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# **Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, December 9, 2004**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Paul DeVillers**

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## Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Thursday, December 9, 2004

•(1105)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North, Lib.)):** I'd like to call this meeting to order.

[Translation]

I would like to call to order this meeting of the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are pursuing our study of the closure of RCMP detachments in the Estrie region of Quebec.

Our witnesses this morning are Commissioner Zaccardelli and Pierre-Yves Bourduas from the RCMP.

Commissioner, we heard from mayors in the region last Tuesday. Today we will hear from you. Following your presentation, Committee members will have questions.

Thank you.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli (Commissioner, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, good morning.

With me today is Assistant Commissioner Pierre-Yves Bourduas, Commanding Officer of "C" Division.

It gives me great pleasure to meet with you today to discuss our decision to redepoly RCMP resources in Quebec.

[English]

I want to reassure all of you today that the RCMP is committed to delivering its mandate and to providing all Canadians with safe and secure communities. In Quebec, as in Ontario, our mandate is to provide federal policing services, and as such, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police remains a major law enforcement partner.

In Quebec, we work with our partners at the Sûreté du Québec and with municipal law enforcement as well as with our partners at the federal level. In Quebec, the Police Act provides that calls for service from the public requiring emergency assistance regarding such offences as individual cases of theft or fraud, drug pedalling, etc., fall under the jurisdiction of municipal or provincial police departments.

Over the past few years, we have all been faced with a rapidly changing environment, which has been marked by such forces as globalization, technological change, and the growing threat of terrorism and organized crime. The unprecedented pace of change

and the emergence of new pressures facing our society means that the RCMP must define what is required of policing in the 21st century and determine how to most effectively use and deploy our limited resources to deliver on those requirements.

[Translation]

In its 131 years of existence, the RCMP has never failed to demonstrate its ability to adapt. We intend to uphold this tradition and, more importantly, to enhance our policing services in meeting the expectations of the Canadian people.

The RCMP alignment initiative in Quebec began two years ago and is consistent with our goal to make the most effective use of our resources in responding to federal policing priorities. The announcement, made on September 23, 2004, came as a result of a process of broad-based consultations with our law enforcement partners, and further discussions in response to concerns expressed by elected officials.

The RCMP intends to pursue its efforts to serve all citizens and to carry out its mandate in all Quebec regions more strategically.

[English]

As part of this wide-ranging consultative process, the RCMP has given weight to the environmental context. We have taken into account a number of considerations specific to Quebec, including geographic circumstances, demographic trends, border protection, coastal watch, and the impact of criminal organizations in Quebec. This comprehensive study has shown the necessity for the RCMP to review its geographical positioning in Quebec. To meet our strategic goals to fight organized crime and to curb the threat of terrorism, an integrated approach to policing is fundamental to successful investigations. In this context, it is more effective to focus our services by consolidating our resources.

If in the past a single investigator was able to handle 15 files by himself or herself, today a single case file requires 15 investigators. It is therefore essential for us to have a critical mass of investigators at various strategic locations across Quebec to be able to manage major case files that we are mandated to carry out.

The RCMP does not patrol the border, but it investigates the criminal organizations that use the border to commit criminal offences.

One should not presume that the redeployment of resources by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Quebec will cause a new burst of organized crime at the local level. Organized crime is a global problem that knows no borders. Quite to the contrary, it is our experience that by strategically repositioning our resources, we will have a much greater impact by attacking organized crime at its very roots.

• (1110)

[Translation]

Officers with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Quebec will continue to offer intelligence-led law enforcement services from an integrated policing perspective, but much greater operational flexibility. By pooling the efforts and the criminal intelligence of our local and international partners, the RCMP can conduct cross-jurisdictional investigations and bring them to fruition. For instance, the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Units, or CFSEUs, and Joint Regional Teams, or JRTs, are having a great deal of success in Quebec. These joint units are part of the efforts toward integrated policing to maximize the use of individual and community resources.

[English]

While I do appreciate the concerns voiced by this committee and the requests by the honourable members for the RCMP to postpone the decision to redeploy resources in Quebec, the resource redeployment process is almost complete.

As you know, the alignment initiative involved nine proposed detachment closures and the redeployment of personnel to priority strategic duties elsewhere within the province of Quebec. To move forward with this initiative, the initial stages involved advising employees of their new assignments and issuing them transfer notices. This process had to be undertaken early enough in the exercise to allow for the completion of transfers, which are contingent upon a physical move to a new location. Differing family circumstances that can involve the sale of real estate cause a variation in the timeframes.

[Translation]

We will continue to honour all agreements and memoranda of understanding that we have entered into with our partners at the provincial and municipal levels, including the Sûreté du Québec, and with other federal partners, such as the Canada Border Services Agency and Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Our shared goal is to ensure safety and security for the people of Quebec and Canada.

Thank you for your attention. We are now ready to take your questions, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Commissioner.

The Conservative Party has indicated it is prepared to cede its first round to the Bloc Québécois. I believe Mr. Ménard will be the first questioner. He has seven minutes.

**Mr. Serge Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, BQ):** Mr. Zaccardelli, you will recall that when I was Minister of Justice, or Minister of Public Security, we had a meeting at which we discussed port security.

I certainly understand your thinking. There is a need for a greater number of investigators to manage these files. I understand the legal

requirements you are facing. I am also aware of the results you have achieved against large criminal organizations after three years of investigation, for example, and so on.

During our discussions back then, we said that a police force was not made up of professional investigators alone, and that it needed to include officers working on the ground, in contact with ordinary citizens, who know the area well and who thus will know which routes are used by smugglers, drug traffickers, and so forth. We said that you needed officers actually working in the ports to get a better feeling for the environment in which these activities were carried out.

What you said at the time, as you have again now, is that you could do this with trained private security guards with experience working in local police forces. Three or four years later, you are going back into the ports because you realize that you have lost your eyes and ears on the ground.

Do you understand that this is exactly what we're afraid of in this case? We are concerned that the RCMP will no longer be benefiting from such contacts, which are much more effective inside a single police force. Indeed, it was on that very basis that we reorganized our police forces in Quebec, to ensure that police forces could provide enough coverage for a local police chief to be able to deal with most of the crime going on in his area of jurisdiction, even if that could mean calling on more specialized investigators in other police forces for assistance with major investigations. In this case, we have the very clear impression that you've decided to abandon this area of responsibility to other police forces, or to I don't know whom, and that you will continue to take responsibility only for major investigations.

Can you tell me what prompted you to change your mind about port security? Why didn't it also cause you to change your mind about border security?

• (1115)

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Thank you, Mr. Ménard. That's an excellent question.

As you know, circumstances do change and we have to adapt to a changing reality. That is why we are currently restructuring our operations to reflect the specific circumstances we are dealing with.

As for port security, I want to point out that the decision to do away with a police presence in our ports was not mine. That decision was made, and I certainly understand why it was made.

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** Who made the decision?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** It was the government, not the RCMP, that made that decision.

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** As I understand it, the government intervened to force you to make the decision to redeploy your members.

• (1120)

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Mr. Ménard, I have to set the record straight on one thing. The RCMP has never been responsible for the ports. We have never had members there. The ports had their own police force. But the circumstances of our ports have changed. The events of September 11 were responsible for that change. As a result of those events, we realized that our ports were more important and we took action. We proceeded with some restructuring so that we would be sure to consider what goes on in the ports.

As for our presence on the ground, you are right. We have to be there, because we need information, intelligence. And we are there. That's why we are talking about greater integration. Does the RCMP have to be present in every city and town and at every border point, or are there other police forces we can become more integrated with, in order to collect that intelligence? That's why we are integrated with the Sûreté du Québec, the Montreal Police, and other police forces, and that we use the resources available to us. Those resources are extremely limited. I would like to be in every city, town and village, but I don't have the resources for it. It's a matter of deciding how to redeploy those resources to act as effectively as possible on threats against Quebec and Canada. That is exactly what we're doing. It's important that I have information and intelligence to establish what the most significant threats are and how I can redeploy my resources in order to counter those threats. That is exactly what we are in the process of doing. It's as simple as that. And we're doing it with our partners in Quebec and all across Canada.

At the federal level, we must consider the situation all across the country, not only in Quebec. What is happening in Quebec is connected to what is happening in British Columbia, and what is happening in Alberta is connected to what is happening in Australia. I have to take all of that into consideration when deciding how to distribute my resources, which are extremely limited.

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** I don't think you answered my question, but not answering is an answer in a sense, and I will be content with that one for now. I would like to immediately move on to another question which concerns me, because the time available to us is really very limited.

You are suggesting that you negotiated those agreements with the Sûreté du Québec and that the officers you'll be removing from the borders will be replaced by officers from the Sûreté du Québec or other municipal police forces. If I understand you correctly, since you seem to be shaking your head, that is not what you intended to suggest. You are not in fact certain that the officers you remove from the borders or from these detachments will in fact be replaced by members of other police forces.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** No, that is not quite accurate. We had consultations. We do not have an agreement with the Sûreté du Québec. We consulted the Sûreté for the purposes of determining how best to use our RCMP resources in Quebec in a cooperative manner with theirs. That is what we did. There is no agreement. We negotiated and explained what were trying to do.

