

F-29H

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is to express our concerns regarding the volatile situation which exists in the Ipperwash Beach area. We believe this situation developed because the Federal Government failed to honour their commitments to the First Nations people within a reasonable time frame.

Over the years large monetary concessions were made to the Kettle and Stony Point Band. The real issue, the return of land appropriated in 1942, was not addressed.

We, like many others in the area, are caught up in the midst of all the unrest and uncertainty which now exists.

We are permanent residents of the Centre Ipperwash area. For many years we enjoyed a quiet and peaceful retirement. All that changed at 5:00 A.M. on Sept. 7, 1995 when we were awakened by the O.P.P. and advised that a deadly confrontation had taken place between the police and natives who had occupied the Ipperwash Provincial Park. We were told for our own safety we should vacate our home until the situation improved.

Following this, the natives demanded the withdrawal of the O.P.P. from the area, and that security be entrusted to the Kettle Point police.

Being away from our home for 12 days not knowing what was happening to our home and belongings was very stressful and frustrating. As a result of the crisis our homeowners insurance was questionable. Many people in the area were told their insurance was null and void.

Since the confrontation, the stress, anxiety and uncertainty has had an adverse affect on our lives, and the lives of others in the area. Our health and that of others has been affected both physically and mentally. Property values in the area have decreased drastically and sales are almost nil.

We are concerned with the inequity of the law applied during and after the occupation of the former Military Base, and during and after the occupation of the Ipperwash Provincial Park. We believe the laws of Ontario, and the laws of Canada should be the same for everyone regardless of race or creed.

Over the years Government agencies have failed to address the request by natives for return of the army camp property. The ministers now responsible for those agencies should provide the negotiator with positive support, and a clear mandate to negotiate a settlement.

Natives occupying the Ipperwash Provincial Park should be removed and the park reopened for campers again this summer. The park has been an important part of the area's economic will being.

We feel the Federal and Provincial Governments have a responsibility to the citizens of this community to resolve the situation at the army camp, and at the Ipperwash Provincial Park without further delay.

For the sake of the local residents, and the native people we hope and pray that peace and tranquility will prevail once again in the community.

Sincerely,

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