

N. S. Indians get back 1,476 acres of their land

HALIFAX (CUP) — The Union of Nova Scotia Indians (UNSI) has won the first round in its fight with Ottawa to recover more than 2,500 acres of prime land set aside in 1842 as the Middle River Indian Reserve.

Armed with stacks of evidence to back their claim that the land was sold or taken from them illegally, Band representatives Peter and Roy Bernard convinced Ottawa last week that at least 1,476 acres should be transferred back to the reserve.

This precedent setting action by the federal department of Indian Affairs involves land now owned by 60 non-Indians (including some wealthy Americans) on which summer and permanent homes have been built, farming is going on and a commercial development is flourishing.

However, according to one Ottawa official, the Indians involved do not want to be paid off in money. They want the land. And, later, they would like to be

compensated for its loss of use over the past 100 years.

It has been estimated that evictions, plus compensation, would likely cost in the vicinity of \$3 to \$4 million especially with lake frontage running at \$40 a foot.

Understandably, Indian Affairs officials don't want to evict anyone. They hope the matter can be negotiated.

But, according to Indian spokesmen, last week's trip to Ottawa just covered the tip of the iceberg.

The victory was the result of almost four years of research.

According to most Indians, they've always known they'd been done out of their lands but never had the financial resources to do anything about it.

In keeping with policy to help Indians to help themselves, the Indian Affairs Department came through with the money to make the legal research into land rights possible.

"But I don't think they thought we could find anyone who could really do it, or else they still think we can be bought off."

In any case, the UNSI hired a research director a few years ago and last June got themselves a top notch lawyer.

Stu Killen, himself a vet of 10 years with the federal department of Indian Affairs and UNSI legal counsel, David Lowry, made the trip to Ottawa.

Lowry refused to comment on the Ottawa action. He said negotiations were still going on and

that he felt confident the Union had a solid claim for winning the rest of the Middle River claim.

Killen was just as reluctant to talk to the press.

He did say, however, that the Middle River Reserve claim is the biggest one presented by the UNSI and could become one of the most dramatic Indian claims in the entire country.

The UNSI apparently made it clear that they want to participate in any dealings involving non-Indians who might be evicted from the lands Ottawa has agreed to return.

According to one Indian spokesman Indians want to have a say in how this will be carried out.

The reason for this, they say, is that Indian people want to make sure that the treatment of non-Indians is humane. They are afraid that if the matter is left up to the department of Indian Affairs "then they will be treated in the same kind of officious and high handed manner as we have been treated and we don't want that."

Demonstrators arrested

Protest government policy towards Chile

VANCOUVER (CUP) — Ten of the seventeen people who occupied Vancouver Manpower and Immigration offices November 19 in protest of Canadian government policy toward Chilean refugees were dragged out of the offices and charged with common assault after they refused the office manager's request to leave.

Similar demonstrations were held on the same day in four other centres across Canada. The demands made by the five groups were the same and they had asked for a five-way telephone hook-up to bargain collectively with the Department of Manpower and Immigration.

When the request was refused, they agreed to maintain their respective occupations until this demand and previous demands that security checks of Chilean refugees cease were met.

In Winnipeg the occupiers voted to leave. In Montreal they were forcibly evicted but no charges were laid. In Toronto they were arrested.

The second occupation of Vancouver Manpower and Immigration offices occurred because a meeting between passport director E. H. Woodyard and the protestors' delegation was unfruitful. The protestors had left the offices the first time after they

were promised a meeting with an official from the Department of External Affairs. When they met Woodyard on Friday, November 16, they were presented with a text from Ottawa which, in essence, said nothing.

It was at a meeting of the Chile Solidarity Committee on Sunday, November 18, that the decision for further action in response to the bureaucratic run-around was made. The demands were much the same as originally:

"That the Canadian government grant political refugee status to all persons affected by the coup in Chile, who make application to come to Canada, without security checks.

"That the Canadian government pressure, politically and economically, the junta in Chile to grant safe conduct to the numerous refugees in embassies in Chile, to allow them out of Chile to Canada.

"That the Canadian government provide an airlift for the exiles and help facilitate their settlement in Canada.

"That ambassador Ross be replaced."

The emphasis was on a halt to the security and personality checks on prospective immigrants. Given the nature of the Chilean junta, the type of information regarding prospective immigrants released to the Canadian embassy is not difficult to anticipate.

A further demand that applicants from Chile be admitted on refugees status was made. This is the procedure under which Ugandans and Czechoslovaks were admitted to Canada (but they were fleeing a different type of coup).

(Donations to help pay the expected fines can be mailed care of P. O. Box 2881, Vancouver, B. C.)

Comedy of errors

Workers ask for sick leave

PETERBOROUGH (CUP) — A man hired by a construction company was asked to fill out the details of an accident that put him in the hospital after less than an hour on the job.

His job was simply to carry an excess of bricks from the top of a two story house down to the ground. This is his meticulous report:

"Thinking I could save time, I rigged a beam with a pulley at the top of the house, and a rope leading to the ground. I tied an empty barrel on one end of the rope, pulled it to the top of the house, and then fastened the other end of the rope to a tree. Going up to the top of the house, I filled the barrel with bricks.

"Then I went back down and unfastened the rope to let the barrel down. Unfortunately the barrel of bricks was now heavier than I, and before I knew what was

happening, the barrel jerked me up in the air. I hung onto the rope, and halfway up I met the barrel coming down, receiving a severe blow on the left shoulder.

"I then continued on up to the top, banging my head on the beam and jamming my fingers in the pulley.

"When the barrel hit the ground, the bottom burst, spilling the bricks. As I was not heavier than the barrel, I started down at high speed. Halfway down, I met the empty barrel coming up, receiving severe lacerations to my skins. When I hit the ground, I landed on the bricks, receiving several cuts and contusions from the sharp edges of the bricks. At this point, I must have become confused because I let go of the rope. The barrel came down, striking me on the head, and I woke up in the hospital. I respectfully requested sick leave."

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