

Indians and supporters lose uphill battle to RCMP

OTTAWA (CUP) - RCMP riot squad officers forced close to 300 militant Indian demonstrators off Parliament Hill late today (Sept. 30) in the second pitched battle between the two groups.

The riot squad appeared from nowhere and forced the demonstrators back down the steps they had won in a previous battle, off the Hill, out onto Metcalfe Street and back to Indian headquarters.

During the skirmish riot squad officers pushed people off the stone wall on top of the Hill, a fifteen foot drop, and down the stairs using their clubs liberally on demonstrators as well as bystanders.

Earlier in the day the Indians marched from an abandoned government building eight blocks below Parliament Hill, up Rideau Street to the Hill before being met by a solid wall of RCMP officers and a wooden barricade. The Indians fought the RCMP for about 20 feet before they were stopped. RCMP officers kicked protesters in the groin and ganged up on individual Indians who broke through the lines. One hundred soldiers armed with bayonets provided the colour guard for Parliament and later a back up for the RCMP.

The Indians remained on the Hill beating their drums, singing and making speeches for about two hours while Parliament was in session. They booed the army band playing O Canada and Chief Justice Bora Laskin when he appeared to review the guard, after the session ended.

Violence erupted again when the RCMP started pushing people off the steps of the House of Commons. Then the riot squad appeared and ordered everyone off the Hill. The Indians fought back throwing rocks, bottles, and sticks.

During the fighting Don Whiteside of the Canadian Federation of Civil Liberties was beaten by riot police as he tried to explain who he was.

"For the riot police to come in and beat people indiscriminately is inexcusable," Whiteside said.

Charlotte McEwan, an elderly Ottawa activist, was also pushed to the ground by the police rush.

"They were pushing everybody down those steps and you know what 20 concrete steps can do. There were quite a few bloody faces," she said.

Bob Buckingham, National Union of Students organizer and a participant in the demonstration said, "I think it's a disgrace. It's symptomatic of the way the Indian in this country is treated by the white man's government."

He was disgusted that no member of Parliament came out to talk to the demonstrators and Chief Justice Bora Laskin did not even acknowledge their presence.

He went back to lodge a complaint with his member of Parliament and discovered that all the MPs were "hobnobbing and having a booze party," in the Parliament buildings.

Indian leaders were not available for comment as they had returned to their headquarters for a private strategy session.

The charge of the riot squad was ordered by Superintendent Marcel Sauve, officer in charge of the criminal investigation branch A, Division Ottawa, of the RCMP.

"It had become an unruly crowd. Our men were being beaten with rocks and sticks and had taken all measures possible to disperse the crowd. Three of our men were

injured slightly and treated in a local hospital. Afterwards we picked up spikes and chains and other weapons," he said.

Canadian University Press reporters who were in the midst of the fighting saw only belts and picket signs in the hands of the demonstrators. Other reporters at the scene also say they saw no other weapons in the hands of the Indians.

Sauve refused to say how many RCMP officers were at the demonstration stating only that

no respect. "We are here to talk about violence. We are against violence. The violence of racism, poverty, economic dependence, alcoholism, land theft and educational warfare. This is the violence that has hurt our people. We say it is time for the democracy of Canada to end its political and social violence against our people."

"We say it is time for the Canadian political system to be reasonable and listen to the voice of our community. We say you have been unreasonable. The

ment of \$2.5 billion from money not presently allocated to Indian Affairs which will be used by local native communities to meet their needs for the development of self-sufficient economies. It is racial discrimination and genocide that the federal government pays \$750-million to the province of Prince Edward Island, with a population of less than one-third of the native population, for economic development but has refused to provide equivalent money for the native

fill the prisons and mental wards of Canada. Racist justice must end.

Earlier in the day Louis Cameron in a short interview said that thousands of Indian people couldn't make the march but that the caravan had their support. He also said that the Indian people would only use violence if they had to.

"People will always fight if put down by discrimination and police brutality. The government and the Department of Indian Affairs have already initiated violence on the Indian people," he said.

Another spokesman for the group, Vern Harper, a Saskatchewan Indian who now lives in Toronto joined the caravan because "It is what I believe in. I believe in the caravan. It is long overdue and could be of some help."

He said that the purpose of the caravan was to be in Ottawa for the opening of Parliament to make the world aware of the plight of native people in Canada. The demonstration, he said, would bring the message to the people.

