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Thursday, November 4, 2010

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Chair

The Honourable John McKay

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•(0845)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.)): Ladies and gentlemen, I see a quorum, so we'll get started now.

This is the 35th meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

Our witness this morning is Chief William Blair of the Toronto Police Service. As Chief Blair comes to the table, I want to welcome him on behalf of the committee and personally. Until very recently, the chief was a constituent of Scarborough—Guildwood.

So welcome to Ottawa, Chief. You've been before quite a number of parliamentary committees. Probably at times you're a bit more popular than you wish to be.

There is some time for your opening statement, and then my colleagues will wish to ask you questions.

Chief Blair, welcome, and please give your opening statement, if you have one.

Chief William Blair (Chief, Toronto Police Service): Thank you.

I'll be very brief with my opening statement. As you all are aware, I'm the chief of the Toronto Police Service. The Toronto Police Service was part of the integrated security unit that provided security and policing for both the G-8 and the G-20.

I've come before you today to do my very best to answer your questions. I have some understanding of the questions that were put to my colleagues in the RCMP and the OPP. I've attempted to gather some of that information so I might assist you with some facts and figures this morning. If I'm unable to supply you with the numbers you require, I will certainly undertake to acquire them as quickly as possible and get them to you. We'll do our best to answer all of your questions with respect to the costs associated with providing security for this event.

I think you are all aware of some of the security challenges we faced. Certainly, some of the security issues we were confronted with in the city of Toronto during the G-20 received quite prominent national attention, and I will do my best to answer your questions.

Unfortunately, because of the rather late notice for attending this meeting, I was unable to arrange to have my chief financial officer and chief administrative officer join me here today, but I had them

working well into the night last night, gathering some facts and figures, so I'll do my best to answer your questions.

The Chair: Thank you, Chief Blair.

For the first eight minutes, Madam Coady.

Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.): Thank you very much.

We certainly appreciate your taking the time to be here with us this morning and the attention you've given to the details.

I'd like to ask a few opening questions this morning. When Mr. Elcock was here a couple of weeks ago, he indicated there was a detailed plan for the event, and he went on to say that once you have your plan, you know precisely what the costs will be because you've budgeted for them. Superintendent Charlebois of the Ontario Provincial Police indicated that they negotiated a budget ahead of time of approximately \$84 million for the event.

Did the Toronto Police Service do the same?

Chief William Blair: We did.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: What was the amount you negotiated, and could you please provide the budget assumptions, that is, the details about the money allocated?

Chief William Blair: Yes, I'll do my best.

The budget that was submitted and negotiated with Public Safety Canada and the summit management unit headed by Mr. Elcock had total budget expenditures of \$124.8 million. Included within that amount, approximately 60% was for personnel costs related to both the Toronto Police Service and all of the other police services that came to Toronto to provide assistance, excluding the OPP and the RCMP.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Just for clarification, would the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, for example, fall under that budget?

Chief William Blair: Yes, it did, and not just for the personnel costs, but for their accommodation and meals, and other related personnel costs also.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Out of that 60% for personnel, you just indicated there were accommodation costs. Do you know what amount was for travel and accommodation, out of that 60%, approximately?

Chief William Blair: I'm going to have to give you an estimate. I don't have the precise number. I'll obtain the precise number, but I believe the cost of hotels in Toronto alone was in the neighbourhood of between \$4 million and \$5 million. I have a recollection of having seen that budget, but I don't know the precise cost.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Okay. Thank you.

I'm sorry, I interrupted you, but you said that 60% went to personnel.

• (0850)

Chief William Blair: The 60% was for personnel, and the other 40% was for various equipment and infrastructure services. For example, there was a requirement to obtain radio communications for all of those different police services. Our existing infrastructure in Toronto was unable to accommodate the additional numbers; for example, we didn't have enough radios for them. There was also some infrastructure for those radios that had to be put in place to create compatibility for all of the different systems being brought to bear.

In addition, we had to acquire certain facilities on a temporary basis and a prisoner processing centre, and there were other related costs. For example, there were leasing costs and retrofitting costs for the premises acquired for that purpose.

There was other protective equipment, things like gas masks and other things very specific to the event, that was also obtained. Some of the equipment that we acquired—and I have some breakdown of it but not great detail, unfortunately—would be retained by the Toronto Police Service. By policy, with Public Safety Canada, that acquisition was based on 50% from my service and 50% from the federal government—if it were our intention to retain the equipment.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Could you give us the budget assumptions over the next few days?

Chief William Blair: Yes, I will.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Okay, great...and some of those breakdowns.

Do you have budget variances as well at this point? Or is it premature for that?

Chief William Blair: It is premature.

We've made some submissions to the government, and actually some of our bills have been paid. But there are others that are due at the end of December, and those are still being compiled.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: But you do have your budget and you know where you are.

Chief William Blair: Yes, that's correct. We have the budget assumptions.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: If we could have that, that would be great.

Chief William Blair: And please be assured that we will not exceed our budget.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Great.

Chief William Blair: In my world, we don't get to do that.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Great.

Now, I want to ask you a question. When were you first informed that the government had decided to host the G-20 in Toronto?

Chief William Blair: We began hearing indications, mostly through some public media, that the G-20 was being contemplated. It was approximately November of 2009.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: So you had, what, six months to prepare?

Chief William Blair: Six or seven months. But let me also tell you that we were aware, of course, for almost two years that the G-8 was being contemplated in Ontario and that it would be held in Huntsville. In our experience, when such an event is held, even in a rural area in Canada or elsewhere in the world, there are impacts on the major urban centres nearby. Usually that's where the demonstrations take place.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: So you'd already been preparing for the G-8. You had only a few months to ramp up for the G-20.

Chief William Blair: We had been working with the integrated security unit in anticipation of some impact of the G-8 in Toronto.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Sure. The airport—

Chief William Blair: We then began to get some indications that a G-20 may come to Canada first. Then there was some suggestion it may come to Ontario.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Did you have any role or any...? Did you give any advice in terms of selecting where the G-20 would be held, in Toronto, or should it have been—or was that decision made by others? Did you get an opportunity to voice an opinion on (a) whether it should be held in Toronto or (b) where it should be held?

Chief William Blair: Mr. Elcock of the summit management unit came to Toronto, I believe it was in January, although I don't have the precise date. He came and met with me and some of my personnel and indicated that the government was contemplating bringing the G-20 to Toronto. He asked if we could and would be willing to assist in providing the security for that event.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: In your opinion, would there have been a significant difference had the summit, such as the G-20, been held in a different location, a more remote location, a more contained location than in downtown Toronto?

Chief William Blair: It's not just a security issue. There are tens of thousands of people who come to a G-20 event, and accommodating those people...for example, you may have 20,000 attendees. There were nearly 4,000 accredited media. There were several hundred additional media who were not accredited but were present. As a matter of fact, there were many what we would call "citizen journalists" out on our streets. We also had large contingents from the various government bodies and business-related bodies that were attending the summit. Frankly, there are very few places in Canada that have the hotel capacity to house these individuals. So I think that was a consideration in addition to security.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Were you consulted on the decision to have it in downtown Toronto?

Chief William Blair: Mr. Elcock simply asked us about our capacity as a police service to assist in providing security for that event.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Okay.

I want to go back. You did talk about some of the assets you were able to acquire during the G-8/G-20, and you talked about having some infrastructure for the telecommunications and some of the other purchases. Do you still have those assets, and how are you disposing of those assets?

• (0855)

The Chair: Chief Blair, you have about 30 seconds to answer that question.

Thank you.

Chief William Blair: For some of the assets that we are keeping, I'm paying 50¢ on the dollar. But I didn't have anything. The City of Toronto did not give me any additional money for the security of the G-20. We were doing it within our existing budget, and quite frankly, there wasn't a lot of room there. So most of the equipment that was acquired solely for the G-20 is being returned to the RCMP.

The Chair: Madame Bourgeois, for eight minutes, please.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Blair, good morning and thank you for being here.

I listened to your testimony yesterday at the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. A couple of questions came to mind immediately, because the attempt to secure information didn't go far enough.

First of all, I would like to know who was in charge of coordinating security in Toronto. Was it you?

[English]

Chief William Blair: On coordinating the security, the security planning for the G-20 event was done as part of a joint operation, led by the RCMP, in the integrated security unit. But within the planning for that event, there were a number of different areas within the summit site that were designated the primary responsibility.... For example, where the summit was taking place, in the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, in the region where the hotels...what might be considered the central security zone, with security and responsibility for the summit site and the summit participants, the internationally protected persons, the primary responsibility was with the RCMP.

There was also an interdiction zone immediately outside of that central zone, which was again the responsibility of the RCMP. Outside that restricted area, within the downtown core of Toronto, that area was primarily the responsibility of the Toronto Police Service. But it was done in an integrated fashion. And what I mean by that is within our major incident command centre, there were representatives of all of the police services participating, including the other emergency services—our fire, our ambulance, the military, and others—who were all working in a very integrated and collaborative way to provide security for the event.

But the primary responsibility for policing the streets of Toronto was my responsibility. The primary responsibility for the security of the summit site was that of the RCMP.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I'm sure you can understand that, because of all the work that was done, it is difficult for us to ascertain what your particular responsibilities were.

You are in charge of a municipal police force. During the G-20, other police forces such as the OPP and the RCMP were also on site, as you mentioned. At this point, we are having trouble assessing budgets that were requested, budgets that you needed as the municipal police force.

In answer to a question from my colleague, you stated that the City of Toronto did not provide you with any extra funding, other than what you have in your municipal police budget, to handle any additional expenses incurred as a result of the G-20. Is that correct?

[English]

Chief William Blair: That's correct.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: That's correct. So, in your capacity as the municipal police force, you did some budget planning.

[English]

Chief William Blair: Yes. We worked very closely within the integrated security unit and with Public Safety Canada to establish a budget of what our costs would be. I have to continue policing the rest of the city, so I have to maintain a business continuity of operations for the rest of the city. We therefore had to bring in additional personnel. We cancelled their leave. We had them work on their days off. We also asked other police services to send personnel to help us, and we created a budget to pay those costs. Some of the infrastructure and equipment costs we would require were very specific to providing security for the summit.

