



Kangaroo protest against corruption and cover-up inside Toronto courthouse

Protest surrounds claims from multiple parties of transcripts being altered at the Sheppard Ave. E. courthouse

By Mike March, Justice Reporter

Convinced that officials are turning a blind eye to corruption and cover-up in the courts at 47 Sheppard Ave. E. in Toronto, Ontario resident, Robert Freedland, took to the street in front of what he has referred to as a kangaroo court.

Dressed in a kangaroo costume and wearing a sign indicating that the court behind him was nothing but a kangaroo court, Mr. Freedland waved and handed out information flyers to people coming in and out of the courthouse.



Robert Freedland stands outside of Sheppard Ave. courthouse in his kangaroo costume to forewarn people about Ontario's Kangaroo Justice

Freedland turned to public protest as a result of his own personal lawsuits against two lawyers for incompetence and for overly-excessive legal fees.

His first case was heard before deputy judge Sabol, who according to Freedland, made a number of outrageous and biased statements in the courtroom. The lawyer representing the defendant lawyer also made false and misleading statements in the court to the judge.

At the end of the trial, the deputy judge ruled

in favour of the lawyer and awarded costs against Freedland.

The outcome of the trial with the second lawyer came out the same with the lawyer winning again.

Freedland was shocked at how justice was perverted, especially in light of the fact that evidence in one court included a third party report from another lawyer which showed how one defendant lawyer had failed to competently represent Mr. Freedland in his legal matters.

Mr. Freedland ordered the official transcripts which for one case took approximately nine months to get from the court.

Considering the fact that most court reporting services in the private sector are able to get transcripts out in a matter of days and at less cost, it raised questions about the competency of services from court workers at the Sheppard Ave. court.

When Freedland reviewed the transcripts he was further shocked to find that they had been drastically altered to remove outrageous and inappropriate judicial comments as well as the false and misleading statements given by the lawyers.

Mr. Freedland said that one of the court reporters involved in the trial involving Justice Sabol was an employee by the name of Latoya Duncan.

Strangely enough, Ms. Duncan was the same court reporter involved in another separate case of alleged transcript altering at the Sheppard Ave. courthouse which also involved a lawsuit against another Toronto area lawyer.

When Mr. Freedland brought his concerns about the transcripts to the attention of the court and asked if he could listen to the recordings, he was given the brush off and told his complaint was groundless.

According to Freedland, the assistant supervisor of family court services, Ali MaqBool told him that he had listened to the tapes himself and found them to be accurate.

It begs the question that if Mr. MaqBool could take the time to listen to the tapes personally, why could he simply not invite Mr. Freedland to attend at the court with him so that they could listen to the tapes at the same time?

This sort of response to Mr. Freedland's simple request smacks of cover-up.

At one point Mr. Freedland offered to pay the expenses to have the court audio tape of his hearing examined by a forensic investigator with the police but his offer was rejected.

Convinced the transcripts had been "fixed" Mr. Freedland filed a motion to the divisional court at Osgood Hall to gain access to the court reporter's audio tapes.

At that hearing the law firm of Polten and Hodder argued against Mr. Freedland's request.

Polten and Hodder attempted to bushwhack Freedland with a motion asking that the court require Mr. Freedland to put up money in advance as security against costs.

The judge, Justice Bellamy, turned down Mr. Freedland's request for access to the court tape.

Why any law firm would put barriers to any person attempting to seek the truth raises some ethical questions as to whether lawyers really are interested in the truth.

In reality, the matter was between Mr. Freedland and the court reporter. The law firm of Polten and Hodder did not even have to show up to court to argue against him which raises the question if something was on the court tape that the lawyers wanted to keep hidden.

One would think that all parties would want to ensure accuracy of court transcripts.

According to Freedland, "It seems there is a disturbing pattern of unethical and dishonest behaviour on the part of the judges and lawyers I have had dealings with.

Mr. Freedland tried to contact the Attorney General's office but got no help there either.

"I have contacted the Attorney General of Ontario, Christopher Bentley, but he does not appear willing to do anything to fix the problem as well," said Freedland.

While the courts are supposed to be working

to protect the citizens, it would appear that the courts and the reporters are working to protect the judges and lawyers within the system.

Many claim that deputy judges should not be adjudicating over small claims cases which involve lawyers as parties as this is seen as a conflict of interest.

Many of the deputy judges who act as part time judges still work at their own practices as lawyers in the community.

Most would not find it hard to believe that lawyers who work part time on the bench would be biased in favour of other lawyers who often work in the same community and often know each other.

This is not the first time that the Sheppard Ave. courthouse has come under attack by citizens in the area.

The Sheppard Ave court was the same courthouse where most major Canadian newspapers exposed senior judge, Marvin Zuker, for altering court transcripts as well.

Justice Zuker was exposed after a public complaint against him and a lawsuit was filed by a client of former lawyer Harry Kopyto.

Mr. Kopyto has gained notoriety for his fortitude in standing up against the justice system and not backing down.

For the past several years there have been protests at this courthouse regarding injustices and general corruption in the courts with more planned by groups in the area.

Mr. Freedland is part of a growing body of Canadians who feel that there is wide-spread abuse of the legal system by judges and lawyers to their own benefit.

Many besides Freedland have complained about court transcripts being altered to protect judges, lawyers and to alter the outcome of cases.

In Freedland's case, thousands of dollars have been wasted by court staff and lawyers in efforts to keep the court tapes inaccessible.

But why all the fuss by the courts?

Looking at all the barriers that have been thrown in front of Freedland and others, it sure appears as if those in the court system have something to hide about the transcripts.

Mr. Freedland should be commended for his efforts in seeking the truth.

If anything, those in the system who stand in his way ought to be publicly tarred and feathered.