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** Mr. Zaccardelli, my understanding is, in fact, that the officers you will be removing from the borders will not likely be replaced by other officers, and that there will thus be a reduced police presence at the border.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** No, not at all. The number of RCMP officers in Quebec will not decrease. We are simply redeploying our resources. We are not taking them away; they will continue to work at the border. If we have intelligence to suggest that a criminal organization is targeting the border, those resources will be used to go after that organization. But we will be working cooperatively. There will be no reduction either in our actual presence in Quebec nor in our activity there; we will be better able to target criminal organizations. We will be more effective. We will not abandon the borders. The fact that we may be less visible at the border does not mean that we will be working less or that we will be focussing less on border security, Mr. Ménard.

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** Your principle seems to be that in order to provide better security at the border, police officers should be located 100 or 130 kilometers away.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Ménard. Your time is up.

[English]

Mr. Breitzkreuz, for seven minutes.

**Mr. Garry Breitzkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you again to the witnesses for coming before this committee.

There'll be a little bit of an overlap with questions that my colleagues in the Bloc Québécois have been asking you. We heard from the mayors of some of the cities in Quebec that one of the key elements in promoting public safety is the presence of the police at the local level. I'm sure you're quite familiar with the presentation they gave us.

I'm somewhat familiar with the New York experience where a lot of crime, vandalism, what you would call petty crime, was reduced by having a more visible presence of the police. It was quite helpful. I think the same would apply here in Canada, that the visibility of the police in the local communities can have a deterrent effect on some of the crime that may take place.

The mayors also expressed a huge concern that policing of organized crime, and especially border security, was really lacking. They gave us anecdotal evidence that there's a lot of uncontrolled traffic going back and forth across the border.

I'm wondering if you can comment on these two elements and the role the RCMP may play in them. Does your agreement with the Sûreté du Québec not include some of this? Where do your responsibilities begin and theirs end? I think we need a better understanding at this committee on this before we make recommendations.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Thank you very much, sir. You raised two excellent points.

As for the first point about local presence of the police, as you know, constitutionally in this country the administration of justice is the responsibility of the provinces. In the two provinces of Quebec and Ontario, the RCMP only has a federal role. That's our mandate. We are only given resources to deal with that federal role.

What we do is this. We have a strong presence in Quebec and Ontario, and we use that federal presence to partner with the provincial and local police to deal with serious crime. Ultimately, the responsibility at the local level is a provincial and municipal one, to have a presence. We leverage our resources with theirs, and we work very well. We're a best practice throughout the world.

Let me come to your second point, which I think is also equally important to understand. I understand when the mayors say that they are impacted by organized crime and by what may take place on the border. The issue is that the impact that town or village feels usually comes to it from things happening far away—and I'm not talking anecdotally here; I'm talking factually, from my experience and my knowledge of 34 years as a police officer, and what I know as a commissioner.

What factually happens is that the end product of that crime is a part of a long process, which affects that town or that village, but the process doesn't start and end in that village. It's the result of a serious organized crime group, probably in Montreal and Vancouver. More and more, these groups are in Asia and Africa. What I have to do now is to say, how do I deploy my limited resources?

So more and more I believe it is more effective for the protection of Canadians for me to send some of my limited federal resources to go and work with the Australian federal police or with the police forces in Africa to stop a major organization actually based there but whose operations are affecting Granby, affecting Carrot River, Saskatchewan. If I can stop them over there....

Now, I understand the mayors when they say they don't see our resources in their towns and villages; but do you see how I'm actually helping them more by stopping organized crime where it is based? That's what I'm doing more and more.

The Sûreté du Québec is doing the same thing. The Sûreté du Québec sends their investigators to work with us in Vancouver, or we go together to Europe, because that's the global nature of the crime. I know you see the effects on the ground, but we're trying to stop it before it gets to the ground.

I have to make a decision. Do I redeploy them in small numbers in local communities and be reactive, or do I go proactive? That's what I'm trying to do, sir.

I hope that gives you a sense of what we're trying to do here.

•(1125)

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz:** Yes, and that leads to my next question.

You say in your introductory remarks that you honour your agreements with the provinces and municipalities. The municipal representatives that we had here really want to see more of a presence. Do they have any say in the agreements you make with them? Wouldn't the provinces accept the recommendations you make that there should be more of a police presence in these communities, together with what you're doing on a broader scale? Can we not do both, or is that part of the agreement? Wouldn't you have quite a bit of say as to what those agreements are? Your recommendations would surely have a lot of weight in what the municipalities and provinces want.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** We try to factor all that into consideration. We do listen very attentively to the local elected officials. We believe in community policing. We listen to the people in the communities. We do listen to the provinces. We do listen, obviously, to our federal political masters. But then I have to make the hard choices, and that's my job as commissioner. That's what the law obliges me to do, to deploy my limited resources in the way I best see fit to attack crime.

My challenge is that I have a multitude of issues to deal with, and I do have certain resources. They're not unlimited. I can't deploy all of my members to smaller communities. I don't have enough resources to put a few members in each community in this country. I have to make strategic decisions on how I can best use them, and strategically place them so that I can best attack those organized crime groups. Then I enter into agreements and alliances with my key partners at the provincial and municipal levels.

Mr. Ménard talked about the meetings we've had. Those meetings were about working together. I remember, he was a great minister in Quebec. He really supported police, and I really appreciated all the effort he put into it.

This is a constant struggle that we've always had.

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz:** I wish I could convince my colleagues around here that we should reallocate some of the resources from some of the areas that are not very effective to more RCMP on the ground. So far they haven't accepted my recommendation.

**The Chair:** Convince us another time, Mr. Breitkreuz, your time is up.

Mr. Comartin, seven minutes.

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP):** Thanks for coming, Commissioner.

I think you made the point, but I want to be absolutely certain, that the number of officers in the province of Quebec has not changed at all. Is that correct, that the number is still the same?

•(1130)

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** That is correct.

**Mr. Joe Comartin:** Have officers in Quebec been moved from the more "conventional" work, let's call it, of fighting organized crime—drug smuggling, money laundering, prostitution, or whatever—over to the war on terrorism?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** That's a good point. I'll make a comment, and I'd like the commanding officer to add something.

After 9/11, we had no choice. We couldn't wait. Again, we did have to take some resources that were in other areas and do that difficult balancing act. After 9/11, I had to redeploy close to 20% of the RCMP resources just to respond to the enormous requests from the United States, for example.

Of course, the federal government infused over \$8 billion to help deal with this, so we were treated very well by those resources. As those resources have been coming in, we've been able to replenish those areas. We now have reached that equilibrium where we've had a lot of resources from the federal government to put into different places. It's never enough—I don't make any apologies for saying that—but we've been able to rebalance that.

Maybe the commanding officer from Quebec can speak to how exactly he's been redeploying them within the province.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas (Assistant Commissioner, Commanding Officer, "C" Division, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** As the commissioner indicated, we had to also address the threat. As an organization, we based our deployment on intelligence. Given the current threat in Quebec, we've had to reallocate some of these resources.

We received resources very much in line with the allocation that the government gave to the RCMP, but we also had to re-profile some of our resources within the territory in order to address the threat of organized crime. It stands to reason that some of these resources that were redeployed from some of these detachments were redeployed toward one of our major threats, which is national security. We had to deal with the issue, and we had to deal with the issue head on.

**Mr. Joe Comartin:** I guess I'm suggesting to you that, from what I'm hearing, the reallocation still has had some impact at the ground level. Whether it's in Granby or Baie-Comeau, or those regions, you have had to move some of your people over to spending more of their time on the demands of the U.S. and the demands of the war on terrorism.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** On national security issues, yes indeed.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Perhaps I can just add something, Mr. Comartin. This is very important. Did terrorism have an impact on those smaller detachments? It did—

**Mr. Joe Comartin:** Commissioner, can I interrupt? What I really want to know is, does it still?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Well, it does, but my point is that had 9/11 not happened, the decision we took about the nine detachments is one that we still would have had to take.

I had to do this in Ontario in 1995, sir. In 1995, which was long before 9/11—

**Mr. Joe Comartin:** I'm also painfully aware of that.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** You remember that.

**Mr. Joe Comartin:** Yes.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** That was a painful exercise. I remember that, because somebody asked me, do you really want to

put your job at risk here, sir? Do you know what you're taking on? I replied that it's my job to recommend what I think is the best deployment of resources, and then others will make their decisions.

We did this in 1995 because the threat of organized crime was so pervasive and so threatening that I just could not keep deploying limited resources in an effective way. I regrouped them. I never moved a person out of Ontario, but I regrouped them, and I think we're much more effective and much more strategic.

What we did in Quebec is really similar to that, but 9/11 did not make that difference. We would have had to do this anyway.