Let me also tell you that there was perhaps not as clear a delineation of responsibilities as I may have indicated, because we share a certain responsibility—the security of internationally protected persons, for example. We work together with the RCMP. For the transfer to the motorcades to and from the airport, we were working in partnership with the RCMP, the OPP, and Peel Regional Police Service. This was very much an integrated operation, but the primary leads for the security of the summit were the RCMP.

We had 22 different police services out on the streets of Toronto, but the primary responsibility was for the Toronto Police Service because those are our streets.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: That means that the City of Toronto will incur additional costs as a result of the G-20 summit. It will automatically have to ask that those expenses be reimbursed for the G-20. To whom will that request be made?

• (0900)

[English]

Chief William Blair: It will turn to the federal government. Our cost arrangement—

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: The federal government or the RCMP?

Unless I misunderstood, in terms of the entire budget operation — even though you worked on it — ultimately, it was the RCMP that provided money to the Toronto Police Force and was involved in preparing the budget for the G-20.

[English]

Chief William Blair: Yes. We all planned for the event together. There was an integrated planning unit. I had officers from the Toronto Police Service. The RCMP had officers from their service. The OPP and other participants were all planning this security, but we all submitted separate budgets to the federal government for our costs and we divided up those costs. I must also advise you that there is a separate agreement between the City of Toronto.... The agreement that we entered into was for emergency services, which included the Toronto Police Service, the Toronto Fire Services, and the Toronto Emergency Medical Services for our related costs for the security. The City of Toronto has a separate agreement with the federal government related to costs incurred by the city other than emergency services.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: You said to my colleague that you did some financial planning of your own operations for the City of Toronto. You also said that you would be prepared to table that document.

Did you spend quite a bit more than projected? Did your spending exceed your planned budget?

[English]

Chief William Blair: No, Madame. I'm not allowed to go over budget. We submitted a budget to the federal government, and we will work within that budget and we will not exceed it. As a matter of fact, I am reasonably confident—the final numbers have not been tallied yet—of coming in under the budget that was submitted.

[Translation]

The Chair: You have less than one minute left.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: The Parliamentary Budget Officer told us that the relative personnel density was an important cost driver. You also said earlier that 60% of supplementary budgets were used to pay staffing costs.

How many outside officers did you need?

[English]

Chief William Blair: I'm delighted to tell you that I actually have that number. I think somebody put this together for me last night.

The number of external uniformed police officers who assisted us in Toronto was 2,028. Of course, not all of those officers were working all the time—they worked various shifts—and not all of them were there for the full ten days with us. The total number of sworn uniformed personnel from external services was 2,028; in addition, 18 civilian personnel also came to provide assistance.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: And those officers were acting as reinforcements for city police. How much did that cost? How much would you say those additional staffing requirements cost?

[English]

Chief William Blair: I can tell you that it represents—I'm going to have to give you an approximation—about 30% of the total personnel costs.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Fine. Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Bourgeois.

Chief Blair, I appreciate that we're asking you questions for which you may not be fully prepared. If, on subsequent reflection, you realize there is a difference in that number or any substantial variation to that response, would you please let the committee know?

Chief William Blair: My people advise me that they believe the number I've just given is what they've termed about 97% accurate, plus or minus 3%, but when I have more precise numbers, I'll be very pleased to forward them to you.

The Chair: Well, in politics, that's 100%.

Go ahead, Mr. Calandra, for eight minutes, please.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Oak Ridges—Markham, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for coming, Chief Blair. At the outset, let me say that I represent a riding just north of Toronto, and I know the York Regional Police had a role to play as well. I was extraordinarily proud of the efforts of not only the Toronto police force, the RCMP, and the OPP, but also of York region.

I'm going to ask you the question that I think the opposition has been desperate to ask for weeks, and for some reason they just won't simply come out and ask it. Of course, I know the answer, but on their behalf, I'm going to ask the question: did you deliberately pad the expenses or overestimate what it would cost to secure the event in order to deliberately rip off the taxpayers of Canada?

Chief William Blair: No, sir.

Mr. Paul Calandra: Okay. Thank you. I knew that to be the answer, of course, but we've been circling around this issue for weeks—

● (0905)

Chief William Blair: As a point of clarification, sir, we didn't deliberately do it, nor did we inadvertently do it; we just didn't do it.

Mr. Paul Calandra: Thank you, Chief.

I know that, of course. As I said, I was extraordinarily proud of the efforts of the Toronto police and of all the police services. You had 35 world leaders representing 95% of the world's population. You've told us there were thousands of delegates. It was a truly remarkable effort. I think you should be very proud, and I know you'll go back, as I did, to York Regional Police. I have told them how proud I am of them.

We're supposed to be monitoring the expenses, and sometimes it's difficult to separate the security aspect, on which you've already testified at the public safety committee, with our line of questioning here. Some have continually suggested that it would have been cheaper to have this event at the CNE, for instance, as opposed to the downtown core. It's hard to separate the two, but from a cost perspective, would it have been cheaper for us to house the delegates in the downtown core and have the conference at the CNE, or is there some other place where we could have held the 10,000 or so delegates?

Chief William Blair: I believe the security challenges might have been greater had the summit event actually taken place at the CNE. I say that because we had a responsibility to secure the hotel sites where the delegates and their staff were staying and to secure the site where the meetings were taking place, the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Had those meetings taken place over at the CNE, there would have been some different security challenges, but we would have also had to secure the corridor between the hotels and the CNE, which is a fairly extensive area. Securing that corridor would also have had an impact on a lot of people who live along it. Because of the length and vulnerability of that security site, the site would probably have presented significant additional challenges to us. You can't collapse your security at one place and move it as the summit moves; we'd have to have maintained it.

In addition, I think that whether the summit took place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre or at the CNE would not have had an effect on the demonstrations and the violence and vandalism that occurred in Toronto. In all likelihood it was going to occur in Toronto in any event, and it would have occurred in the downtown core in and around the central business district and along Yonge Street, as we saw. I don't think a variation of venue would have impacted on that outcome at all.

Mr. Paul Calandra: There has also been the suggestion that we should have saved costs. I suppose the opposition is also contending that the military would have been better suited to do this: we could have saved money, and somehow your force and the police forces that participated in this were not capable of policing the city and we could have done this with the military. How do you respond to that type of criticism?

Chief William Blair: Well, I have great respect for our military and the role of the military, but the role of the military is not to police the streets of our municipalities. That's the job of the police.

I can also tell you that we have a long and I believe successful history in peacefully managing large demonstrations and events. I think we have a good reputation for managing very large demonstrations peacefully, to facilitate lawful, peaceful protests. I would hearken back to the year before, when we had hundreds of thousands of people taking to the streets during the Tamil demonstrations. Although we faced unique challenges with those

demonstrations, they were facilitated peacefully, without injury, without damage to property.

Throughout the entire week—it was about a 10-day period—we were able to facilitate lawful, peaceful protests throughout that entire period—very substantial protests. Even on the Saturday of the summit, there were tens of thousands of people out on our streets exercising their free and democratic right, which we respect and support and facilitate, to protest peacefully. We were walking with them; we were working collaboratively with them in order to keep that peaceful.

Unfortunately, a group with a different intent, an intent to engage not in protest but rather criminality and violence on our streets, launched their attack on more vulnerable areas of the city from within that larger group, making it very challenging to continue to facilitate lawful, peaceful protests while simultaneously trying to control a mob.

Mr. Paul Calandra: Yes.

Chief William Blair: Unfortunately, I think the actions of that mob compromised our ability to continue to facilitate lawful, peaceful protests and took away the ability of those people who had every right to be there to speak to do so, because it was very difficult, as I say, to continue to facilitate a peaceful protest of tens of thousands when you have several hundred rampaging across the streets.

● (0910)

Mr. Paul Calandra: Yes.

Let me ask you about the planning process.

I guess clearly the answer is yes, because they were not very successful, but did you have enough time? How was the working relationship with the RCMP, the OPP, and the summit officers? Were you able to get the information you needed? Were you able to organize and plan this properly? And how would you describe the openness?

I know the Parliamentary Budget Officer has said that the costing of this has been very open in comparison to other places. How would you categorize it?

Chief William Blair: Well, first of all, I would agree that our budgeting processes are far more open and transparent than in other venues that I'm aware of. I can tell you that the collaborative working relationship, the integration that exists between the law enforcement agencies of this country, led in large part by the RCMP, but including the provincial police and the municipal police services, is excellent. We've been working together well for years, and we've planned major events together for years. We just had the experience of all working collaboratively on the Olympics security planning, for instance, so there was a model upon which we could build.

I put some of my best people into the integrated planning team. We worked very collaboratively, and I felt that the concerns of the Toronto police were respected and our viewpoints were valued throughout. We worked very carefully together to ensure that there was an appropriate delineation of responsibility and no overlaps to manage our expenditures.

It was a compressed period of time for planning. I would have liked to have had more time. In hindsight, I'm not sure that more time would have been necessarily impactful. I think we were ready to deal with what took place. The fact is that the security of the summit site was at no time compromised, and from a security standpoint for that major event, which was primarily why we had all gathered, we were very successful in providing security.

We were also aware, as I think one can reasonably anticipate, that there will be demonstrations and perhaps even violence, and we were prepared for that. You can't prevent every crime, but when it began I think we were able to maintain the peace and to protect the people of Toronto. So we did have the resources necessary to do our job.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Calandra.

Mr. Martin.

And just as a point of order, for those colleagues who are at the far end of the table, I don't wish to interrupt you towards the end of your questioning period, so if you could just sort of look my way, I can give you some indication as to what time is left in the period.

Mr. Martin, you have eight minutes, please.

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): The rule is you never look at the speaker; you always want to ignore the speaker or the chair and just keep talking.

The Chair: Yes. I've noticed that rule seems to prevail in this committee.

