

LI  
Tc

IPPERWASH PROVINCIAL PARK - NATIVES WILL DEFY A COURT ORDER - S.G. WILL NOT FORCEABLY

SATURDAY, September 9, 1995

THE LONDON FREE PRESS

# IPPERWASH OCCUPATION

# Province won't forcibly remove natives

The OPP has been pulled back, and negotiations to end the confrontation will take place.

By Norman De Bono  
Free Press Reporter

Natives occupying Ipperwash Provincial Park will defy a court injunction to leave the area, and Ontario Provincial Police will not remove them, native leaders said Friday.

In an effort to ease the violent unrest in the community, Ontario Solicitor-General Bob Runciman agreed Friday that natives will not be forcibly removed.

In fact, following negotiations between native leaders and the provincial government, OPP pulled back from barricades surrounding Camp Ipperwash. In turn, natives also took down many of their protest fires and agreed to negotiate in hope of ending the confrontation with police.

"The police will not come here. We understand they will not be seen on this property at all," Ovide Mercredi, Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, told natives at Camp Ipperwash.

**REFUSE MEETING:** However, government officials continue to refuse to meet with native leaders until the park land is vacated, something Gordon Peters, Ontario Regional Chief, said will not happen.

"There is no reason for anyone to leave the park," said Peters.

Wednesday night, Anthony "Brian" George, 38, was killed by an OPP gunfire following a confrontation between OPP and natives at the park. The OPP claims natives fired first, while natives say they were not armed. On Monday, natives from Camp Ipperwash seized 107 acres of the park, claiming it housed a burial ground.

OPP were then called in as near-

by cottagers feared for their property. On the evening of the shooting, more than 200 cottagers were evacuated to nearby Forest, and are still awaiting an end to the standoff.

"There is a lot of concern, they're wondering when are they going to go home," said Cindy Maxfield, a Bosanquet town employee.

Many of the evacuees are seniors now, living with family and friends, and fear for their property while they are away. One elderly man needed oxygen Thursday and couldn't return to his home, and Maxwell had to call a London company to help the man.

**FRUSTRATION:** "There is a lot of frustration on both sides and it is increasing. We all want this to be resolved," she said.

As for the call to remove the burning tire barricades, natives greeted the announcement with "mixed feelings," said Vic George, who works for the Kettle and Stony Point volunteer fire department.

"I'd like to get on with my life, but there is still a lot of tension here," he said.

George said OPP patrolled the fields near the army base Thursday night and Friday morning, but were being viewed by natives wearing night vision goggles.

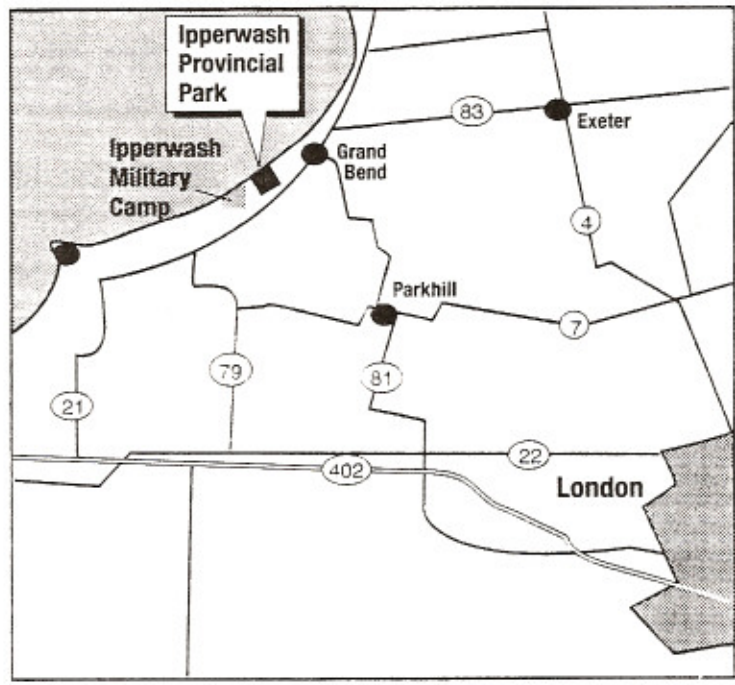
"They have a lot of equipment, but we have a lot of gear now, too. I don't know what they were trying to do, but we were watching them," said George.

While the threat of an armed conflict still exists, Scott Ewart is calling on non-natives to gather Sunday for a peace march from Highway 21 in Ravenswood to the camp gates.

"For the love of God help us put an end to this misery and violence," said Ewart, who also works for the town of Bosanquet.

"There is a lot of fear and lot of prejudice here right now."

Ed Francis, a native living at Camp Ipperwash, said like many natives, he is still willing to die to hold on to the park.



The London Free Press

## WHAT WAS SAID

“ There is a lot of frustration on both sides and it is increasing. We all want this to be resolved.

” Cindy Maxfield, a Bosanquet town employee.

” The police will not come here. We understand they will not be seen on this property at all.

” Ovide Mercredi, Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations.



George Blumson / The London Free Press

Ovide Mercredi, Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, leaves the meeting en route to meet with natives at Camp Ipperwash Friday.