Besides that, the caravan had united the native people across Canada. We have people from AIM and the Ojibway Warriors Society. It has also united people of all age levels and broken down the barriers between Metis, and Indians and non-status Indians," he said.

We explained that the group has been harassed by the police since they started out in Vancouver. (Three members of the caravan were arrested by police in Vancouver.)

"The police never openly attacked us but would have if they had the chance," said Harper.

He also had harsh words for various political groups who have tried to manipulate the caravan on its way.

"We denounce some of the left and right wing groups that have tried to manipulate us. We expected the right wing groups to manipulate us, but some left wing groups have tried to manipulate us instead of just giving us their solidarity."

He believes that the caravan has been an education to all the people who participated in it.

"It has taught us to respect each other. It has also made us look to our sisters with more respect."

He sees the caravan as the first of many such actions. "The caravan is an open affront and the native people are going to use it as a way to deal with the issues."

"The government now has two choices - to make radical changes or openly oppose us and we're ready for both. We're prepared for trouble."



"If you don't like it here in Canada why don't you go back where you came from?"

"they had adequate reserves, including the riot squad over and above the number that were seen."

"We had carefully planned this operation in conjunction with the Ottawa police," said Sauve. There were 20 Ottawa policemen guarding the American embassy during the demonstration.

When asked to comment on the statement made by Don Whiteside, Sauve said only that "we have no comment to make on that statement."

Over 20 arrests were made by the RCMP, most of them in the second battle. Ottawa police say that two of the Indians will be charged with obstructing the police but other charges are as yet unknown. All arrests were made by the RCMP and processed by Ottawa police.

The Indians arrived in Ottawa Sunday night and took over an abandoned government building, saying they would stay until Minister of Indian Affairs Jud Buchanan met with them.

While the Indians were on the Hill they shouted to the RCMP and soldiers that they "didn't come 4,000 miles to stop here. We'd rather die here than in your institutions."

During the speeches Louis Cameron, leader of the Ojibway Warriors Society who occupied a Kenora park earlier this summer, read a manifesto and list of demands that they wanted met by the government.

"We the native peoples have banded to come to Ottawa seeking justice. We are here to talk about the right of all people to live as free people. For many years we have received promises instead of human rights, instead of justice; we are here to say the people cannot live on promises."

"Today our people exist in the midst of the Canadian extension of European competitive values. Today our people have alcoholism, they have no education, no work, no housing. Today our people have

proof is evident in the condition our people exist in. Since politicians have taken control of our lives the destruction of our communities has increased.

"This time we are still willing to talk but we will not sit idly to the side while the destruction of our people is completed. We only seek to live as free people. It is the way of the land and its children. The will of the people to be free is supreme. The right of the people to be free is divine."

The Indians also had a list of ten demands which they read out and wanted presented to either Prime Minister Trudeau or any MP who would come out.

The list included: -the hereditary and treaty rights of all native peoples in Canada including Indian, Metis, non-status and Inuit must be recognized and respected in the constitution of Canada.

-we demand the repeal of the present Indian Act and the creation by native people of new legislation recognizing our right to self-determination and sovereignty over our land.

-the Department of Indian Affairs operates to serve business and government interests, not the interests of the Indian people. We demand a complete investigation of the Department of Indian Affairs by native people and the transfer of its power and resources to native communities. Indian affairs must belong to the people and be separated from the Department of Northern Development.

-we demand annual payments in perpetuity from all levels of government. Canadian wealth is derived from the land. The time has come for the Canadian government to pay their debt to native peoples.

-we demand an end to the destruction of our native economies.

-we demand immediate pay-

ment of \$2.5 billion from money not presently allocated to Indian Affairs which will be used by local native communities to meet their needs for the development of self-sufficient economies. It is racial discrimination and genocide that the federal government pays \$750-million to the province of Prince Edward Island, with a population of less than one-third of the native population, for economic development but has refused to provide equivalent money for the native

peoples, the most impoverished in Canada. -we demand that the standard of housing in native communities be immediately raised to the Canadian average. We demand that \$800-million be allocated to Indian Affairs to be made available to local native communities for housing needs this year.

-we demand health care facilities and services which are adequate to raise the life expectancy of the native people to the Canadian average within five years.

-we demand an end to federal cutbacks in native education and an expansion of community controlled native education. The education system must be made to serve native people rather than native people being made to serve and educational system designed to destroy native cultures.

-violence and oppression will only be ended when both the hereditary and human rights of the native peoples are truly upheld. We demand that \$500-million be made available of money not presently allocated must no longer

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