Mr. Pat Martin: Chief, thank you for being here. I know you've been dragged through a number of committees and interviews lately, and you're not finished even now.

Contrary to what Paul says, I don't think anybody ever thought that somehow one of the regional police forces, or your police force, was trying to pad their expenses or something to benefit, but we are genuinely concerned, as I think representatives of the taxpayers should be concerned, at \$1.3 billion for a three-day conference. We're staggering in trying to understand how you can spend that amount of money. Your figures that you brought to us today—we knew that global figure of \$124.8 million.

There was testimony that the RCMP spent \$546 million in that same period of time. I did the math, and that would buy the services

of 500,000 RCMP officers for a three-day period at their normal \$40 per hour rate of pay, or whatever it is. We know there weren't 500,000 RCMP officers; there might have been 4,000 or 5,000. So the numbers for lay people like us who don't deal with the costs of security...on behalf of taxpayers we're trying to understand how this could possibly happen.

Can you give me the total number of municipal police who were involved in the week or 10-day total time period? For that \$124 million, how many officers does that represent?

Chief William Blair: From within my own budget, sir, it represents a total of 5,400 staff. That's 4,800 police officers and approximately 600 civilian employees. Of course, they weren't on 24 hours a day. Most of them were working 12-hour shifts. Most of them were being paid, according to our collective agreement, at a premium pay level because their leave and days off were cancelled so they could come in and do this work. Again, we had to maintain our staffing in the city of Toronto. We have a responsibility to our citizens, so to provide the personnel required, we had to bring them back during time they would normally be off. The cost associated with those 5,400 staff is generally not at a base rate of pay but at a premium pay rate.

• (0915)

Mr. Pat Martin: Again, I'm just doing crude math here. Let's say 5,000 people times \$1,000 worth of salary, \$300 a day, would be \$5 million. Even if you double that...

Chief William Blair: I think, sir, you're going with a three-day period, and the summit for us was a 10-day event. It began on June 18. We didn't have everybody in on the first day, but we began bringing personnel in on that day. We were providing training to our officers and we were deploying them in the city as well.

Mr. Pat Martin: Okay. I just multiplied that figure by five, so let's call it 15 days instead of three days. That would be \$25 million, not \$124 million. I know there's probably lots of good justification and reasoning for this, but it's just beyond the scope of my imagination to understand how you can spend \$124 million in that period of time, and even more so how the RCMP could spend \$546 million in that period of time. The bigger question is, was it worth it? That's not for your testimony.

Chief William Blair: It's not for my determination.

Mr. Pat Martin: I want you to understand why we've asked you here, and it wasn't to accuse you of wrongdoing or to say you shouldn't have busted heads or whatever. None of those questions are relevant here.

Chief William Blair: We didn't bust any heads, by the way, sir.

Mr. Pat Martin: Were any of your officers injured?

Chief William Blair: Yes, sir.

Mr. Pat Martin: How many?

Chief William Blair: About 10. We had a number also who had to attend hospital as a result of exhaustion and other related things, but about 10 were injured in confrontations with demonstrators.

Mr. Pat Martin: When the briefings took place for the joint group, who would be advising as to escalation of force or at what point force would be used? Were you just left up to your own judgment as experienced police officers, that when the situation crosses a line, this amount of force is allowed, and when it crosses another line, that amount of force?

Chief William Blair: Sir, we're guided not just simply by our own discretion, but by the law. We have policies and procedures and performance and training standards in place in policing in Ontario, and our people are guided by the policies of the Toronto Police Services Board.

Mr. Pat Martin: But you must have been briefed by the organizers of the event. Mr. Alcock or somebody must have told all three law enforcement agencies, here are the rules of engagement.

Chief William Blair: Let me tell you, sir, that's not the case. No one from a political body can direct the operations of me or of the police service. We did not receive any such direction.

As to our rules of engagement, we have very experienced commanders who do major incident command. We have from our police services board our own standing operating procedure policies that guide our operations. But the responsibility for determining operations is with the police.

Mr. Pat Martin: Under those traditional guidelines, at what point are you allowed by law to arrest someone?

Chief William Blair: That's a rather broad question. First of all, within the Criminal Code, on reasonable probable grounds if an offence has been committed, it does empower a police officer in Ontario to charge—

Mr. Pat Martin: Do you think all of your arrests met that test?

Chief William Blair: There is another test, sir. There is a section of the code with respect to preventing a breach of the peace. It is an authority for the police, but it's also a responsibility to prevent a breach of the peace. It's not a charge; it's a preventative detention. When there's a reasonable apprehension that the peace is about to be breached, the police have the authority under the Criminal Code to detain a person while the risk of that breach is imminent and in any event not longer than 24 hours.

Mr. Pat Martin: It seems that was used a great deal, and very generously, an interpretation of that clause to be—

Chief William Blair: I would disagree with you, sir. It was used a great deal, but a great deal of effort was made to resolve every situation peacefully. But if they begin to riot tumultuously on our streets—and they did—I think there was a very reasonable

apprehension that a breach of the peace was at great risk, and we made every effort to prevent that.

● (0920)

Mr. Pat Martin: Could I speak about the variation of venue that you and Paul were talking about? Canadians generally don't like to see that level of security on their streets. Whether it was necessary or not, it's Orwellian. Even the War Measures Act... People still remember how sick it made them feel to their stomachs to see armed soldiers with guns on their street corners in 1970. We don't like it.

Now, surely if you held this event at Camp David in the States, a place where you can have these things secure, or Meech Lake, or Kananaskis, or on an old military base, you could spruce it up. For \$1.3 billion, you could pave the streets of an old military base with gold and build a "Taj Mahal" and have a beautiful event there for less money than we spent.

Don't you think that it would have been easier to police a pre-existing facility that's self-contained? You could have had a ring of law enforcement officers holding hands around the thing for the whole three days.

The Chair: Mr. Martin, I had suggested earlier that you look my way.

Unfortunately, Chief, that question will have to go unanswered.

Mr. Regan.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Chief, for coming this morning.

I want to talk mostly about the cost, but let me first ask you, following up on some of the questions that Mr. Martin asked, were any protesters given medical attention?

Chief William Blair: Yes.

Hon. Geoff Regan: For what sorts of things?

Chief William Blair: Actually, at our prison processing centre we had medical personnel on site who were immediately available upon entering, if it was necessary. For example, there were medical personnel for decontamination if pepper spray or other forms of tear gas had been used, and to deal with any injuries that anyone might have experienced. In addition to that—

Hon. Geoff Regan: It follows up on the question about what Mr. Martin said. He used the phrase “busting heads”, and when I read the story about officers removing their name tags, it does cause me discomfort. I'm sure it would cause you discomfort, because for whatever reason they may have removed them, the concern may be that it creates an impression of what their intent might have been going into those events, in relation to the protesters. That is a concern. I'm asking in that regard: what kinds of injuries were sustained by protesters?

Chief William Blair: There were, I understand, five instances where protesters received injury. All of those matters were referred to the Special Investigations Unit, which is an independent investigative body in Ontario. They are independent of the police, and those matters are being investigated by them. By law, we cooperate and provide whatever assistance the Special Investigations Unit needs. I think their investigations are very important. There were five instances.

I also want to advise you that with our public order unit, we have embedded within those public order units emergency medical services personnel who are available to render any assistance required to both the police who were on the line having things thrown at them or to any of the protesters who might be injured as well.

Hon. Geoff Regan: Could you comment about the concern I expressed about the impression that could create?

Chief William Blair: I'm well aware of it.

We have a rule in the Toronto Police Service; I implemented that rule. It was in response to a policy of my police services board. The rule requires that police officers wear name tags identifying them.

I'll show you the name tag, if you like. It's Velcro. It affixes onto a Velcro strip on their uniforms. It's fairly visible from a distance. It's their first initial and last name.

We've had this policy in our service for the past three years. There is overwhelming compliance with it, and I think there is real value when we're interacting with the public. I think it gives the public confidence. They know who the officer is. They can see there is a certain accountability that comes with that. So it is an important rule in our service.

I take it very seriously when anybody breaks the rules. I am responsible for the discipline and the conduct of all of my officers.

We received a number of public complaints—13 of them, in fact—that police officers were not wearing their identification. Rather than simply investigating those complaints...we investigated, but we also looked further. We reviewed a number of videotapes that were available to us—and by the way, there was a series of videotapes that we reviewed—and we identified a number of officers who were not wearing their name tags.

Hon. Geoff Regan: Thank you, Chief.

I'm sorry for cutting you short; I only have five minutes. I have lots of questions, and now I have two minutes.

Chief William Blair: I have no short answers, sorry.

Hon. Geoff Regan: You said you had a budget for this. It was assigned by the Government of Canada, I think, for \$124.8 million:

60% was for personnel and 40% was for equipment and infrastructure services. I don't know how much of that was radios.

That 40% for equipment and infrastructure services amounted to \$50 million. Now, this raises the question in my mind of what that was. Obviously part of that was communications.

Clearly, your officers have radios. Were you unable to use any of the radios you had? Did you have to buy a ton of radios for the 2,000 officers who came from other services? Was that a big part of the cost? Where did that \$50 million—

• (0925)

Chief William Blair: We actually didn't buy the radios. I had some capital money for a radio infrastructure project. I moved it forward and spent some of my own money to acquire the radios. We leased the rest because we didn't have the money to buy them; we leased them for the period of time.

With regard to our total costs, we also had some infrastructure we had to put in. We had some additional towers, to handle that capacity of radio communications in the city and to facilitate all the different equipment coming in. Our total expenditure for radio infrastructure, including the purchase and leasing of hand-held radios, was approximately \$15 million.

Hon. Geoff Regan: What was your cost for operating the detention centres—leasing, prisoner processing, etc.? What were all the operations cost?

Chief William Blair: Bear with me while I find that out.

I don't readily see the number here. I know there was a facility on Eastern Avenue that we leased. A substantial portion of that facility was used as our prisoner processing centre, but we used it for other things as well. We used it as a marshalling area for our personnel, and for the storage of vehicles and other equipment.