**Mr. Joe Comartin:** I appreciate that. I'm not agreeing with you, but I appreciate that this is your position.

In the Ontario experience, there's at least some anecdotal evidence that organized crime, recognizing what the RCMP did, relocated. They adjusted. They moved their high level of operations back into smaller communities, where they were less able to be assessed.

This is anecdotal, and I understand that, but could you comment on that? Was there any indication of that having happened in Ontario?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** You know, organized crime is very flexible and fluid. That's the whole point. They change their modus operandi. They do change locations. That's exactly the reason why we have to change our approach. Sometimes our structure has to change.

The reality is that organized crime in this country is controlled by a number of major groupings. We know where these groupings are. We know where they are and where they operate from. They have a presence here and they also operate from outside of the country. The small movements within communities do not really get to the root of the problem. At the local level, it's really the low-level people who are readjusting. We want to get to the root of the problem and eradicate the root.

We know where those organizations are, and they are not in the small towns. They have a presence there, and they have a way of influencing small communities, but they are usually located elsewhere. They are constantly moving, taking advantage of technology, taking advantage of globalization, and so on.

That's why we talk about integration as not just a Canadian philosophy. We are operating more and more on a global basis. There is a global law enforcement movement. We are all integrated. We are not just working in partnership with the Sûreté du Québec. We are working in partnership with the Chinese police, with police in Africa, and in Asia. That's the new reality we're facing, sir.

• (1135)

**The Chair:** One minute.

**Mr. Joe Comartin:** I'll pass, thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Comartin.

*Monsieur Paradis, pour sept minutes.*

[Translation]

**Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank you for being here today and for making your case for this redeployment.

You say that you're committed to delivering your mandate and providing all Canadians with safe and secure communities. Rest assured that every person around this table is just as committed to that goal. As far as your mandate goes, I believe it is important not only for you to deliver it, but also—and this is important in politics—to look as though you're delivering it. The other day, one mayor told us that his impression was that in recent years, the RCMP, which is supposed to serve the people, had turned into an RCMP that basically serves the RCMP. I would be interested in your comments in that regard.

What you are saying is that you want to improve services based on the expectations of Canadians, and that this is the biggest priority, as far as you are concerned. And yet the expectations of Canadians—at least those that I serve in Brome—Missisquoi and the people served by my colleagues in various regions of Quebec—were made clear here by the elected officials closest to the population. If you want to meet the expectations of Canadians, I believe you should listen to what local officials are saying. They appeared before the Committee this week to tell us what they expect of our federal police force.

You also said in your presentation that you have engaged in broad-based consultations. And yet these same elected officials, who are responsible for such cities as Granby, Baie-Comeau and Rivière-du-Loup, all told us that in their opinion, there had been no consultations. And in terms of consultations with the Sûreté du Québec, I want you to know that I myself asked Jacques Chagnon, the Minister responsible for the Sûreté du Québec, if there had been any consultations. He told me that the Sûreté had been informed of what was to take place. But there is a big difference between consulting and informing, Commissioner.

Under the previous government, discussions did take place and M. P.s had participated in those discussions. At the time, we were told that nothing would change, that there would be further discussion of the issues, and so forth. But before we knew it, by means of a press release from your shop, we were told that you were getting out. Indeed, I even commented on that to Commander Bourduas. I told him I had no idea who was in charge of PR, but that this announcement, coming smack dab in the middle of the pot harvest and the closure of police detachments in our respective regions, was very poorly timed.

I must admit I'm puzzled by all of this. I can't help but think of your mandate and your motto. Indeed, we could probably take a few minutes to discuss your motto, which is *Maintiens le droit*. I might suggest changing that to say *Maintiens le droit et la présence sur le*

*territoire*—in other words uphold the law and maintain a presence on the ground—because to me that presence, that visibility is essential. I understand your requirements as regards domestic security, services for Aboriginals and port surveillance, but the fact remains that mayors from all across Quebec came before the Committee saying that an RCMP presence in their area was an absolute necessity.

In my riding of Brome—Missisquoi, there are ten official border points and a number of roads that cross the border where there is no official border crossing. About two years ago, the U.S. Congress Committee on Justice and Drugs went on a tour. I went and testified in Highgate, Vermont, and met with members of the U.S. Congress there. I explained that there was a need to facilitate customs processing of goods, leisure travellers and tourists. At the end of my testimony, the Chairman of the Committee's question to me was: "What about your Quebec gold?"

We talked about our relationship with U.S. politicians. But drugs are a major preoccupation for them. As you know, marijuana grows just about everywhere here. It's available in primary schools—which is absolutely ridiculous. The other day, when the mayors were here, I mentioned that there was a need for a physical presence on the ground in order to assess the situation. If there were local police officers, they would take the trouble to read our local newspapers. And here I'm not talking about conducting major investigations. In a local newspaper, it said that in one region, properties were selling for three times more than the municipal assessment. And these are not small amounts of money we're talking about, but properties assessed at \$500,000 by the municipality and sold for \$1.5 million.

• (1140)

Not only that, but the real estate agent demands to be paid in cash. This is the reality on the ground. And it's the same thing with the farmer who finds \$2,000 in his mail box and doesn't know where the money came from. These are the kinds of things that are happening in our area. Drugs are now in the schools, the border is very close, and the police are nowhere to be seen. It seems to me a significant part of the RCMP's mandate has been set aside in the regions.

About two years ago, in Granby, we had a meeting with the Sûreté du Québec and municipal police forces. I don't remember whether the RCMP was in attendance or not. We talked about the need for chemistry between police services. When officers are used to working together and there is that chemistry, things work a lot more efficiently than if there are issues and police officers only get together a couple of days a month. That chemistry is essential in police work. And officers in the Granby region, as well as members of the Sûreté du Québec and municipal police officers, all said that chemistry would no longer exist if the RCMP got out and that it would be more difficult to work effectively.

**The Chair:** You should leave the witness at least two minutes to answer.



**Hon. Denis Paradis:** Just to conclude, I want to talk about costs. I'm not convinced that by putting your officers somewhere else, you will really be saving money. For instance, if you send investigators to our area for three days, they will have to stay in a hotel, have meals, and so on. I'm not sure just how beneficial all of that will be. What is absolutely certain, however, is that you are deserting a territory that is absolutely vital.

I would just ask you to comment on that.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Thank you for your comments, Mr. Paradis. I appreciate that.

I would also like to make a few comments before asking the Commander, with the Chairman's indulgence, to add some of his own.

As regards the last point you raised, I want to make it perfectly clear that the purpose of this exercise was not to bring costs down. The idea really wasn't to save money.

You referred to consultations. While I certainly understand your question, the fact is consultations are never totally successful. Just to give you an idea of what I mean, I stated in my opening remarks that we had begun this exercise in 2002. In actual fact, it began in 1998, and here we are almost in 2005. This operation has taken a great deal of time. I believe you were there when I made presentations to the caucus. We did consult people, but it's difficult to consult everyone. And yet we made a considerable effort, and the Commander can tell you about that. For us, the issue is always the same. Just think of the territory we have to cover and the size of this country. If I divide the number of officers I have at the Royal Canadian Mounted Police by the total surface area of Canada, the result would be that I could assign one police officer every 1,000 square kilometers. I can do that, but the challenge I'm facing is to determine where I am going to put those resources, which are extremely limited.

For my part, all I'm really interested in doing is ensuring that my resources are used effectively in order to better fulfill our mandate, which is to fight organized crime and terrorism. I am 100 per cent convinced of that. If the mayor doesn't see us around, that doesn't mean that we are not working for him or for the good of the people in his town or village. I mentioned earlier that I worked with Australian police officers to arrest criminals in Australia who were targeting Canada. I can arrest someone in Australia. In so doing, I am working for the people of Granby and Carrot River, even though they may not be aware of that. Maybe we should issue a press release informing them that we arrested someone in Australia. We are making a tremendous effort.

Pierre-Yves, you could certainly say more about that. As I mentioned, this operation began in 1998: this is not a decision that we made overnight.

• (1145)

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** With the Chairman's indulgence, I would simply like to mention that the consultations actually began in 1998. At the time, we were talking about seven detachments. We had received letters from municipal councillors who were opposed to this move for the very reasons you have just cited. The situation is continuing to evolve in terms of organized crime and terrorist threats. We must adjust accordingly.

As the Commissioner already pointed out, we held a number of consultations. Can we arrange a meeting with every elected official to explain this situation? In fact, we use public forums to explain our position. We have done that on a number of occasions, both in a public forum and at private meetings, over the last five or six years. This is not a process that was only just launched or designed simply for the current circumstances. The fact is that this began back in 1998.

I want to clarify one other point. Mr. Paradis expressed his concern about the fact that narcotic drugs are being grown and then sold in schools across Quebec. The RCMP is aware of the problem and is attempting to resolve it. But this is not something that falls within our responsibility in Quebec. Allow me to quote the words of Serge Ménard who, at his appearance before the Standing Committee on Institutions, talked about introducing a legislative framework for the different police levels in Quebec:

What is needed is a legislative framework that will foster the development of larger, more efficient police organizations better able to meet the challenges of the current situation. Such a change is not easy to bring about, because it comes up against long-held beliefs that a small local police force is generally closer to its citizens. And yet constant staff turnovers in small organizations and the instability that comes with that are certainly not conducive to the establishment of real community policing.

