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Natives end tax protest

Protesters march to city hall in Toronto Friday after a dozen native protesters left a downtown Revenue Canada building they had occupied for 29 days.

Natives said they would now take their anti-tax fight to Ottawa.

Changes that came into effect Jan. 1, force 3,000 status natives who work off reserves to pay income tax for the first time, a move that natives say violates treaty rights. See details on Page A2.



CP Photo

TORONTO — Natives said they would take their anti-tax fight to Ottawa after emerging from a month-long occupation of a Revenue Canada building Friday.

About a dozen native protesters left the downtown office waving flags and feathers. They were met by about 700 cheering supporters, some beating drums while others chanted.

The protesters later marched several blocks to City Hall.

"We feel we are today victorious," said Roger Obonsawin, a native leader and one of the protesters holed up inside vacant fifth floor offices of the federal building for 29 days.

The Toronto protest and smaller protests across the country were in response to changes to tax laws.

The changes, which came into effect Jan. 1, force about 3,000 status Indians who work off reserves to pay income tax for the first time, a move the natives say violates treaty rights.

Obonsawin urged aboriginals to disobey new income-tax rules.