The leasing costs were primarily for the prisoner processing centre. We had to retrofit that in a relatively short period of time. We leased the property as close to the event as possible to minimize our costs, and then we retrofitted it according to provincial standards that had been established for the housing of prisoners in temporary detention.

I'll get you the costs. I don't have the precise number.

[Translation]

The Chair: Mr. Vincent, you have five minutes.

Mr. Robert Vincent (Shefford, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

These figures are absolutely astounding. You talked about 15 million dollars for radio infrastructure and towers that you needed for 10 days. You also leased radio equipment.

We are talking about an overall budget of 124 million dollars, including 15 million dollars for radio equipment. Planning operations may have cost you 10 million dollars. But if we calculate what is left after removing that, it means that 10 million dollars was spent every day for 10 days. Ten million dollars was spent every single day. Can you please explain how it is possible to spend 10 million dollars a day?

[English]

Chief William Blair: As I've indicated, we had approximately 2,000 personnel who came from out of town. They had to be housed, so part of our expenditure was for hotels and meals for those individuals. We had the personnel costs of their salaries.

By the way, all of that will be documented line by line, right down to the hour. We will be able to provide to the government and to the public a complete articulation of every hour that was being paid for.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Vincent: Then please explain why you needed 2 000 additional personnel? Why did the Toronto Police Service require an extra 2 000 officers, when RCMP, OPP and CSIS personnel were already on site? How is it that the Toronto Police Force required an additional 2 000 officers when all those other police forces were already there in Toronto?

[English]

Chief William Blair: We had a reasonable apprehension, I think. We looked at other G-20 events that had taken place in other areas of the world, at other such large public gatherings where there were security challenges, and the likelihood of public demonstration and even violence was, I think, reasonably anticipated, given the history of such events. So we planned to provide a secure environment to try to police those things. It was determined by the planning team that these were the personnel and the equipment that were required to do that.

I can tell you that after the events of Saturday, when quite a violent clash occurred—a number of our cars were burned, many of our windows were broken—there was a great deal of intelligence available to us. We were monitoring the social media sites and the communications. We had people who were working and providing us with information on the planning of the various anarchist groups that were coming to Toronto, and were from Toronto, that were planning to engage in criminal behaviour.

As a matter of fact, on Saturday night they were widely advertising that they were going to rampage through the city of Toronto. They called it “Saturday Night Fever”. So we had a reasonable apprehension that we needed help.

Fortunately, because the G-8 had successfully concluded in Huntsville, the OPP sent a great deal of its resources down to Toronto to help us, to have additional police officers on the street. We wanted to ensure we had enough people there to resolve things as safely and as effectively as we could. Frankly, having enough police officers there to do that was, in my opinion, necessary.

● (0930)

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Vincent: Personally, I think there were far too many police officers there compared to the number of people who gathered to demonstrate. There were more police officers than there were demonstrators, in my opinion. Furthermore, you set up a “temporary”, as you put it, centre in a building that you leased. It was a film studio that you leased and then retrofitted, but you don't know how much that cost? You don't have that information.

I think it's important to do that planning. How often was the planning centre used and how was it set up? Was it set up to ensure it would be safe for the prisoners or was it a facility where you would just put 40 people into the same cell, altogether, lying down on the floor, with only one bathroom? Was that how it was set up or did you make space for offices for your staff and just leave a small amount of room for the prisoners — just a small cage you could pile them into and that's it?

[English]

The Chair: Chief Blair, you have less than 30 seconds.

Chief William Blair: Yes. By the way, I found the numbers for the precise cost. The leasing of the facility was \$1.7 million. The renovations, to put in various detention facilities, etc., was \$1.1 million. Additional equipment, primarily cameras and video systems, were set up. Every place within that centre was videotaped in anticipation of the complaints we would receive. The cost of that was approximately \$0.7 million, for a total of \$3.5 million for the prisoner processing centre.

It was constructed according to provincial standards for the temporary housing of prisoners. It was a secure facility. There was a facility for access to legal aid, for prisoners to make phone calls to their lawyers or whoever. There were also investigative facilities there.

These were not opulent facilities. They are intended to temporarily house persons who are detained for various reasons during the summit. Then if they were going to be retained in custody beyond 24 hours, they were transported from that facility to other provincial institutions for transport to court.

The Chair: Thank you, Chief Blair. Thank you, Mr. Vincent.

Mr. Holder.

Mr. Ed Holder (London West, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, Chief Blair. I sincerely appreciate your attending, as I know all of us do.

Let me declare a bias, if I might. I believe your municipal force and all the forces across Canada provided security for the leaders, for all our international visitors. For all the work you've all done, I think you all deserve our thanks and our respect for the great result.

It's interesting. I really believe we would have heard the outcries, as one could never have imagined, if there had been serious injuries or worse at the G-8 and G-20 conferences. In terms of G-8 and G-20 summits in the past, which have been overshadowed by incredibly dramatic and violent protests, I'd like to get your opinion. Do you think the security measures that you and the other forces put in place prevented such an outcome?

Chief William Blair: I'm aware of, and have studied very extensively the outcome of, various G-8 events in which protesters have been seriously injured and killed. Although this event was certainly a challenging security issue for us, I'm proud of the fact that there was no serious injury. There were a couple of relatively minor injuries, which are being investigated, but there was no serious injury. We had literally thousands of cameras pointed at us 24 hours a day and at every step we took, but I've not yet seen any video or photographic evidence of any police officers using excessive force or exceeding their authority. I think that is a testament to both their training and their personal professionalism.

I'm very proud of my police officers and my service, and of the effort we all made collectively to ensure that our people knew the limits of their authority. They were well supervised, and I believe well led, and they did their job to the very best of their ability. It was a very difficult and challenging situation, but the police did not lose control. They maintained their discipline, they followed their training, and they kept the city safe.

● (0935)

Mr. Ed Holder: Chief, I hear the number of \$1.3 billion bandied about for security. In fact, that was not the case; it was \$930 million. While that's not a small amount of money, particularly when we're dealing with taxpayers' money, it's rather interesting not only that the Parliamentary Budget Officer acknowledged that the Government of Canada had been transparent with regard to the security costs at the G-20, but also that a number of sources felt that the costs associated with it were reasonable.

We've heard references back and forth that this was a three-day summit. It was unprecedented that we had to bring forces from across Canada, and it was unlike other G-8 and G-20 summits across the world. Relatively small countries can draw from other forces with a train ride or a car ride, but in our case, our security forces were drawn from right across this country. Logistically it was quite significant, including training and all.

From your perspective, was this a three-day summit?

Chief William Blair: No, not at all. In fact, I had 90 people working in preparation for this summit for nearly nine months prior to its commencement.

We had people involved in planning and intelligence gathering and criminal investigations. We were working full out. We had 90 people dedicated full time to that. Additionally, quite a number of my additional personnel were preparing for training. Every single one of our officers and every visiting officer from across the country was given extra training so that they would understand the limits of their authorities and the policies and procedures that would be followed in policing this summit event. We were deploying our people in various parts of the city commencing about June 18, which was a ten-day period.

Mr. Ed Holder: Chief, you know, it's interesting. My NDP colleague acknowledged quite properly that we are not the experts, and I would agree, but it's rather interesting that we feel we're the experts when it comes to determining whether the number of detainees we had in place or the number of folks who were arrested or detained was somehow generous, as the case might be, for that purpose.

I've heard concern about inmates; I'm concerned about the 10 police officers who were injured or had to be hospitalized. I'm concerned about folks who felt they were put under threat.

My quick question to you is this: do you feel the amount of force used was necessary to contain the risk as you assessed it?

Chief William Blair: I believe it was. I also believe that police services must be held to a very high level of account, and that's one of the reasons that all public complaints are being properly investigated by the Office of the Independent Police Review Director in Ontario. Investigations involving any injury are being dealt with by the SIU in Ontario. We also have my own "after action" report. I'm looking at our operations and deployment decisions. My police services board is conducting a different review, and the Province of Ontario is conducting two reviews on certain legislative matters with respect to the G-20.

There's an expectation that the police will always be held to a high level of account, and we embrace that accountability because it is how we maintain the public's trust.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Holder. Thank you, Chief.

I'm going to take the next round. My Liberal colleagues are generous.

Chief, the central image of the summit, unfortunately, was the burning police car. Which taxpayer paid for that police car?

Chief William Blair: The Toronto Police Service paid. We self-insure our vehicles, so that cost will be borne by me—excuse me, by my taxpayers. I just work for them.

The Chair: It will be the Toronto taxpayers.

Chief William Blair: I should be really careful about that. I work for them.

The Chair: I noticed about a week ago that the taxpayers of Toronto had expressed some sensitivities.

What about the windows that were smashed and the damage to business? Who pays for that?

Chief William Blair: I believe those costs are still under negotiation. Some of them, I'm hoping, are going to be covered by insurance.

But I can tell you that we estimate the damage caused on our streets that day to be approximately \$2 million, and some of those affected were small business people who could ill afford the cost.

The Chair: Are any of those things in this budget you've submitted to the committee?

Chief William Blair: No, unfortunately, I'm not authorized to compensate for those damages.

The Chair: What about the anticipated lawsuits that will come out of this event? Will the Toronto Police Service be engaged in lawsuits?

Chief William Blair: I'm named already in several lawsuits, as is my service.

There has never been a summit site where there haven't been a great number of public complaints against the police. Civil suits launched against the police, human rights complaints, calls for public inquiries, calls for the resignation of the chief of police—these are pretty commonly anticipated. We have insurance for those civil suits.

But I can tell you that my service, on an ongoing basis, is very engaged in preparing disclosure for a number of different reviews that are taking place, for civil suits, and preparing to defend ourselves. We have criminal prosecutions that we're also responsible for. So we have quite an ongoing commitment.

• (0940)

The Chair: But are any of those things in this budget you've submitted?

Chief William Blair: No, sir.

The Chair: None. I see.