Had we wanted to choose a spokesperson to promote the RCMP's objective, we couldn't have found a better one than he. Among the police levels instituted by Mr. Ménard, we have the local level, for a population of less than 100,000, which is the size of most of the municipalities affected by the harmonization. The production, trafficking and possession of illegal drugs at the local level or on the street falls within the responsibility of the local police force. The RCMP works in partnership with local forces to that end, as the Commissioner has already mentioned.

**Hon. Denis Paradis:** Mr. Chairman, regarding the costs referred to earlier, Parliament passed a vote an appropriation of approximately \$2 billion for the RCMP on a recurring basis. After 9/11, for reasons of national security, Parliament passed an additional allocation of \$800 million.

So, the money is provided as the needs arise, but there is no need to make cuts all across Quebec because of this. The fact is that at a given moment in time, money was made available to respond to national security-related requests.

[English]

**The Chair:** Merci.

With the agreement of the committee, we'll go to five-minute rounds now to have more opportunity for questioning.

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Mr. MacKay, for five minutes.

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Central Nova, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank Mr. Zaccardelli and Mr. Bourduas for being here as well.

I want to follow on the line of questioning that my colleague from the Liberal government was pursuing. I'm hopeful that he's going to pursue this in a genuine way and funnel that quiet rage into support for the opposition motion, which would allow for the reallocation or redeployment back to these detachments. I know that he will certainly put action to those words.

When we talk about redeployment, reorganizing, reallocation, re-profiling, what that really means is closure. You're closing nine detachments in these counties and communities. What I'm hearing is that even in spite of the \$8 billion, in spite of the additional resources—which I'm assuming you requested—in spite of the commentary that we're hearing now about the need for more resources, the limited resources that force you, to use your words, to make these types of tough decisions, it's still not enough.

I want to revisit an issue that we discussed the last time you were here, Commissioner, involving the DNA databank. You told us uncategorically that there was no backlog whatsoever in that databank. In fact, you said there were only DNA cases in process. These were the words you used on November 24. Ten days earlier, an individual who is a member of the lab management team was interviewed by CBC and he stated: "Forensic Laboratory Services has traditionally defined backlog as the total number of cases or service requests received and not yet completed. The backlog consists of works in progress and unassigned cases and requests in biology"—I believe he's referring to DNA. "On October 29, 2004, there were 1,134 operational DNA requests in the Forensic Laboratory Services, of which 274 were unassigned, 860 were works in progress".

• (1150)

**Hon. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** I have a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps I'm missing something, but I'm just wondering how this is germane to the closure of detachments in the province of Quebec.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** It deals directly, Mr. Parliamentary Secretary, with resource allocation within the RCMP. I would suggest it's very germane to the subject matter.

Well, let's put it to the chair.

**The Chair:** I think we're looking at the big picture here. So I think we'll allow a certain amount of latitude in the questions.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My point, Mr. Commissioner, is that this commentary from somebody working in Forensic Laboratory seems to define "works in progress", to use your exact commentary, as backlog, and that there were over 1,100 cases on backlog.

You told us further that the wait time was minimal, that in terms of urgency of requests, these cases were being dealt with within the permissible or acceptable time limits. That runs completely contrary to people who are working in the Forensic Laboratory Services. I'm wondering how you square that, because it's a very serious matter to mislead this committee.

Either you were misled or you misled this committee. I find that very disturbing.

**The Chair:** Mr. MacKay, I think that's going a little too far. If you want to ask—

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Well, I'm asking for clarification on this matter.

**The Chair:** That is fine. I don't think we need to get into allegations of misleading or not.

I'll allow the commissioner to respond to the question directly.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will answer that.

When I last appeared here, Mr. MacKay, before coming in here that morning, I checked with my most senior people who were responsible for this whole area and I was given certain information, which I passed on to you.

I'm glad that you mentioned 1,100 cases, because I think the last time we were talking about 1,700 cases. I'm glad that you've come down, I think, to what I said. That's good, because numbers sometimes can get confusing.

Whatever I said in no way was meant or intended in any way to mislead or confuse anybody. I gave you the best information that I could give you. You talk about backlogs; I talked about works in progress. Now, you may call that a backlog. Obviously when a sample comes in it has to be processed. While it's in this process, you might say that's a backlog. We don't call it a backlog; we call it a work in process.

I also did mention to you, Mr. MacKay, that all the serious cases... and this is the information I had. As I think you know, I've arranged for some of your staff to come to visit the DNA labs so we can take a look at this. All the samples related to the most serious cases have a timeframe of 15 days. We will deal with those serious cases within the 15 days. That's been agreed to. That is a standard benchmark worldwide.

The other cases are all negotiated on an individual basis. For example, if a police officer from Saskatoon comes in and it doesn't fit within that serious category, the lab will negotiate with the investigators and say, "When do you need it?" We might say we can do it in 50 days. If they say, "Look, I really need it in 38 days, can you get it?", we will negotiate it to their satisfaction. We have a prioritization process. So that's what we do.

You're right, during this timeframe there are these 1,100 cases, and that changes on a daily basis. So these cases are in the system. Now, you may call them a backlog, but in fairness, I think the backlog denotes somehow that it is outside what people can accept as normal processing. That's why I don't like using the word "backlog".

They obviously are works in process. Some cases are in the lineup. If they're in the queue for 50 days and the police force or the officer can accept that, well, that's okay, because then we can concentrate on the 15 days.

I don't think what we were talking about—

• (1155)

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** It's really an exercise in semantics, sir, with respect. If you have somebody working at the lab calling it a backlog, using the same definition as you're using, that to me seems to be problematic, whether you like that definition or not.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** I don't know who you refer to. In fairness, I don't know who you refer to. I'm held accountable for the RCMP. What I speak, what I say, is what the RCMP does.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Based on your best information. Fair enough.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** I accept that this employee may feel that way. I accept that we went through some growing pains at the beginning with the lab. We did have some backlog. I'm very proud of how we worked with everybody to create a world-class operation. I look forward to you or your staff coming over to see what we have.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** We look forward to that as well.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Commissioner.

*Monsieur Vincent, pour cinq minutes.*

[Translation]

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

I've been listening to your testimony, Commissioner. Correct me if I heard wrong or I am misinterpreting what you said—Mr. Bourduas as well. I understood you to say that there had been no consultations when detachments were closed in Ontario and Quebec. Is it true that elected officials were not consulted?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Where? In Ontario?

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Yes, in Ontario, because we were talking about Ontario at one point.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Yes, there were consultations.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Did you hold the same consultations in Quebec?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** No. The consultation period in Ontario was in fact very short.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Very short?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Yes. It didn't last for five or eight years. In Ontario, we're talking about months. That may be the reason why Mr. Comartin is not very happy. The consultation lasted months, not years.

• (1200)

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** I see. But it's just like what happened in Quebec. Mr. Bourduas was saying earlier that there hadn't been time to go and meet with every elected official and explain the situation. But there were only nine elected officials to see. The fact is you didn't take the time or have the decency to consult the mayors or M. P.s for each of the ridings, to see what they thought about the closures. Isn't that the way it really happened?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** As I already explained, when the meetings took place, at the request of the Members of Parliament... It is important to realize that...

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** I don't want to beat around the bush here, because I only have five minutes. I'm asking you whether M.P.s and mayors were consulted when you made the decision to close regional detachments in each of these ridings.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** The decision was made on September 23, 2004. As the Commissioner already mentioned, the consultations began back in 1998-99. I have the list of people we met with. It was in the public domain. We received letters from these people, had telephone conversations with mayors, elected officials, and so on.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Mr. Bourduas, you're talking about 1998. We are talking about 2004, and the closure of detachments in Quebec, particularly the Granby detachment. Did you consult those nine mayors before proceeding with the closure of those detachments?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** Those detachment closures were already public knowledge. The mayors had had an opportunity to discuss the decision. A number of them wrote us letters. We discussed this with the mayors. In fact, I met with all the mayors following the announcement made in October, to explain our position once again. I also met with the mayors before the announcement was made in the Rivière-du-Loup and Estrie regions. Under the circumstances, as the Commissioner has already explained, it is extremely difficult to meet with every single elected official. When it's in the public domain...

