of the demonstration key figures within Diagonon suggested that the Federal government might use this demonstration as a means to create a 'false flag' event and may even hire actors in an attempt to instigate demonstrators, thereby allowing the federal government to bring in the military or arrest participants in the convoy to discredit the entire demonstration. This paranoia within members of Diagonon resulted in Mackenzie and Harrison conducting online live streams and interviews from their hotel room in Ottawa on January 29 to prove that they were not physically present on Parliament Hill that day (in the event of an attack) s.38

Since the initial weekend of the Freedom Convoy 2022, key figures within Diagonon have made many appeals for participation in and documentation of the demonstrations. Further, Vriend has been collecting donations to allow others to travel to participate in demonstrations in Coutts, AB, or Ottawa, ON. Prior to the actions of law enforcement on February 19-20 to clear the convoy in downtown Ottawa, Diagonon members continued to maintain a presence at the Freedom Convoy 2022 in Ottawa; Mackenzie, Vriend and Harrison were in Ottawa during the weekend of February 12-13. Mackenzie has claimed that he would not leave Ottawa until all COVID-19 mandates are removed. s.38

Coutts, Alberta Blockade

A partial blockade at the Coutts border crossing started January 29, 2022 as part of the anti-public health measures movement. Many of the participants are driven by a similar range of narratives and grievances as seen at the Ottawa occupation, including their opposition to some- if not all- public health restrictions related to COVID-19. As of February 15, 2022, the RCMP had arrested 13 individuals in connection with the blockade and seized weapons, firearms ammunition and body armour. The RCMP notes that several participants at the blockade are members of Diagonon. See Diagonon flag on body armour.

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Increased Diagon Following

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An increased Diagon following will also increase the number of consumers of the extreme anti-government, anti-authority and anti-law enforcement messaging espoused by key figures within the community. Though there were calls for peaceful protest among Diagon at the onset of the Freedom Convoy 2022, the tone of open messaging from key figures has become more focused on law enforcement over the past weeks. There have been more overt calls for members of Diagon to travel to Ottawa and "hold the line". Key figures within Diagon are calling the government's response to the Freedom Convoy a 'siege'³ and have:

- claimed the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is intentionally cutting truckers off from essential supplies such as food, water and medications in both Ottawa and Coutts, Alberta;
- claimed the RCMP may attempt to disrupt cell towers to ensure that the truckers cannot communicate outside of the demonstration; and,
- shared directories, including the names of all members of the Ottawa Police Service s.38

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³ A 'siege is a military operation where the enemy cuts off essential supplies with the goal of making an enemy surrender. For Diagon, this implies that both the federal government and RCMP are cutting truckers and protesters off from essential supplies to facilitate compliance. s.3

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Diagolon – Future Implications

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