So the costs may actually be well beyond the budget you've submitted, because we don't ultimately know the costs.

Chief William Blair: Let me clarify that. There are some “after action” costs that are budgeted in this, primarily for archiving and preparing documents for disclosure for various events, and they are included in this budget.

The Chair: Now, when you submit your budget of \$124 million to the Government of Canada, are you submitting it through the RCMP or is it in addition to the RCMP?

Chief William Blair: It's in addition, I believe, sir.

I'm not submitting my bills to the RCMP, but rather to Public Safety Canada.

The Chair: The Parliamentary Budget Officer has produced a budget here of the \$929 million, and I don't see the Toronto Police Service in it.

So would the \$124 million be in addition to that?

Chief William Blair: I couldn't answer that question, sir.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

I believe my Liberal colleagues may well want to finish off the questioning.

Thank you for that, Chief.

You have about two minutes.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Great. Thank you very much.

I just want to follow up on an earlier question by Mr. Martin on something we've been talking about here. Would it have been better, from both a security and cost perspective, if we had held this meeting in a contained area, and I'll use Kananaskis or some other location as an example? Were you involved in any discussion about that?

Chief William Blair: I was not involved in any discussion on that. Quite frankly, I don't feel well qualified to answer your question. My responsibility, once a decision was made that such an event was going to be held in Toronto, was to figure out the best way to police it.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Okay, fine.

The City of Toronto had a budget, as you indicated earlier. Do you know what that budget was and what it was used for?

Chief William Blair: I'm sorry, the City of Toronto...?

Ms. Siobhan Coady: You mentioned that the City of Toronto had a separate budget.

Chief William Blair: Yes, they do.

I have some numbers here. I believe the total city budget for the event is \$23.9 million, which the city has negotiated and submitted separately to the federal government—outside of the emergency services or protective services.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Do you know what those assumptions were in that budget?

Chief William Blair: I don't know those assumptions. I could inquire of the city and forward them, if they're able to give them to me.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: That would be helpful, thank you very much.

In response to an earlier question, you said there was a process to ensure that the concerns of the Toronto police were respected. Could you just talk about that process and what concerns you had?

Chief William Blair: Absolutely.

We were very much a member of our service.... We had some conversations about...because it's very important to determine that our policies will be followed. My police services board has a responsibility for the oversight of policing in Toronto, so we had some discussion to ensure that our policies would apply.

We also talked about things like a potential public complaint against a police officer and that there were certain legal requirements in Ontario for police officers that must be met. Those discussions took place between us and our policing partners.

I can tell you that it's a very integrated and collaborative environment; everybody was working as cooperatively together as they could to ensure that all of us were able to fulfill our responsibilities.

The Chair: We have two minutes left, if the Conservatives wish to ask a question.

Mr. Calkins.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Chief Blair, for being here. I really appreciate this opportunity.

I just have a few questions for you. The police officers that you reassigned and reallocated—you said you brought back people from scheduled days off, and so on—to be present at the G-20, or the backfilled police officers you had to put in place of those others, were they earning regular pay or were they earning time and a half or overtime?

Chief William Blair: They were earning primarily time and a half. All of the officers were paid, and part of our agreement is that they would be paid according to our collective agreement. I'm bound by a collective agreement, which determines the rate of pay for the officers, depending on whether they're working on their regular day of work or on a day off. We had to bring some of them back, cancelling their leave, and there were additional costs associated within our collective agreement to pay them during a leave period.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: So this is quite typical for the major events that you would host in the Toronto area? Because of the collective bargaining agreement, you would be bound either way?

Chief William Blair: It's really common. We've hosted a number of large-scale events—the Caribana Parade, for example. I'll cancel days off or bring people in on overtime shifts, and we have to pay them according to our collective agreement.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Some people claim that maybe we should have had this thing up in Hans Island or built the Taj Mahal someplace else. Even if the event was held in a remote location—I think you alluded to this earlier—the reality is, and I think the international experience is, the protesters would have chosen a destination where they could have done the most damage.

Is that not true?

• (0945)

Chief William Blair: When we were only aware of a G-8, we were fully anticipating that no matter where the G-8 was held, the protest would take place in Toronto.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: That's great.

The Chair: Last question, Mr. Calkins.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Thank you.

Generally speaking, with your experience, the suite of tools available to you for the various legal avenues, whether it's the Criminal Code, provincial statutes, bylaws—I'm more interested primarily in the federal statutes—are there any tools that would be more beneficial? I think Canadians were, quite frankly, outraged by the hooligans and thugs who were there, the anarchists who were just creating a whole bunch of damage to public property and so on. Are

there any tools that you would recommend the government change, strengthen, or enhance in order to give you more abilities?

Chief William Blair: No. I believe there's a very clear articulation of our legal authorities in statute, in our common law authorities, and within provincial statutes. There was some discussion about a provincial statute and a regulation that was enacted but not really used at this event, that frankly became quite an issue in the public mind. I'm quite satisfied with the current authorities and the accountabilities that those authorities imply.

The Chair: Thank you, Chief Blair.

Thank you, Mr. Calkins.

The time is up. I see from my colleagues in the Bloc that they would like to continue asking questions. My experience last week was that it didn't work out very well. So unless there is unanimity on the part of the committee to continue asking Chief Blair questions, I have to bring this session to a close.

An hon. member: I'm fine with that.

The Chair: You're fine with that?

I want to respect Chief Blair's time. I know you have another event, and we don't want to unduly burden you, but I'm open to another, what, 10 minutes? Five?

An hon. member: Ten is good.

An hon. member: Ten; whatever it takes.

The Chair: I see. Well, I'm—

Mr. Pat Martin: You're going to have to divide that time, Mr. Chairman. Some of us have had one round.

The Chair: I was just going to continue with a round.

Mr. Pat Martin: Well, that doesn't do anything for me, so I would vote against that.

The Chair: The next round is Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party, Conservative.

If I take that time to 10 o'clock, will that be satisfactory to colleagues?

An hon. member: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay, then, for five minutes—

Mr. Pat Martin: Mr. Chair, did anybody ask the witness if he has other obligations? I understand he's—

The Chair: He does have other obligations, and they are in one hour's time. That's why I'm limiting it to 10 o'clock.

The Bloc for five minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would also like to thank my colleagues.

Chief Blair, you surely worked hand in hand with CSIS, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, during the G-20, did you not?

[English]

Chief William Blair: Yes.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: What level of threat was discussed? Was the threat level during the G-20 low, medium or high?

[English]

Chief William Blair: There were a number of discussions about the protection of the internationally protected persons, which was primarily a discussion that I was aware of taking place with CSIS.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Excuse me.

Were you told that there was a high threat level? Were you told that demonstrators at the G-20 represented a serious threat?

[English]

Chief William Blair: I did not have any conversation with CSIS with respect to the threat level from demonstrators. Most of that was of a domestic nature.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I see.

[English]

Chief William Blair: The discussion with CSIS pertained primarily, from my perspective, to any perceived threats or potential threats against the internationally protected persons attending the summit.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: So, no one ever told you about the threat level associated with demonstrators who were gathering democratically.

[English]

Chief William Blair: There was considerable discussion from our policing partners with respect to intelligence that was being gathered with respect to the demonstrators. But that was quite frankly a separate issue for me than the security of the summit participants and the presidents of various countries, etc.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Forgive me, but I'm trying to pick up the pace.

You were the one who decided to arrest people as a preventative measure.

[English]

Chief William Blair: No, ma'am, I did not make that personal decision. Police officers on the ground, based on their own observations and their beliefs, their reasonable, probable grounds, made a determination whether or not to detain or to arrest persons and what charges to lay. The chief of police doesn't make those decisions.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: So, was it officers on the ground who decided to arrest people at the University of Toronto on Sunday morning?

• (0950)

[English]

Chief William Blair: No. As a matter of fact, those arrests at the University of Toronto, as I understand it, were as a result of an ongoing criminal investigation that had been taking place over several weeks or longer. It was an investigation primarily led by the Ontario Provincial Police, but it was a criminal investigation that took officers to that site, where they arrested a number of people whom I understand they had reasonable, probable grounds to believe had committed criminal offences.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: So, it was following an OPP investigation, if I understood you correctly. Among those people were 90 Quebecers whose basic rights were violated; 90 people who spoke French and against whom the charges were later dropped. They were neither officially charged or detained. They had no formal trial.

How do you explain the fact that the security service and the Ontario Provincial Police had to detain these people for two, three or even four days when there is actually nothing showing that they represented a clear threat?

[English]

Chief William Blair: With great respect, I disagree. In fact, my understanding is that a criminal investigation was conducted—

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: *Bonne, expliquez.*

Chief William Blair: —and people were arrested on criminal charges. They were brought before the courts as required—they must be brought before the courts. I heard yesterday testimony from a young man who said that he, along with approximately 60 of his colleagues, was arrested and brought before the courts and that subsequently a legal decision was made by the crown attorney that although there were reasonable and probable grounds to believe a criminal offence had been committed, there had been a technical error by the police officers making the arrest, which made it unlikely that there was a reasonable prospect of conviction, and on that basis they did not proceed with the criminal charges.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Bourgeois, you have 30 seconds left.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: That's not enough time. Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Martin.

Mr. Pat Martin: Thank you.

Chief Blair, I think we've covered most of the ground, but I am still interested when you say that the police have legislative tools and authorities that they need when exercised well. And there are also checks and balances in place to make sure that those authorities don't exceed the rights of citizens, in answer to Blaine's questions.

At the corner of Spadina and Queen, some 200 people were surrounded, I guess—

Chief William Blair: They were contained.

Mr. Pat Martin: They were contained—or kettling, is that the term that's used?

Chief William Blair: I'd never heard the term until I heard it that evening on television. But I know a decision was made to contain what was perceived to be a significant threat at that location.

Mr. Pat Martin: Under what authority do you detain that many people and on what grounds?