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Because there were too many of them.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** When it's in the public domain, we are always open to such discussions. All people had to do was get in touch with the local detachment. I am always pleased to go and meet with people—something I did on a number of occasions in both the Estrie and Rivière-du-Loup regions. I went to Rivière-du-Loup in February of this year, to meet with the mayors and RCM reeves, as well as the local member of Parliament, to have a long discussion about the reasons behind this decision.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** I see. So, as I understand it, you called to present them with a *fait accompli*. You told them that the closure of these detachments was imminent and asked them if they had anything to say. However, the decision had already been made. Indeed, the mayor of Granby appeared before the Committee, with the other mayors, and told us that he had received a call on the 23rd informing him that the detachment would close.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** The mayor of Granby was perfectly aware of the consultation process that was underway. This information was made public a number of times. They were perfectly aware that the process was underway to close these ten detachments.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** You say the number of officers will remain unchanged in Quebec.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** Yes. Actually, it's interesting to note that the number has actually gone up since the consultation process began. Since the anti-terrorism initiative to strengthen national security was put in place, Quebec has in fact received additional resources which, as the Commissioner explained, are being strategically deployed across the province to better serve the people of Quebec.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** My understanding is that officers assigned to the nine detachments which will close in Quebec will continue to work at regional offices.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** Some officers will remain in regional offices. It is interesting to note, however, for the benefit...

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** I don't want to get into lengthy extrapolations. Will they stay in place? Will some of them be transferred?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** That's what I was trying to explain. At the regional level, the Coaticook detachment is closed, for example. Those resources have been reassigned to Sherbrooke and we have also opened a detachment. It's interesting that no one is talking about the fact we have opened a detachment in Stanstead, which is along the border, next to our partners. We want to be sure to have a strong presence along the border and be closer to the Canada Border Services Agency.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** I heard that people working at the Quebec detachments had been assigned to Ottawa. Is that true?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** No, it is not.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Do you mean to say they will stay in Quebec, and continue to work in the regions?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** Their positions remain in Quebec. They were redeployed following the opening of a new detachment.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Mr. Bourduas, when we met with you here in Ottawa, you gave us assurances that the communities affected by these closures would always be served by a regional detachment via its satellite offices.

Do you agree with that? Is that the way it will work?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** Regional offices will continue to be open to provide services to local communities.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Will that also be the case in areas where detachments have been closed?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** Yes, it will, because that is also the purpose of this exercise. The idea is to provide better service.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Is this the way it works all across Canada, whether we're talking about Ontario or another province? When a detachment becomes regional, do regional officers also provide service in those areas where detachments have been closed?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** Yes, exactly.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Fine. Thank you.

I would like to table a document, if you don't mind.

A little earlier, you quoted the words of Mr. Ménard.

Here I have a document from Mr. Laperrière, Chief of the Timmins Police Service, in Timmins, Ontario, where he talks about the closure of the RCMP detachment in that city. I will distribute

copies of this and give you a few minutes to read it, so that you know what it's about.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Yes, Mr. Comartin.

**Mr. Joe Comartin:** I have a point of order. I've indicated to Mr. Vincent that he can take my five minutes if he requires them.

**The Chair:** Okay, very good.

[*Translation*]

Then you have five minutes.

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Thank you. My five minutes will begin when I start speaking. This will give the witness an opportunity to read the document.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Yes, Mr. Cullen.

• (1205)

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. Are there any provisions within the rules of the committee in terms of notice for this document now being circulated? The RCMP, I imagine, are seeing this letter for the first time. Is it fair to...?

Are you prepared to respond to this, Commissioner?

If we'd had this a few days before, I'm sure the RCMP would have been prepared to deal with it. What are the rules around this, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** I don't think there is a particular rule; it's a question of Monsieur Vincent questioning a witness after having provided the witness with a document and time to read it.

I think the commissioner is indicating that he's prepared to respond.

[*Translation*]

Are you ready, Mr. Vincent?

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Yes.

In the second paragraph of this letter, it states that RCMP detachments in Ontario suffered the same fate as those in Quebec. In other words, they were closed without any prior consultation.

Does this mean that when you decide to close an RCMP detachment, you don't hold consultations, you don't ask for permission, and you don't see anybody?

Are you at least aware of the repercussions, in terms of crime, for the people and cities or towns where these RCMP detachments are being closed?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Mr. Chairman, we have just explained that we held consultations over a seven-year period in Quebec, and now we're being accused of not consulting anyone. That's unacceptable.

At the same time, I clearly stated that in Ontario, the consultations were not as extensive. I know that, because I was Commander at the time those consultations took place, which lasted several months. I fully understand the concerns of the Chief of the Timmins Police Service. I can assure you that I gave the same answer to police forces in Ontario as I did in Quebec.

We are moving ahead with this reorganization in order to provide better service. As I explained to Ontario police chiefs, if a criminal organization is operating, we will go after it and pool our resources with those in Toronto and Timmins, if so required. That's the important thing.

We're talking about nine detachments...

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** I don't want to continue on this.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to have a chance to...

You are using up my entire five minutes, and I won't have any time left.

I have checked certain figures with Statistics Canada, Mr. Chairman...

**The Chair:** You have to...

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Please understand my position. He is using up all my time. If he takes a lot of time to answer, I lose my train of thought. Rather than having that happen, I prefer to put my questions to the witness.

• (1210)

**The Chair:** Yes, but if you ask questions without ever leaving him the time to answer...

**Mr. Robert Vincent:** Mr. Zaccardelli already answered. But his answer drags on and on.

As I was saying, I checked certain figures with Statistics Canada, particularly with respect to the detachments that closed in Ontario, like those in North Bay, Peterborough, Lakefield and Timmins. Those offices were closed in 1998, I believe. My data cover the period from 1996 to 2001. In 1996, there were 455 violent crimes, and in 2001, 574, an increase of 21 per cent. In Peterborough, there were 3,475 property offences in 1996, and 3,665 in 2001, an increase of 5 per cent. In Timmins, there 452 violent crimes in 1996, and 539 in 2001, an increase of 16 per cent. Since you got out, there has been an increase in criminal activity in those towns where there is no longer an RCMP detachment.

Let's look at this document once again. I asked Mr. Bourduas a little earlier whether services would continue to be provided. Again in the second paragraph of this letter, it states that the Commissioner of the RCMP had assured the mayors of the affected communities that regional detachments would still provide services through satellite offices, but that those promised services were never provided.

Are you saying the same thing in Ontario as you are in Quebec—in other words, that you will be providing services? The Chief of the Timmins Police Service said no one had ever returned. How do you respond to that?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** The work we do is a little like electricity: you can't see it, but when it hits you, you know it's there.

If, by working in partnership with police forces in Montreal, the United States or Australia, we are able to dismantle organizations operating there, that will have a positive impact on cities like Timmins, Granby, and so on. The Timmins Police Chief may not see us there. However, that doesn't mean we are not working with him, for him and for his entire community.

When a detachment has only two, three or four officers, it cannot undertake a major operation against a criminal organization. Mr. Ménard is well aware of that. A certain level of resources is required. Rather than having two, three or four officers somewhere who are unable to engage in major operations, we can bring our officers together in groups of 15 or 20 so that they can really crack down on these large organizations. And that has an impact not only in Granby, but in Montreal, British Columbia and elsewhere.

I would be prepared to send 20 investigators, as we speak, to Africa if that could help Canada minimize the impact of African-based criminal organizations. The Timmins Police Chief would certainly ask me why I sent 20 police officers to Africa, rather than to Timmins. I understand he needs them, but we have decisions to make, because that organization in Africa could have a major impact on Canada or Quebec. That is the RCMP's current philosophy.

[English]

**The Chair:** Merci, Monsieur Vincent.

Mr. Cullen, for five minutes.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[Translation]

Thank you very much, Commissioner Zaccardelli and Assistant Commissioner Bourduas for being with us today.

[English]

I have a couple of questions. When you go to meet with the mayors of various small towns, do you ever have an expectation that the mayor is going to say, yes, it is a good idea to remove the detachment?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Before Assistant Commissioner Bourduas answers that, Mr. Cullen, if I could be so bold, I appeared before the Liberal caucus of the previous government, not this government, and I left the room feeling that some of the message had not actually got through. I understood their questions, but as much as I tried, I didn't feel I succeeded in really satisfying them. It's a tough audience sometimes.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** I'd just like to leverage on the commissioner's comments. We approach this from a public safety and security perspective, and the elected officials approach this from a different mindset. They look at their local challenges and they expect to see the RCMP address those local challenges, when in fact we approach this holistically, looking at criminality from a national perspective. We know the types of challenges and we try to communicate these challenges as much as we can. The fact of the matter is, there is sometimes a message that is not clearly understood.

From our own perspective, we are up to the challenge when it comes to organized crime, but we need the cooperation of the local police force and the provincial police force, as well.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** The reason I raised the question—and maybe partially facetiously—is that when we talk about consultation, there are the two extremes, that of someone going in with a *fait accompli* and then sort of listening but not, versus that of someone going in and consulting and the people saying, “We don't want these changes to happen” and then having the consultation fully reflect that view. So consultation is a difficult process. But to expect that the local mayors would think it was a good idea that some of the local detachments would be closed, I think, would be a very unrealistic expectation.

It's surprising with the Bloc, because in many other cases they would argue they wouldn't want a federal presence in the province of Quebec. So this is interesting, where they want a federal presence. I can understand my colleague Monsieur Paradis perhaps being a strong federalist—but with the Bloc, I do find it amazing. So maybe we'll find that the motion will be replaced and removed later.

