

J6

Aug 16/01
RR 2 Forest Ont.
P.O. Box 25
NON1J0.

Crown Attorney Mark Czerkowski,
700 N. Christina St.
Sarnia Ontario.

Dear Sir,

I attended the court case for incidents involving several property owners at the west Ipperwash beach community in August of 99. The case was heard on June 8/01 and sentencing of the three individuals charged is in Sept./01

As a resident of Ipperwash and the west beach subdivision, I have been appalled at the amount of crime in the area. I have personally been a victim of crime myself. I have suffered through theft of my vehicle and having it totally trashed as well as a break and enter to my home and two break and enters to my garage. Involved with Tourism in the cottage rental business, I have also been aware of tourists being victims with break and enters to their cars and personal belongings such as wallets and credit cards, purses and valises being stolen while in the area for vacation. As a neighborhood watch captain, I have discovered damage to many homes with attempted and completed break and enters. I was witness to the offense which occurred to the home of Anne McGowan as a result of these three trying to get away from the police. I honestly feel that they would not have been caught had they not rammed into the house. For weeks residents had to deal with daily break and enters, thefts and vandalism. Crime is rampant out here. In many cases some residents are afraid to even name the person if they know them for fear of retaliation if the person is a native. On the day of the incidents in question, I was threatened with death threats by [REDACTED] as well as others who had responded to the accident. These three defendants showed no respect for the law officers or the property owners. It was disheartening to know that at this time all three were on probation for other offenses. Since June 8/01 we have become aware that two of them, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have been involved yet again in incidents on the west beach and at Kettle Point. All of us were concerned that they were being freed until the sentencing date and now we are more than sure our concerns were justified. In the year 2000 there were over 200 incidents in the Ipperwash area. Only three people have been arrested for six of those incidents. In 1999 incidents of break and enter, threats and vandalism escalated to bodily harm for two residents. One has permanent disability in his hand as a result and the other received burns from a lit Roman Candle pointed at him. Unfortunately many incidents are at the hands of aboriginals. It is not our fault that aboriginals chose to commit these offenses against innocent homeowners. These three individuals have lengthy records and should not be allowed to just walk away with probation yet again. A message must be sent by the courts that the Justice system does care about the victims of crime and that the ethnic background of the perpetrator of repeated criminal offenses should not have a bearing on the proper sentence for the seriousness of the offense. We at Ipperwash should not have to live in fear of when we will be victimized next because the courts did not do the right thing to deter crime.

In closing I also wish to state that I am not aware of anyone who has suffered a crime at Ipperwash who has had anyone refer them to victims services of any kind to deal with the aftermath of what has occurred to them and how to handle the fear and frustration. To the best of my knowledge this is the first time we have been allowed to provide an impact statement.

Respectfully Submitted,
Roland LaPratte.