Chief William Blair: Again, sir, there is an authority under the Criminal Code where the police have a reasonable apprehension, an honest belief, reasonable, probable grounds to believe that a breach of the peace is about to take place and that it is necessary to detain persons to prevent that breach. There is an authority to do that. That authority only lasts as long as the threat exists and in any event cannot exceed 24 hours. That's an authority under the Criminal Code.

There are also other common law authorities, which of course being common law are not articulated in the code. The police have a duty to maintain the public peace, a duty to prevent crime, and where that duty exists, then a commensurate authority should also exist.

Mr. Pat Martin: Following Geoff's questions earlier, why would police officers take their badges off? So they wouldn't be identified, I presume, because one of the checks and balances—

Chief William Blair: There are a number of reasons why that badge could come off. All that forms part of our investigation. When we receive complaints and we see the person is not wearing the badge because we have photographic evidence, we conduct an investigation.

Because there was Velcro, some of them may have been torn off in a struggle. Some of them may have been purposely removed by the officer. If they were purposely removed by the officer—and again, there may be a myriad of reasons—I might speculate that one might do that to avoid accountability for one's actions, or one might do that because of fear that they would be identified and that their identity would be used for some subsequent reprisal. Those two issues have arisen in the past.

The Chair: May I interrupt this questioning?

This is a government operations committee. We are supposed to deal with budgetary matters, the cost of running the summit. I've allowed a fair leeway with respect to questioning by members, but I would ask you to focus your last couple of minutes on budgetary matters, please.

• (0955)

Mr. Pat Martin: Fair enough.

Were all of your police in uniform?

Chief William Blair: No, sir.

Mr. Pat Martin: Some were undercover.

Chief William Blair: Some were working in plain clothes and observing within the crowd to identify people engaged in criminal behaviour, and other operations had been taking place in criminal investigations and intelligence gathering over a number of months. The majority of our resources, of course, were out in uniform.

Mr. Pat Martin: You're familiar with the term *agent provocateur*.

Chief William Blair: I'm familiar with the term, sir. There were no *agents provocateurs* from the Toronto police or any of my policing partners, to the very best of my knowledge, who were in any way involved in this summit throughout its entire period.

Mr. Pat Martin: We're back to the dollar figures. Let me just say on behalf of the people in Winnipeg that I represent that they are shocked, horrified, and disappointed at the staggering, seemingly reckless and irresponsible spending associated with this summit. For the record, I believe the government was so bound and determined they weren't going to be embarrassed and they wanted to put on a good show that they ignored the fact that we're at a \$58 billion deficit and blew a billion dollars on a three-day party of very questionable value to anybody any time.

Notwithstanding the cheerleading over on that side, the people on this side think it was a big mistake. We don't blame you for that, sir. We think you were given an almost impossible job, frankly, when that was plunked into the middle of Toronto.

I have a hard time understanding how you can say if it were in a venue that was easier to secure, the protests would still have taken place in downtown Toronto. What leads you to say that? What intelligence—

Chief William Blair: In my experience, there is no place for the protesters to stay in Huntsville. There are only about 1,300 hotel rooms and they would have all been occupied. They would not have been able to get close to the perimeter. Most of them are going to gather in urban areas where the media gathers, and the plan throughout the G-8 and the G-20 was that the meeting would be located in Toronto. The protesters tend to come to where the media are.

Mr. Pat Martin: When the World Trade Organization meets in Doha or someplace, people don't gather in Toronto to protest.

Chief William Blair: My reference was to the closest urban centre.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Martin.

We still have a few minutes for a Conservative question.

Mr. Ed Holder: Thank you, Chair.

Rhetoric doesn't change reality, and regardless, we look at the security that was involved in this. Frankly, it was an outstanding success, full stop. I still believe that had there been serious injury, the hue and cry from around this table, or even around the country, you might say, would have been very different. Again, I don't apologize for offering sincere compliments to all the forces that were involved, including my own London force and others that were involved.

I have a question for you. I want to keep this to the budget components if I can. It's important to remember who the good guys are in all of this, and in terms of the vandals and those who burned police cars and those who broke windows and disadvantaged our shopkeepers and others, we were all horrified when we saw that level of disgusting violence. Frankly, it was minimal, but it was disgusting nonetheless.

The chair asked the question as to whether the \$2 million of damages was included in your budget. Would shopkeepers have any legal recourse against these convicted vandals from a civil suit for the damage they had caused against the shops? Are you aware of that?

Chief William Blair: There is a possibility of bringing civil suits. I'm not qualified to suggest it would be successful. Sometimes these organizations are rather loosely constructed and don't necessarily have a lot of money behind them that's readily accessible. I'm not sure. I wouldn't necessarily see that as an avenue available to those poor shopkeepers.

Mr. Ed Holder: Well, I sure hope there's some correlation, though, because I think that was quite disappointing and disgusting. I think there have to be consequences when there's that kind of conduct. I do hope that shopkeepers will pursue that as an avenue for them. Obviously there's insurance as well.

Chief William Blair: Let me also tell you, sir, that I believe very much in accountability for criminal action as well. We've assembled an outstanding investigative team. They have been able, through excellent efforts and great cooperation from the public, to identify many of the people who were responsible for that violence and vandalism. They will be brought before the courts, and hopefully they will be held to a public account for their actions.

Mr. Ed Holder: Can I quickly ask you—it's rather interesting. You made some reference to public accounts yesterday, about the violence associated with a hockey game, that, if I understand correctly, there was more violence after a hockey game in Montreal than there was in Toronto.

Would you care to comment on that?

• (1000)

Chief William Blair: I don't want to compare apples and oranges. But I'm aware, for example, that two years before, at the conclusion of a hockey series, as part of the celebration, unfortunately, a number of people then—not sports celebrants but people—just came out to wreck the place. Vandals and people committing crimes burned about four times as many cars as we lost in Toronto during the G-20 summit.

I actually went down. I worked very closely with the chief of police in Montreal and I had people on the ground with him there. We learned from that event, by the way. What we learned from the Montreal police and with the assistance of the Montreal police in

Toronto, I think, contributed to our success in minimizing the damage in Toronto.

Mr. Ed Holder: That speaks to your preparation—

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Holder.

Thank you, Chief, for the generosity of your time. I appreciate your being here.

I'll suspend for two minutes while the other witnesses come in, and we'll return to the committee hearing.

• _____ (Pause) _____

•

The Chair: Colleagues, let's resume our meeting.

Our next witnesses are Mr. Justin Taylor and Madame Joyce Reynolds from the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association.

Welcome to the committee, Mr. Taylor and Madame Reynolds. You have, I assume, a presentation, and you've been briefed by the clerk as to the length of your presentation. Thereafter members will wish to ask you questions. So the time is yours.

Ms. Joyce Reynolds (Executive Vice-President, Government Affairs, Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. We appreciate the opportunity to be here today.

Justin Taylor and I represent the \$60 billion, one million employee food service industry. Today we're here to talk about the \$5.8 billion Toronto restaurant industry and the impact of the G-20 on our sector.

In Toronto there are over 8,000 food service establishments, employing 85,000 people. In the neighbourhoods most impacted by the G-20, our percentage of employment is as high as 8%. The industry suffered significant losses as a result of the G-20. We're an industry with very skinny profit margins, 3.2% on average. So when the industry is experiencing a major loss on one of the weekends that is typically one of the busiest of the year, it's really devastating. It's been four and a half months since the G-20, and our members have not received compensation yet.

So we're here today to ask for the committee's assistance in providing quick and fair compensation to our restaurant operators for the losses they experienced.

I'm going to ask Justin Taylor to review for you the CRFA survey that we conducted to assess the impact of the losses on our industry.

●(1005)

Mr. Justin Taylor (Vice-President, Labour and Supply, Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association): I believe everyone has received a copy of our presentation. I am going to speak to the numbers in it.

Following the G-20 summit, we conducted an online survey to assess the depth and breadth of the impact of the summit on Toronto food service operators. The survey was sent by e-mail to our database of food service operators across Toronto, both members of the association and non-members.

On page 2 you have some information about the response rate we had, which indicates that the numbers I'll be talking about today represent the views of 234 establishments in the city of Toronto. We will be comparing numbers from downtown and outside downtown as well. There's a bit of an explanation on the slides of how we defined those areas.

I want to mention quickly that we do not have numbers on the statistical significance of this. We prepared this survey immediately after the G-20, and respondents sometimes had operations across the city with multiple restaurants, so it was difficult for us to assess the statistical significance of the results. But the survey really gives you an indication of the impact on restaurants and about the sentiments of those business owners.

On page 3 of the briefing package you will see that the first question we asked was, "For the period Monday June 21st to Wednesday June 30th, how was your business impacted by the G20 meetings in Toronto compared to the same period in 2009?" This first pie chart shows you that on average in Toronto, 73% of respondents said they saw a significant decrease in business.

I also wanted to point out that we assessed the period leading up to the G-20, as well as the weekend of the summit, because there were a number of highway closures for security reasons. The security perimeter was starting to be erected during that period, and many businesses in downtown Toronto, including many of the major employers, instructed their employees to stay home and to work from home. That had a huge impact. Restaurants that usually serve coffee and muffins in the morning to office workers or serve beers after work were all affected by this decision to instruct employees to stay home.

On page 4 I break it down between downtown and outside of downtown, indicating that 93% of those who responded to our survey said there was a significant decrease in sales downtown. That's a huge impact on downtown businesses and restaurants, which are, as Joyce mentioned, operating on thin profit margins to start with.

What really surprised us was the impact on businesses outside of downtown as well. Outside of the downtown core, 54% of respondents saw a significant drop in business and 18% saw a modest drop in business. This is very surprising compared with what we were expecting. The impact was much more widespread than just the immediate downtown core.

On page 5 of the presentation you will see that we asked those who saw a decrease in business to explain how severe that decrease was. In the downtown, on average, businesses saw a 55% decrease in business for that full week, and this includes the weekend and the week leading up to the summit. Outside of downtown, on average, it was a 28% decrease in business.

Again, as my colleague mentioned, this was during one of the weekends that are traditionally the busiest for restaurants in downtown Toronto. You can imagine there was no one sitting on a patio having a beer, where they normally would have, during this weekend.

