

SIU reopens investigation into G20 arrest

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Video: [G20 protest at Queens Park](#)

Jayne Poisson Staff Reporter

Ontario's police watchdog has announced that they will reopen their investigation into the injuries sustained by Adam Nobody during the G20.

The news comes one day after Police Chief Bill Blair lashed out at the Special Investigations Unit for saying excessive force was probably used by officers in two cases during G20 protests.

Blair said a YouTube video, consulted by the SIU as evidence in Nobody's complaint, was "tampered with," and edited out of context.

The video, shot by web developer John Bridge, shows Nobody being chased by a group of about six uniformed officers. He is then tackled to the ground.

Referencing the video, SIU director Ian Scott concluded there was a "probable excessive use of force," but the officer could not be identified.

In an interview, Bridge said he shut the camera off when he saw police rushing towards him. But turned it back on again when he realized they were not coming at him. He has since signed an affidavit and said that no one from the SIU or Toronto Police had contacted him about his video.

“In my view, the assertions by Chief Blair and the contents of the affidavit sworn by Mr. Bridge satisfy the criteria of being materially new information with respect to the Nobody incident,” said SIU director Ian Scott.

“Accordingly, I am reopening this investigation. I will be asking Chief Blair to provide the SIU with any further relevant information he has with respect to this incident and more specifically any forensic evidence in his possession regarding the allegation of tampering with the video tape. The SIU will also be requesting an interview with Mr. Bridge.”

Adam Nobody, the man at the centre of criticisms lobbed by the Toronto Police against the SIU spoke with the Star this morning.

He recalled one terrifying moment, handcuffed and lying on the ground behind a paddy wagon, when a plainclothes police officer placed his foot on his face.

“He was calling me a piece of sh—t,” said Nobody, recounting the moment.

“Get up and fight me,” he said, adding that there were “tons of police officers around laughing.”

Then, the officer asked his name.

“Adam Nobody,’ I said, and the guy takes his foot off my face, kicks me in the face and tells me to stop being a smartass.”

Nobody, 27, is a stage-designer who changed his name two years ago from Adam Trombetta, a moniker he used when he performed in music groups.

The Star obtained a copy of the original video. The time code data indicates there was a pause of four seconds between two clips.

“We have no way of knowing what has been removed,” Blair said in a statement Monday.

“It is very likely that what has been removed sheds light on why the man was arrested, and why force was used.”

For his part, Bridge said he was still watching when he turned the camera off.

“Police really only had the time to bring Adam to the ground,” he said. “He wasn’t going anywhere and he wasn’t doing anything, and he didn’t resist.”

Nobody, who suffered a broken nose and cheekbone, said Blair’s comments are “just another slap in the face.”

“To say the video was doctored or tampered with is too much,” he said. “He keeps on building on the aggravation I’m already going through.”

What happens in the video is one of two allegations made by Nobody that he was assaulted by police during his arrest at Queen’s Park.

The second, which he says occurred when two plainclothes officers kicked him repeatedly in the head between two paddy wagons, is not on video.

Scott concluded that there was not enough evidence to corroborate Nobody’s claims on the second allegation.

Two subject officers were identified by the SIU, but exercised their rights and declined to be interviewed.

“The fact that they didn’t charge anybody. That there were six cases investigated and not a single charge. It was very disappointing,” said Nobody about the SIU’s investigation.

In another twist, Nobody’s arresting officer could not be identified because the badge number does not match with any members of the Toronto Police Services.

“The service doesn’t even know who the person who puts a badge number on an arrest sheet is or who the badge belongs to,” said lawyer Julian Falconer, now representing Nobody, who has up to two years to bring a law suit.

“Why are we engaged in this bizarre game of hide and seek with badge numbers,” he added.

Nobody was charged with assault against a peace officer. The Crown subsequently dropped those charges in October, saying there was “not reasonable probable grounds to arrest Mr. Nobody.”

Sunil Mathai, a lawyer at Falconer's firm, who is also representing Nobody said, "When I first heard of Chief Blair's remarks yesterday I was dismayed at the allegations he made about the fabrication of the video."

He added that the next step would be for police to fill in the gaps of Nobody's and, now, Bridge's, accounts.

"Mr. Nobody has come forward and Mr. Bridge has come forward, the only people who have not come forward are the police."

"There is transparency coming from citizens involved but not from police," he added.

In an interview Monday, police spokesperson Mark Pugash said it would be wrong to assume police were uncooperative.

"Unless you were in that interview. . . Unless you understood how chaotic that situation was, I really don't believe you're in a position to make any kind of judgment," he said.

As a "tangible example" of police policing their own, Pugash said the Toronto force initially received about a dozen allegations of officers not wearing badges during the G20, investigated further, and came up with about 90.

Those officers will receive one-day suspensions without pay.

Pugash confirmed that an internal investigation into the six cases investigated by the SIU is in its early stages.
