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# Ontario police watchdog reopens G20 'Nobody' arrest investigation

By Adrian Morrow

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## *Special Investigations Unit says statements, affidavit qualify as new information*

The video is only 26 seconds long, depicting one of the more than 1,000 arrests at the G20 summit in Toronto in June. But this short, shaky sequence has ignited a furor that has drawn in the province's police watchdog, Toronto's top cop and two strangers on either side of the camera.

Now, the Special Investigations Unit has said it will reopen the probe into the alleged beating of a G20 protester at the hands of police, based both on the police chief's assertion that the video was tampered with and the objection of the person with the camera, who says the man arrested wasn't fighting back.

The SIU cited the video, which shows 27-year-old Adam Nobody taken to the ground and arrested at Queen's Park on June 26, as evidence police "probably" used excessive force against Mr. Nobody, who suffered a broken nose and shattered cheek. The SIU, however, couldn't identify any of the police involved because the arresting officer provided a badge number that belonged to a Quebec police officer who wasn't assigned to the summit.

On Monday, Police Chief Bill Blair pointed to a gap in the tape, alleging the video had been "doctored to create a certain impression" and referred to Mr. Nobody as "a violent, armed offender" in a radio interview.

Then, John Bridge, a 36-year-old Torontonion who works as a Web designer for a bank, identified himself as the video's shooter and challenged Chief Blair's contentions.

In a sworn affidavit, he said he videoed officers chasing Mr. Nobody, then briefly turned off the camera, fearing he had to run from police. After a few seconds, he flicked it back on and captured the rest of the incident, he said.

He explained that he combined the two clips into a single video which he uploaded later that day, but denied tampering with them.

"During the time that I was not recording, I continuously viewed the incident and saw the officers tackle Mr. Nobody to the ground," he wrote. "At no time did I see Mr. Nobody assault or attempt to assault any of the officers."

Mr. Nobody's lawyers demanded the case be revisited on the basis that Chief Blair had besmirched their client's reputation by suggesting he was a criminal. In fact, charges against him had been withdrawn due to a lack of evidence and prosecutors said police did not have reasonable grounds to arrest him. His lawyers also questioned why the officers in the video had not been identified.

"Mr. Nobody and Mr. Bridge have been completely transparent, they have nothing to hide," lawyer Julian Falconer said. "The police on the other hand ... refuse to identify themselves as having been there."

In an earlier interview, police spokesman Mark Pugash said the force co-operates with SIU investigations and rejected any allegation officers protect each other from scrutiny.

"It's dangerous to make assumptions," he said. "If I was one of those officers, I would take great exception [to that suggestion]."

The SIU agreed to take another look at the case Tuesday, saying it would ask for evidence from Chief Blair and take a statement from Mr. Bridge. The SIU will also review a further incident in which Mr. Nobody alleged two plainclothes officers beat him behind a van.

An SIU spokesman declined to respond directly to the chief's allegations.

"That's not why we're here," Frank Phillips said. "We're here to investigate these things, not to comment on Chief Blair."

*With a report from Joe Friesen*