Another important point about the restaurant sector is that it's unlike other sectors, say, for example, retail, where someone might have delayed the purchase of a jacket or shoes and come back a week later. In our sector, when you lose a sale, it's gone forever. The individuals have chosen to consume that meal elsewhere, and the loss is not recuperated later on.

On page 6 of my presentation is a question about what the other impacts of the G-20 were on businesses. Here, 81% of restaurants downtown reported fewer customers and 65% of restaurants outside of downtown reported fewer customers. There was also a huge impact on tourism, obviously, with 60% of restaurants downtown seeing a huge drop in the number of tourists.

Of those who responded, only 8% saw direct vandalism to their stores, but what's important to remember is that when one restaurant is vandalized, people don't want to go into the neighbouring restaurants either, because they don't feel safe.

●(1010)

That brings me to the next point. We asked a question about how many restaurants closed due to safety concerns, either for their employees or their customers. Thirty-two per cent of restaurants outside of downtown and 51% of restaurants downtown closed due to safety concerns for staff or customers.

I come now to a point that would be of interest to this committee, particularly compensation. We surveyed our database to find out who was aware of government compensation that was supposed to be provided to restaurants. Sixty-seven per cent of downtown respondents were aware that there was some form of government compensation for loss of business, and 58% of the restaurants downtown that responded said they intended to apply for compensation. Well over half of the downtown respondents intended to apply for compensation, but few have done so, due to the administrative burden, the limited area eligible for compensation, and the fact that many restaurants were forced to close due to safety concerns.

I made a number of follow-up phone calls with members who indicated that they were particularly interested in the progress we're making on compensation. The vast majority told me they've decided not to apply for compensation because there are real costs associated with hiring an accountant and a lawyer to fill out all of the required forms. The way the guidelines are written, the government is under no obligation to provide compensation, and there's no guarantee restaurants will actually see any compensation. Also, the areas downtown that have been highlighted for compensation are very restricted compared to the areas that saw a significant decrease in business. The sentiment is that many restaurants feel disappointed by what happened and don't feel convinced that they will receive compensation if they do apply for it.

On page 8 I mentioned some additional reasons why restaurants located at a fair distance from the security perimeter saw big decreases in business. I myself live in downtown Toronto and found it very difficult to get from point A to point B because of the closures of the subway and the security perimeters.

In slide number 9 is a picture of a downtown café with a chair thrown through a window. Under the compensation guidelines, if you decided to close your business during the G-20, you are not eligible for compensation, but I would like to know how a restaurant would be able to stay open following this type of situation.

I've been asked to speed it up a little bit here, so I'll just move—

The Chair: You're bordering on ten minutes. Can you wind it up very shortly?

Mr. Justin Taylor: Okay.

In conclusion, downtown and outside of downtown restaurants are asking for fair and efficient processing of their claims. They're looking for an expansion of the areas eligible for compensation, and we're looking for compensation for the restaurants that were forced to close because of security concerns.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Taylor.

Colleagues, we took an extra 15 minutes with Chief Blair. We're now at 10:15. We're supposed to be out of here by 10:45. That leaves half an hour, and I'd like to reserve five minutes for committee business, so that's 25 minutes. Unless the chair is going to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, I'm going to be arbitrarily allocating four minutes for the first round to each, so that will take us to 24 minutes. No, I'm sorry, that's 16 minutes. Okay, I'll give you six minutes, and we'll only have one round of questioning.

I really need Mr. Martin to do the math for me.

• (10:15)

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Thank you very much to both of you for taking the time. This is an enlightening presentation this morning and a very important one.

I'm astounded by the numbers. You said 84% had significant or modest decrease in sales. That's a pretty serious impact. Not only is compensation required for the damages to a lot of these restaurants, but there is the loss of income. This is pretty significant and very serious. I would like to support you in your endeavour to have fair, efficient, and timely compensation, because this is pretty detrimental.

I find it ironic that \$2 million was allocated for a fake lake exhibit to encourage tourism, and the impact of that kind of thing was that we actually had a decrease in business to Toronto.

What did the summit cost the members of your organization? Do you have the cost quantified? What was the extent of the impact? I know 84% was "significant" or "modest", but do you have that quantified financially?

Mr. Justin Taylor: No, we haven't been able to quantify it financially, because it would be the comparable year-over-year sales that have decreased. We didn't go through the financially difficult exercise of hiring an accountant to calculate that at this time.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Once the summit was over and we had all those "tourism benefits", did you actually have a bump in sales? You didn't see the benefit afterwards?

Mr. Justin Taylor: No, and many restaurants reported that because the G-20 summit fell so close to the Canada Day weekend, many Torontonians just decided to get out of town for a week or two. So the lag in sales continued for a longer period of time than expected.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: When did sales start to stabilize, let alone go up?

Mr. Justin Taylor: About two weeks later.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: So you had a decrease in sales for upwards of two-plus weeks.

Ms. Joyce Reynolds: We had a much better summer weather-wise this year. The summer the year before was actually quite cold and wet, so that makes the comparison challenging as well.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Yes, absolutely.

So I'm hearing from you that you want a couple of things changed. You want what I'm going to call the "limited area eligibility" rule changed. That's one of your asks. The other is to include those businesses that actually closed because they were concerned about safety and security. You want those included in the elements, and then you want this process to be moved very expeditiously.

We're almost five months after the event now. Are any of your restaurants anywhere near getting any compensation at this point?

Mr. Justin Taylor: I followed up with all of the members who intended to seek compensation, and not a single member has seen any compensation to date.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: I'm sorry, I didn't catch all that you said.

No one has received compensation at this point?

Mr. Justin Taylor: No one.

Ms. Joyce Reynolds: Not that we're aware of.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Not that you're aware of.

I'm sure you've been talking to government and your members have been talking to government. Is there any hope on the horizon of some of these people getting compensation in the very near future?

Mr. Justin Taylor: We've been in contact with the summit management office repeatedly, and they've indicated that they're endeavouring to provide fast processing of these claims. But we have not necessarily seen that materialize.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: I'd like to know the definition of "fast".

For previous events of this magnitude, has there been any precedent for compensation? And if there has been precedent, has it taken this long previously?

Mr. Justin Taylor: I'm not aware, sorry.

Ms. Joyce Reynolds: I don't think we've ever experienced anything quite like this.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: Now, your members are going to be compensated, hopefully, for this impact. They're going to be compensated for decreases in sales, losses in sales, as well as any physical damage to their facilities.

Mr. Justin Taylor: The compensation guidelines do not provide any compensation for damage to property. Before the summit, the summit management office indicated that restaurants might want to try to bump up their insurance, but I have not heard from any members that they were successful in doing that either.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: You talked about the complexity of the forms and how difficult it is to complete them and to have them submitted to government, and that a number of people have just decided, "Well, I won't do that", because of the cost of having a lawyer and an accountant complete them, which is what's required.

What would you estimate the overall cost to be of having a lawyer and an accountant complete the forms for compensation?

• (1020)

Mr. Justin Taylor: It really depends on the type of operation you're looking at. For a multi-unit restaurant operator, they would have to have an accountant review the books for three years of operations and to provide estimates for where sales should have been and where they actually were. I wouldn't be able to say how much it would cost, but it would be significant.

Ms. Siobhan Coady: So we have \$1.3 billion spent on G-8/G-20 summits. We have thousands and thousands of dollars spent on snacks, for example, at a quite fancy local hotel. We know there were glow sticks, we know there were fake lakes, yet there's no compensation for business owners in the downtown core of Toronto, who either suffered from a two- to three-week decrease in sales or physical damage to their infrastructure and their businesses.

The Chair: Unfortunately, Madam Coady has not left you with any time to answer that question.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Bourgeois, you have six minutes.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Thank you, Mr. Chairman; I will be sharing my time with my colleague.

Good morning to our witnesses.

Like my Liberal colleague, I'm appalled that there has been no assessment of the impacts of holding the G-20 summit in Toronto and the surrounding area. I'm a little surprised to see your description of the impact of this event on page 6 of your document. I agree that if we were able to spend millions of dollars to show the rest of the world that we are capable of hosting this type of event, we should be in a position to spend several million dollars more to compensate restaurant owners who suffered as a result of these delusions of grandeur.

Having said that, on page 7, you say there is a government compensation program. It seems that the people we represent — restaurant owners — were not aware of this program.

Did you have any prior meetings with G-20 organizers where you were informed of what might happen? You talk about security measures, and you also talk about compensation.

Mr. Justin Taylor: We had several discussions with the organizing committee.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Whom exactly did you speak to?

Mr. Justin Taylor: I forget the name of the gentleman, but he was from the Department of Foreign Affairs. We also set up a direct phone line for our members, so that they could call us to get information about government programs available to affected restaurant owners.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: But you were assured that there was a compensation program?

Mr. Justin Taylor: Yes, yes. However, the program guidelines were not actually set prior to the G-20; it was only four to eight weeks after the summit that the guidelines were finalized.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Good heavens!

Mr. Justin Taylor: It was at that point that the eligible affected areas turned out to be far smaller than what we were expecting.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: On page 9 of your document, you say: “Restaurants that were forced to close because the safety of their staff and their customers were at risk [...]”. So, it’s very difficult to determine where the safety risk begins and where it ends.

I would also have liked you to provide us with percentages in your document for the major food chains like Tim Hortons, McDonald’s and so on, as well as for operators of fine dining establishments. Their situations are not the same. They don’t have the same problems.

Mr. Justin Taylor: Nor do they have the same means.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Well, that’s why I would have liked you to make that distinction.

I will turn it over to my colleague now.

Mr. Robert Vincent: Thank you.

Ms. Reynolds, this is not the first time we have met; we met previously at the Industry Committee.

What radius has been set for the affected area in Toronto in terms of kilometers, for the purposes of determining which restaurants will be compensated? Is it one, two or three kilometers? What does it include?