Commissioner, and Monsieur Bourduas, there has been a lot of discussion or concerns expressed about the border. I know that our government has set up these integrated border enforcement teams; in fact, in that area of Quebec, I gather there are three. Could you tell me, and maybe allay some concerns, if there is a lot of cooperation between Canada and the United States in terms of integrated law enforcement?

Maybe, Commissioner, you could talk about that and how it works in the province of Quebec.

•(1215)

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Thank you very much, Mr. Cullen.

If I could just take 10 seconds to say something before I answer that, I must say that Mr. Ménard, when he was the minister and I was in Quebec, always worked with us and encouraged us to work together. He was a strong proponent of collaboration.

I was very thankful for that when I was in Quebec, Monsieur Ménard.

In terms of the border, I know this is a major preoccupation. Maybe I can tell you a little story. After 9/11 I went to Washington and met with my counterparts. At that time, most of my counterparts were arguing very strongly that we had to seal the border, we had to have a strong presence on the border, we had to have men and women on the border so that nobody got through. And this was a tough position. They were talking about having Black Hawk helicopters, militarizing the border.

In our Canadian way, I said, well, okay, but it's 8,000 kilometres. There aren't enough people in Canada and the United States to hold hands and cover the border. And they said, yes, but we have to stop people from crossing the border.

So then I said, well, what about this? What if we make sure we have good intelligence by working together in an integrated way? In Canada, we'll work together in integrated teams with all the police forces. In the United States, you'll do that. What if we used the integrated border enforcement team philosophy, which we were starting to develop in Canada?

What we did in Canada, thanks to the federal government's generosity to us, which is not totally what I need but it's very generous—I had to get that in, Mr. Cullen—is put in a number of integrated teams, which meant the RCMP in Quebec, with the Sûreté du Québec, the other federal aid. We created holistic, integrated teams, and we placed them strategically all along the border. We have 17, 18, 19 of these teams.

The philosophy is that these are integrated teams with sufficient resources to be flexible and responsive to the good intelligence we get and attack the problem wherever it comes, not to be static so they can run around us, not to be static so they can say, well, there they are; we'll just go somewhere else. They're flexible, mobile, never knowing where we're at. We finally convinced the Americans that they should do the same thing. That's exactly what they did. They bought into that. So now we are not only integrated ourselves in Canada—strategically located; moving, flexible, and responsive; based on intelligence, not necessarily just having a presence at the border—but now we're also totally integrated with the Americans.

So now if the intelligence tells us there's a group in Montreal, or in Timmins, that's going to use the border, I'm not going to wait for them at the border. I'm going to go get them where they are. The border's just an imaginary line that's used. If all we do is just stand there and wait, we're going to be waiting a long time.

So this is the philosophy. We used the resources to create integrated teams. We haven't abandoned the border. We haven't abandoned anything. We've actually increased our capability. We're much more effective. We're much more flexible now to respond right along the border, not just in Quebec, but in Alberta; in B.C., where we actually had the test pilot; in New Brunswick; and with our American friends. The border is better protected. Even though you may not see a police officer on the border, it doesn't mean there aren't eyes and ears, thinking about it and getting information, working to get them.

Now, if the mayor goes to the border and says, I don't see anybody and I'm worried, I totally understand that. But what we're trying to reassure them of is that we're working in a more effective way. Unless somebody wants to give me all the resources so we can all hold hands at the border...

•(1220)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Commissioner Zaccardelli.

Thank you, Mr. Cullen.

Now Mr. Warawa, for five minutes.

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to thank the commissioner and assistant commissioner for being here today.

I'll give a brief background on where I'm coming from so you'll understand my question. The question I will be leading up to will be on what the best bang for our buck is, keeping in mind limited resources.

I come from 14 years of local government in a township council environment, where I've worked with both the RCMP and municipal police forces. I've had a very good relationship with both, and I've met some wonderful people in police work.

I've found it frustrating over the years to see a member in a very effective position and loving their work be redeployed to a different position. Many times I've had council—having been liaison between council and the RCMP—say this person is doing such a terrific job. The response was, thank you very much; that will go on their record as an endorsement, but the notification was that they were being redeployed. It wasn't necessarily, as I said, the request or the desire of that member. It was a loss to the community to see somebody, for example, a school liaison officer working with kids in a drug program, taken out of that because a senior officer felt it was the appropriate decision.

The point I wanted to make on those responses was that if it's a consultation.... Hopefully you'll take the comments you're hearing today, because we are learning from you, and hopefully you'll learn also. Consultation needs to be consultation. If it's not consultation, if you are in a very difficult position where you have to make some hard decisions because of a lack of resources, then it's a notification, not a consultation. If it's called consultation and it's not, the frustration level rises dramatically, and then there's opportunity for criticism.

At local government I found that's where the buck stops. The federal government downloads to provincial, provincial downloads to local, and local governments are the last opportunity for tax collectors. You collect as much tax.... It's like de-feathering a duck: you take as many feathers as you can with the least amount of squawking. That's how one councillor described it. It's very difficult. It's not fun to collect taxes.

But taxes are limited, so city council, the RCMP, all government bodies have to make use of those dollars the best way they see fit.

You mentioned the new reality since 9/11. Since 9/11 we've had those new challenges you reminded us about, and it's your responsibility to target organized crime groups and ensure national security. You're trying to make the best use of those resources, and the deployments you are making are your decision on the best, most effective, strategic way to deal with those needs.

You shared with us that the number of RCMP members in Quebec have not increased.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** They have increased. They have not diminished; they've increased.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** I had marked down that you said they did not increase.

So they have increased. That's good news.

● (1225)

**The Chair:** There's one minute left for the response, Mr. Warawa.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** I'll make this very quick, then.

Commissioner, you mentioned that you want to be proactive, not reactive. Mayors have said they believe it is proactive to have a visible police presence. I agree with them, Mr. Commissioner, that to have a visible police presence in our communities is proactive, yet you have these other responsibilities to ensure national security and attack organized crime.

Do we have adequate resources to meet these new challenges and still meet the needs within our community, which is what the motion is dealing with? There is that need, and I agree with the motion, in principle. Those needs are not being met. You are focusing on a new set of challenges.

Do you have adequate resources to meet the needs of both? I think the answer would be no.

Do you feel there are better ways—back to my colleague here—for example, the gun registry? Are there other areas we could look at for resources without having to go to the taxpayer, and get a bigger bang for our buck?

Thank you.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** You made some very good points there.

I give a lot of speeches, and one of the things I always say in my speeches is how we usually talk about two things that are guaranteed in life, death and taxes; I always add a third one, shortage of resources. We'll never have all the resources we want. My job is to maximize the use of my resources and leverage them with my various partners in policing and in otherwise.

Of course I understand there's a need to have a physical presence. I also understand that it's not an either/or. You have to have a presence. You have to have the ability to tackle organized crime. You have to have the ability to tackle terrorism, and so on.

But then you also have to look to mandates. I'm a public servant. I am given a mandate by the elected officials, and I have different mandates. In Saskatchewan, my mandate is a little different from what it is in Quebec and Ontario. In Quebec and Ontario, I have a federal mandate. That uniform presence is not my mandate.

What I do with my federal presence in Quebec is I leverage it with that local and provincial presence. I do that. In Saskatchewan and the territories, the mandate is different. I always look to leverage and maximize that. It's not an either/or; you have to have both. You have to have a presence. It's how you divide it up.

Usually what dictates it is the environment that's constantly changing around us. That's why I need intelligence. I have to be proactive in getting intelligence. That's what we do. I get the very best intelligence from every part of this country and indeed around the world. Then I look at it and say, out of this, what are the greatest threats facing Canada? I look at my resources and deploy them in an integrated partnership way, but I always know that I will not be able to cover everything off.

I do try to consult, and I do try to explain. But at the end of it, I cannot go to sleep at night if I know I have some resources that are not being used as effectively and efficiently as they possibly can be simply because somebody said, I want a Mountie at my back door. I'd love to put a Mountie at every back door; please give me the resources to do it. I'd love to.

You know, when Sitting Bull came across the Medicine Line in 1876 with 5,000 warriors, Superintendent Walsh met him with seven Mounties. That's all he had. He said, Sitting Bull, you have to obey the law in Canada; and he did, for five years.

I'll bet Superintendent Walsh wished he had a few more Mounties; but all he had was seven, and he deployed them the best way he could. We're still trying to do that, deploy our people the best way we can in true partnership with everybody for the greater good of Canadians.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Commissioner.

Mr. Maloney, for five minutes.

**Mr. John Maloney (Welland, Lib.):** Mr. Zaccardelli, in your presentation you indicated that your realignment notice involved nine detachments. You went on further to say that you're almost completed. After six years, that's understandable.

