

Indians trying to establish 'diplomatic relations'

OTTAWA (CUP) -- One of the main reasons why the native caravan came to Ottawa was because Judd Buchanan, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development would not talk to the native people of Canada, said Louis Cameron, spokesman for the protest group.

Since the caravan arrived in Ottawa late Sunday night, they have tried to contact Buchanan to arrange an interview but he has let several deadlines pass without answering the natives.

Today (Oct. 2) the 12-person central committee of the native caravan will set a specific time for Buchanan to meet with them at the Native People's Embassy, the

name the natives have given the abandoned carbide mill they are occupying while in Ottawa.

"Buchanan hasn't offered us anything yet. We had a group trying to set up a meeting but we couldn't contact him. We think he should come here to meet with us, because these people have come 3,000 miles to bring their message," said Cameron.

The natives have new demands which they will present to the minister but are not revealing them as of yet.

Cameron had harsh words for Buchanan's overall attitude. "Buchanan says that he won't come to meet people using violence. However, Buchanan also didn't

come to meet with members of the Native Indian Brotherhood in Quebec in late August when he was invited.

"He better do something. We will stay here until he comes and the confrontation will continue until he meets with us," Cameron said.

"The Department of Indian Affairs has divided the Indian people as had the band system and the Indian people have been confused by the educational system. We want the DIA dismantled," he said.

Members of the caravan say Buchanan has tried to have the march stopped since it started out from Vancouver in early September. They say Buchanan told

George Manuel, president of the Canadian Indian Brotherhood that it was his job to stop the caravan.

"Buchanan will try to use our own people against us. But the native leaders are saying the same thing as we in the caravan are saying," Cameron said.

Members of the caravan feel that Buchanan is doing nothing to ease the tensions in Ottawa. Instead they are being allowed to build.

When talking about the violence on Parliament Hill, Cameron said that the army, RCMP and the government were there, armed and ready to commit violence. The native people only brought a drum and petitions and the government wouldn't listen to the just demands

of the demonstrators.

"They were prepared and had guns to use against us. We are against violence but we will defend ourselves if attacked. They didn't listen to our demands and brought the violence on us. We just fought back."

"The attacks by the police have cleared the lines and clarified the position of the government and the native people."

The number of people in the embassy, named so because "everyone has to have a spot of independence, every country is given a piece of land in a foreign country", has been growing daily.

They have also been receiving a lot of support from the Ottawa community in the form of food, clothing, and money. The natives have the support of many outside groups as well.

Cameron says that the press could become an enemy of the native people.

"I don't want to criticize the freedom of the press but if its the same kind of freedom provided by the government to commit crimes of violence against the people and if the press continues to distort the facts they will become an enemy of us."

Cameron feels the housing needs of the native people are the most important. When a native has decent housing then he can worry about getting a job and food but most natives do not have any decent housing and this creates most of the other problems for the natives, he said.

He thinks the government will continue to cutback on funds to native people. They have already cut back their funding for native economic development from \$8 million in 1973-74 to \$4.95 million in 1974-75.

"The whole country is effected in this way. The people will be more oppressed and one economic group will be suppressed to serve another economic group. Social programs, food, etc. will all be cut back to redeem the corporate elite."

Trudeau's government has taken a "left-wing stance" in their foreign aid policy while, says Cameron, taking a genocidal approach to native people.

"The government actions are genocidal. We have the highest incarceration rate, suicide rate and the shortest life expectancy in Canada and these are all a direct effect of government action or inaction."

"Look for more open confrontation in the months ahead if the government doesn't meet the demands of the native people."

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The can issue gets resolved

(CUPI) -- A California Assemblywoman's long-standing campaign to force pay toilets succeeded last week as Governor Ronald Reagan signed her bill into law.

The bill, which Assemblywoman March Fong has been pushing for four years, bans pay toilets in public buildings. Fong used the pay toilet issue as part of her successful campaign for the Democrat nomination for California's Secretary of State.

Commenting on her bill's passage into law, Fong said, "The battle has been won, we flushed the opposition right down."