• (1025)

Mr. Justin Taylor: There are several different affected areas. The areas along Yonge Street and Queen Street have been identified, but that is really only a very contained area. I don’t have the number in square kilometers.

Mr. Robert Vincent: Did restaurants outside Toronto also shut down because of the possibility of mayhem and things being broken?

Mr. Justin Taylor: Outside Toronto?

Mr. Robert Vincent: When I say “outside”, I mean outside the downtown area.

Mr. Justin Taylor: Yes. Our table on page 6 indicates the percentage of restaurants in the downtown and outside the downtown area, as well as the impact on them.

Mr. Robert Vincent: So, these are restaurants that were affected.

At this point, I would strongly suggest — although I know that you say it would be a complicated accounting exercise — that you check back with restaurant owners again. It would not be difficult for them to determine what their sales were in May. If you compare that with their sales in June, for a two-week period, it should be possible to identify the impact fairly quickly.

I worked in that area and it’s a number that can easily be calculated. All they would have to do is call their accountant and ask him or her what their profits were for such and such a week, and what their sales volume was. That is easy enough to determine. It

seems to me these people should be able to provide you with that information even now.

Right from the outset, the dates of the G-20 were known. So, those numbers should already be available so that you can make a claim immediately. I think there will be delays. One day the government will say that restaurant owners are at fault for not producing the figures.

So, restaurant owners in the city should have provided the names of the restaurants, with the appropriate numbers and amounts, asking to be compensated. The other bill would be for damages to their facilities. That would have been much simpler.

It’s going to take a lot longer, because they’re going to ask you to provide figures. They will say they’re willing to pay, but they don’t have the figures. So, those are things that should be done quickly.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Vincent. Your six minutes are up.

Go ahead, Mr. Warkentin.

Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Taylor and Ms. Reynolds, we appreciate your attendance today. We always appreciate your testimony and your efforts to advocate on behalf of your members. Thank you for coming.

I should mention to colleagues that these two individuals have been strong advocates of the restaurant industry in my own community. We have worked together to great success in the past.

You, as an organization, are very aware of the efforts that our government has undertaken to try to compensate people affected by the G-8 and G-20. I know that we’ve worked together with your organization to get an extension to the application period and time. You are aware of that, and your members, I imagine, would be aware of it, especially with your efforts to make that information available to them.

Are you happy with the extension of the deadline that has now been established? Are you satisfied that the period of time is appropriate?

Mr. Justin Taylor: Our members were very pleased that the deadline was extended. One of the reasons we were asking for the deadline to be extended was that the guidelines took a significant amount of time to be established. The government did take actions to make sure that restaurants that wanted to apply were provided with adequate time to do so.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Very good.

I want to go to page 5 in your deck of cards here. When talking about the impact, you talk about the average sales being down 55%, but in the press release that you put out with regard to this issue, you also state that 51% of the businesses were actually closed during that period and time. Did the members that were closed just submit a zero to establish the average of the actual sales for that period in time?

Mr. Justin Taylor: No. Only the businesses that remained open submitted numbers for the decrease in sales. Those that indicated they were closed were captured under the response for being closed during the G-20.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Very good. That's very helpful.

You represent members in the Huntsville area. Did you do any surveys or work in that area as well?

Mr. Justin Taylor: We did not hear a significant outcry about compensation from our members in Huntsville.

Ms. Joyce Reynolds: In fact, what we did hear from our members in Huntsville was that it actually had a positive impact on sales in that area. We don't have survey results, but what we tended to hear from our members was that there was a positive impact in that region.

• (1030)

Mr. Chris Warkentin: It would be interesting, if only for our sake, to find out what that positive impact was, because obviously there were immediate impacts that were beneficial to business owners.

As I look through a number of different organizations from the Toronto area, including the chambers of commerce and professors from Ryerson University, I see that a lot of study has been done on the impact of the G-8 and G-20 and the benefits that will come to people who are in the tourism sector, specifically to restaurant owners, hotel owners, and the others who benefit from tourism. They talk about the long-term benefits.

Have you undertaken any efforts to measure the long-term results and benefits of the G-8 and G-20 on your respective members?

Ms. Joyce Reynolds: I don't think we would even know.... We wouldn't be able to do that at this point.

One of the challenges of this G-20 was that our operators had no idea what to anticipate. They were getting mixed messages in terms of what to anticipate and whether to stay open or closed. Some went into the G-20 with fairly high expectations that it was going to be close to normal, and that there might even be a bump in some cases. I think the overwhelming message we got from our members was that it was far worse than they could possibly have imagined in terms of its impact.

My 92-year-old mother had to go for surgery on the Thursday at a downtown hospital, and I wondered how I was ever going to get her there. I've never had such an easy drive downtown in my life. There were tons of street parking. It was as simple as you could possibly imagine. That was prior to it even starting. The city was empty days before the thing even started. None of our members imagined that would be the case.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: I don't know that there's any way to imagine that. I know in communities that have hosted large events, that sometimes is the effect. I know my own community of Grande Prairie hosted the Canada Winter Games, and the same thing happened. Kids were given time off school, so everybody took off to Disneyland. It was an opportunity because everyone was anticipating this huge crush on the city, so they thought they'd get out of town for that period of time. We understand that, and I certainly believe that people all around this table have a great amount of sympathy for

those people in your industry because we know the margins are so slim.

On that point, you are aware of a number of things we've done on the tax side to benefit your members. Have you taken a position on the tax cuts that are being brought forward by this government and how their impacts might relate to your members?

The Chair: You have about ten seconds to answer a tax question.

Ms. Joyce Reynolds: I can say we're appreciative that EI premiums are not going to be 21¢ per \$100 of payroll for employers. As our president put it, we were expecting a hurricane of seven and it's been reduced to a two, so we're pleased about that.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Warkentin.

Madam Chow, welcome to the committee. You have six minutes.

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): Thank you.

Joyce, it's good to see you again.

As you know, I represent the downtown area, the area you've described as a ghost town for that week and a half. So 93% of your downtown businesses said they lost a staggering amount of business. Many of them are telling me and telling you they've given up applying for funding compensation because it's slow, it's opaque, there's no guarantee they would qualify, it's expensive, it's bureaucratic. I haven't heard of anyone who has got any compensation yet, or even heard that they would get any compensation both for loss of sales and for broken windows. Am I correct on that? Have you heard that anyone actually got a penny?

• (1035)

Ms. Joyce Reynolds: We haven't heard.

Mr. Justin Taylor: No members have reported getting any compensation yet.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Has anyone been promised they would be compensated for their broken windows? The government has been saying it's too bad about broken windows, they should get their insurance company to pay. That is what they were told. Am I correct on that? Is that what your members are telling you too?

Mr. Justin Taylor: Some members did have adequate insurance to cover that type of damage, but there is no compensation from government for any of those costs.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I also noticed that it was really difficult for some of the people who work in the restaurant business to get to work. Whether they're chefs, waiters, waitresses, or hostesses, they couldn't get there because they were worried, they felt the downtown was locked down.

Have you heard of some of the restaurants ending up having to lay off people for a little while because they were so affected by the whole situation that they are having a hard time recovering?

Ms. Joyce Reynolds: I talked to one restaurant operator who said that as a result of his loss during the G-20 weekend, he wasn't going to be able to hire the students that he had anticipated hiring for the rest of the summer.

Ms. Olivia Chow: That's too bad.

I know the downtown entertainment district and the local city councillor have been pushing for an expansion of the affected area, because right now they say if you're within this area you will get compensated, maybe, but if it's outside that area, you definitely won't be compensated. A lot of the restaurants that you represent are outside that area and they're telling you that they have lost a great amount of sales.

Has there been any advancement or progress in terms of expanding that area?

Mr. Justin Taylor: No, we have not had any indication that the area will be expanded. An important thing to remember is that even within the identified area, any business that closed during that period is not eligible for any compensation. So many members just feel discouraged.

Ms. Olivia Chow: They didn't know that if they closed they wouldn't qualify? It wasn't clear as to who would or wouldn't qualify? They said if you show us the last few years' business and you show...? Is that the case? It's very confusing.

Mr. Justin Taylor: In fairness, it was clear that if you chose to close your business—if you made the decision to board up and just stay closed the entire time—you would not receive compensation. What was surprising was that, because of some of the violence and some of the risks that we saw downtown, some restaurants had to close unexpectedly. Those restaurants, according to the current guidelines, are not eligible for compensation.

Ms. Olivia Chow: So they were open probably on Friday and Saturday morning, by Saturday afternoon saw what was happening, got worried because there was mayhem, and closed on Sunday. But because they closed on Sunday, they do not qualify for compensation.

Mr. Justin Taylor: That is correct.

Ms. Olivia Chow: At all, for any of the dates?

Mr. Justin Taylor: The guidelines aren't clear on that. It just says that you had to remain open during the G-20 summit.

Ms. Olivia Chow: So what you're seeking, really, is the expansion of the affected area. You want a quick, fair, and efficient application process for compensation, and you want a bit of flexibility in terms of the guidelines so that those restaurants that suffered would have some kind of compensation.

Mr. Justin Taylor: That is correct.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Those are the three or four areas.

Have you had any encouragement from the government or anyone to say that may be forthcoming? Are there any discussions, any meetings to get to where you want to get to?

If the committee were to recommend that this is the route, to have some kind of dialogue so that what you are requesting can in fact occur, would that be something you want or would welcome?

Mr. Justin Taylor: We had repeated conversations with the summit management office and they were very responsive. They always returned calls very quickly. However, they informed me that decisions about the amount of compensation and the guidelines were made by cabinet and they didn't have any authority to make any changes to that. At this time, although the summit management office has made big efforts to be open and responsive to our questions and comments, they've indicated that they don't really have the authority or flexibility to make changes.

•(1040)

The Chair: Thank you, Madam Chow.

Thank you, Mr. Taylor and Ms. Reynolds. I appreciate your flexibility with respect to time. Time is always the enemy of this committee.

I'm going to suspend for 30 seconds in one minute so that we can go in camera and finish some committee business.

Thank you.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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