What do you mean by almost completed? How many detachments have the Mounties walked out of, turned off the lights, and locked the door?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** That's a very good question, Mr. Maloney. Perhaps I could refer that question to Assistant Commissioner Bourduas. He's probably more up to date on the exact number, and he'll know exactly where we're at.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** From the information I've gathered, we currently have four detachments that have been closed and five detachments in the process of closing down. Some of the detachments have one or two resources left. As the commissioner indicated in his opening comments, we have to take into account family considerations, such as moves. We have to provide our own people with some of these answers, which is the reason we've proceeded with the redeployment as quickly as possible, to take into account the personal realities of our membership.

What you have to bear in mind is the human factor in the management of these human beings, the members of the RCMP in Quebec. They were left wondering whether or not we would proceed

with closures during a consultation that has dragged on for five or six years. All members faced the question of whether or not these detachments would be closed. Finally the answers came, and we moved ahead in order to provide our membership, our own people, with the appropriate answers: yes, you're allowed to move on now with your life, and this is where you're being redeployed.

The HR process was put in place. We met with each and every individual. Our federal public servants were also provided with options. Some of them made personal decisions. The process has already been started. That's why it was vital for us to advise our members, who have been waiting while the consultative process took place.

• (1230)

**Mr. John Maloney:** At five detachments you have one or two resources. Do you mean one or two staff at those facilities?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** Yes, we have one or two staff members left at these detachments.

**Mr. John Maloney:** On average prior to the reduction, what were your average staffing levels if you had a full complement?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** There were some detachments where we had no people left.

**Mr. John Maloney:** Let's go back six years to before we started this realignment. How many officers were in the detachments, on average?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** On average, we'd have about four or five people in some of these remote areas.

**Mr. John Maloney:** You referred to political masters. What would be the logistics, or implications, or complications if your political masters made the request that these detachments be re-staffed to their previous complement—reopened?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** That, sir, wouldn't affect our redeployment. As the commissioner clearly indicated, we are not talking about the closure of detachments for monetary or financial reasons. We've redeployed these resources because our intelligence on the movement of criminals clearly indicated to us that we needed to create this critical mass of investigators to address the threat at the appropriate level. These resources have to be strategically redeployed. When we looked at Îles-de-la-Madeleine, for instance, and we looked at our intelligence, did it make sense that we had four people at Îles-de-la-Madeleine at one point?

It wouldn't affect the process. Maybe the commissioner would like to comment further on this.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Mr. Maloney, directly to your question on what the impact would be, it would have a very negative impact.



**Mr. John Maloney:** That's what I like to hear.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** I would lose human resources to use in dealing with organized crime and the terrorism initiative. Quebec would be less safe if this was to be reversed. Canada would be less safe—and I'm not trying to over-dramatize this. It would mean that those limited resources I have would be reduced even further.

**Mr. John Maloney:** We've heard the firestorm from the mayors of these communities. How do we drive this message home to them? They feel less safe.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** I understand that, but I guess at the end of the day I know the intelligence. I know the information. I think I have a good appreciation of the severity of organized crime and terrorism.

The director of the Sûreté du Québec, Normand Proulx, is a good friend and colleague and professional. He understands this. He doesn't necessarily agree because he faces some of the same challenges in terms of trying to provide policing in the province of Quebec. He totally supports this. By being able to redeploy and better place our resources, I'm able to enter into more effective partnerships with him, which helps us to better protect Quebecers in the province of Quebec.

But it's tough. I understand when the mayors say, look, you're not here, we don't see you. They almost have to make a leap of faith and say, I trust that you are working somewhere else for my greater good even though I don't see you. I understand that's a leap of faith.

**Mr. John Maloney:** It's not a policing problem with the mayors; it's a communications problem. Do you have any initiatives to try to improve those lines of communication?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** I have a federal act that obliges me to manage the resources of the RCMP in the most effective and efficient way. I have a mandate and a responsibility to do that.

**Mr. John Maloney:** I appreciate that, but how are you going to communicate that to your constituents here, the mayors and the citizens they represent?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** We're trying. I don't know how we'll do it, but we're going to try some more. It's a tough issue. As Mr. Cullen said, these aren't situations where people come to the table looking for win-win. They're looking for something for themselves, saying, why my community, take it from some other community.

•(1235)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Maloney.

[Translation]

Mr. Ménard, you have five minutes.

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** Mr. Bourduas, given your experience, you know the difference between a small police force and a small police detachment within a large police organization, do you not?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** Yes, of course.

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** The quote that you read earlier had to do with the efficiency of small police forces, but not necessarily small police detachments that are part of a large police organization.

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** The point is that based on the concept you were laying out, Mr. Ménard, you also talked about the importance of providing better service and pooling resources. That is precisely what the RCMP is seeking to do as an organization.

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** We certainly agree on that, but your quotation was somewhat out of context.

Having said that, do patrol officers have a role to play with respect to gathering intelligence? I prefer the English word to the French one. The French term used is *renseignement*. But the word “intelligence”, refers to an accumulation of information. It denotes an overall understanding of all the information one has obtained. Do you think patrol officers have a role to play in collecting intelligence that can help police better understand criminal actions that they are then better able to crack down on?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** Yes, indeed.

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** The problem I see with what you are proposing is that you are cutting yourself off from this source of information without replacing it with something else. I realize that there is a large PR component in all of this. I see that your brochures are very well designed and very professional. I realize that your involvement with youth and the efforts you are making to encourage police officers to work with community organizations, in particular, are partly aimed at developing this knowledge of what is going on in our communities. This knowledge can be used by investigators to gain a better understanding of the phenomena they are confronted with.

I fully agree with Mr. Zaccardelli that you cannot place officers at one kilometer intervals all along the border. In any case, I don't think that would serve any purpose. However, don't you think you're depriving yourself of the knowledge that these patrol officers contribute to your “intelligence”?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** I would like to comment first, and then Mr. Bourduas can add his own comments.

You're right, Mr. Ménard. I also believe that patrol officers will perform effectively, just as our officers do that work in small detachments, if that is where they're assigned.

As far as I'm concerned, the real issue is whether I can be more cost effective by redistributing those resources. If I leave those officers in small detachments, they will certainly perform effectively. However, if I can reassign them to other duties and this redeployment means that they will be more effective... That's where the difference is. Obviously, whether a police officer is assigned to one office or another, he will perform well, but what is the best way of ensuring that he is as effective and efficient as possible?

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** Mr. Zaccardelli, it's efficiency in relation to intelligence that we have to focus on.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Yes, of course.

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** What will replace the contribution patrol officers make on the ground in terms of intelligence, even in small detachments? Are you abandoning this?

**Mr. Pierre-Yves Bourduas:** No. What you have to understand, Mr. Ménard, is that these patrol officers are the ones who wear the uniforms, who conduct patrols and interact with the public. At the present time, our officers in the detachments are experienced investigators who work for the federal police and who, in partnership with the Sûreté du Québec or municipal or local police forces, obtain information in order to target the right level. For example, there are cases where patrol officers have passed on information through their own intelligence networks and launched major investigations. When that happened, there was a group of experienced investigators who could target at that level. So, the connection was made with the patrol officer on the ground.

However, just as you did with respect to the different levels of service, we recognize the importance of patrol officers who are with the local police. As the Commissioner mentioned, we also recognize the importance of interaction between the different levels of police organizations. Through harmonization, we are aiming to develop critical masses that will allow us to target at a higher level, because we know that local patrol officers can't do that.

• (1240)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Ménard.

Mr. Paradis, you have five minutes.

**Hon. Denis Paradis:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At times I really think we're talking at cross purposes. As elected members of Parliament, we are saying that this is what people need. If there are ten elected M.P.s at this table and we each represent 100,000 people, then you could say there are one million people sitting at this Committee table. As elected M.P.s—and I think this is a pretty common view—we believe that your presence in our ridings, our regions and our cities and towns is important. You are saying you understand that, but that you have to give priority to other areas. Some of the areas you have mentioned are national security and intelligence.

I want to rapidly address national security and intelligence. Earlier, you said that if you had to send 20 investigators to Africa, some people would say that... Are we in the process of creating a CIA here—a Canadian Intelligence Agency that is going to deploy its forces across the globe? I don't believe Parliament has authorized that kind of thing yet. Also, we have CSIS to deal with Canadian intelligence. So, I'm having a hard time understanding. That's my first point.

Second, I want to ask a question about the Maritimes. I'm worried. First it was Ontario, and now, Quebec. How can I possibly assure my fellow M.P.s from the Atlantic provinces that the scissors are not going to come out again to make cuts in the Maritimes? Are you putting plans in place to cut detachments in the Maritimes as we speak?

Third, it's not you we're angry at. As you say, you are administering things as best you can. However, I really have the sense that our political message is not getting through to you, just as you may not be having much success conveying your administrative message to us. That's why I said we've been talking at cross purposes. It looks as though we are not having much success around this table in terms of making the point that as elected M.P.s, we share

the interests of the people in our ridings. We can't seem to get our political message across to you. I don't understand. As elected M.P.s, what do we have to do for you to understand our political message?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** You raised three points, Mr. Paradis. I will try to address them.

First of all, I talked about what would happen if I had to send 20 investigators to Africa. There is certainly no plan to create a CIA. As a police force, our focus is criminal operations and cracking down on crime. That is what we do. Nowadays, in more than 80 per cent of all the investigations we undertake at the federal level, a number of countries are involved as a result of globalization. Organized crime has become a global phenomenon. If I launch an investigation today, I know full well it will involve several countries. That's the kind of thing I was talking about. If we start an investigation on organized crime or biker gangs, I will most certainly have to reach an agreement with Australia. That's the kind of thing I was talking about. We undertake criminal investigations. We do nothing else. And that's what we do every day.

**Hon. Denis Paradis:** But you collect intelligence.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Only criminal intelligence.

**Hon. Denis Paradis:** Not on terrorist activity as well?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** What do terrorists do? They commit crimes. We investigate those crimes. That's all we do. I hope I have explained that adequately.

The second point had to do with...

**Hon. Denis Paradis:** The Maritimes.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** Yes, thank you. I worked in the Maritimes and I am very familiar with the region.

• (1245)

**Hon. Denis Paradis:** I'm very concerned. You also worked in Ontario and Quebec. You're going to scare people in the Maritimes.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** I also worked in the West. I understand the country perhaps a little better than some Canadians.

As I said, it's important to remember that the Maritimes are somewhat different from Quebec and Ontario. In the Maritimes, we act as the provincial police by virtue of a contracting arrangement. We do the municipal work and we maintain a presence there. If the province of Nova Scotia decides to close detachments or offices, that decision will be made by the province, not me, because it is the one paying the bill. It's not up to the RCMP to decide. The situation is completely different. Elected officials are always the ones that make the decisions, but it's important to understand one thing: in our system, deployment and operations are always the responsibility of the police. That's the distinction that needs to be made. As Ms. McLellan stated when she appeared before the Committee, in terms of operations and the deployment of its resources to attack criminal organizations and carry out criminal investigations, the police act independently.

**Hon. Denis Paradis:** I will have to disagree with you on that interpretation, because in my opinion, when it comes to distributing policing resources across Canada, it's not accurate to say that politicians have no right to be involved in such decisions.

The mayors told us they don't want to know whether police officers are doing speed checks in such and such a street, or whether they're making seizures, and so on. However, if there are clubs in certain neighbourhoods which are making noise, they'll ask police officers to patrol that area more frequently, because people make complaints about the noise. That's at the municipal level. But if we're talking about the distribution of policing resources across Canada as a whole, I believe elected members of Parliament should have their say.

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** But if there are five incidents in a given community and the police can only intervene in three of them, who is going to decide which ones warrant police intervention? That's the issue. If I want to intervene in the three most serious cases, I have to be able to distribute resources based on those priorities.

Your third question was... Perhaps we are talking at cross purposes, but I see no other solution than to continue to talk. I'm here and I'm prepared to come back before the Committee again, to try and explain my position. I'm very aware of the politics surrounding this, and I'm also aware of the situation of the mayors in small towns, which is no different than that of our mayors in the large cities.

Ultimately, in our system, if you want a police force, you have to pay to have the staff. If you want to increase the staff complement, you have to pay to do that. Are taxpayers prepared to...

**Hon. Denis Paradis:** Commissioner, once again, you're talking about money. This is what I was saying previously. You are given a base budget of \$2 billion a year; because of security issues following 9/11, you were given an extra \$800 million. And now you're saying that if we want more services, we have to pay even more!

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Paradis.

Mr. Breitzkreuz is next. We have to save some time to debate Mr. Ménard's motion, of which we were given notice Tuesday.

[English]

Mr. Breitzkreuz, you had a question.

**Mr. Garry Breitzkreuz:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Fantino, the Toronto police chief, expressed a lot of concern that some of the resources going into justice were not being properly utilized. At the end of my last question, I alluded to the fact that there are resources that, in my opinion, should be redeployed.

You have somewhat avoided my colleague's question, and Mr. Warawa's question as well, on whether the money being spent on the Firearms Centre would be better used fighting organized crime. It's in the neighbourhood of \$100 million a year, give or take a few million. I'm going to put you on the spot: don't you feel that would be a better expenditure of our money? I'm asking you now to take your policeman's hat off and put on your political hat. In a sense, it has been politics.

In my opinion, from what I have seen, we have 176,000 people in this country who have been ordered by the courts not to possess firearms, and we never check on them. The Firearms Centre is basically an exercise in pushing paper around and dealing with law-abiding citizens. I don't know how many thousand more police officers we would have, but I'm sure a couple of thousand could be

put on the streets for the kind of money that is being spent here. Wouldn't that be a better deployment of resources?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** You're not putting me on the spot at all. As you know, I only wear the RCMP hat and I wear no other hat. The point is very simple for me. You've heard me say that I am a very strong supporter of a gun registry. I believe it is a good and effective tool. I believe in that. It's never a question of either/or; you need many tools in the toolbox.

Where elected officials chose to put their money or support is for the elected officials to decide. I will make my argument that we need resources in many areas. We do need more resources, but I strongly support the gun registry. I strongly support the DNA databank. I support a lot of initiatives that we have.

• (1250)

**Mr. Garry Breitzkreuz:** I have limited time here. Let me go to something else.

My understanding is that in Saskatchewan the training facilities are not being fully utilized. In addition to that, there are some communities that are concerned about the closure of their detachment. I get reports from time to time from citizens very upset that there's not the presence of the RCMP there.

In Saskatchewan and Manitoba there have been huge cutbacks to the number of highway patrols, and in Saskatchewan there's been some high-profile interception of drugs moving along the Trans-Canada Highway and this kind of thing. Can you make some comments in that regard? This is a huge concern.

I'll cite another statistic for you, and I think this clearly illustrates how underpoliced we are. The number of Criminal Code offences per police officer has doubled in the last dozen years, and the workload for each police officer is becoming overwhelming. The paperwork sometimes absorbs their time because of the number of Criminal Code offences they have to deal with. Doesn't this indicate clearly that we are underpoliced and that we should be redeploying our resources from some areas and putting it into that?

**Commr Giuliano Zaccardelli:** I agree with you that we need more resources in policing. In Saskatchewan in the nineties the province asked us to go through an exercise where we reduced the number of detachments by more than half. As you know, a number of small communities literally closed down. Again, we moved those resources elsewhere, we grouped them, and so on. You're right, there is a shortage. It's the same thing in Manitoba

As to those great cases we're making on the highways, they're from intelligence. It goes back to what Mr. Ménard was saying: those highway patrol officers and those uniformed officers, by getting good intelligence, are making some fantastic seizures on the highway. We're using intelligence and we're deploying them based on the intelligence; we're not putting them in static positions.

There have been some closures, but again, the elected officials in the provinces dictate how much money they want to spend on policing. Based on that, I tried to make the best use of those resources. But overall, I believe policing is underfunded in this country.

I want to come back to Depot, which is the training academy, the jewel in the crown. I'm sorry, I hate to disagree with you, but Depot, that training academy, is being used almost to the maximum right now, because we are going through a demographic shift here. The people who joined policing in the late sixties and early seventies throughout this country are all retiring, and every police force is facing the challenge of recruiting a lot of people.

Depot, the training academy, is working very hard. We're actually talking about now putting on double shifts at night. Of course, the more cadets we put at Depot, the more benefit the province of Saskatchewan gets.

I don't know who's saying we're underutilizing resources. As a matter of fact, we're almost bursting at the seams in some cases. We're building some new facilities there to accommodate some of this now.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I think our time is up, and I thank Commissioner Zaccardelli and Assistant Commissioner Bourduas for being with us.

I think we'll have a five-minute adjournment before continuing.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ménard, do you intend to move your motion?

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** Yes.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Yes, Mr. Cullen.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Mr. Chairman, could Commissioner Zaccardelli and Mr. Bourduas stay for the motion in case there are some questions that come up? There are some issues around the number of detachments and—

**The Chair:** I'm in the hands of the committee. If we debate the motion in camera or if we have it in public, it's up to the committee. If it is in public, obviously I think they have the right to remain.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Well, I think there might be some questions. I know there are some questions around some of the wording of the motion and operational issues that I think we need to—

• (1255)

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz:** I'd like to move in camera. It doesn't matter to me who's here and who's not.

**An hon. member:** What's the point of going in camera?

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz:** The point of going in camera is that it's not recorded and it's not on the public record.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Maybe we could compromise. Could we ask the commissioner and Mr. Bourduas to wait outside in case we have any technical questions?

**The Chair:** First, is it the committee's desire to go in camera or to remain in public?

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz:** They could just sit at the back so they know what our technical questions are.

**Mr. Joe Comartin:** I would like to get some rationale as to why we're going in camera.

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz:** I want to discuss the motion. I have a few problems with the motion.

**The Chair:** We'll suspend for five minutes, we'll go in camera, and if the commissioner and the assistant commissioner remain available, then we could ask them questions.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]







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