

# Officers believed natives would attack homes

TORONTO (CP) — Some Ontario Provincial Police officers feared aboriginals would attack their homes and moved their families out after an officer killed a protester at Ipperwash Provincial Park, police records reveal.

The records, obtained by the Globe and Mail through a Freedom of Information Act request, were a police summary of the native occupation compiled while the incident took place.

About 40 aboriginals, some of them children, occupied the park when it closed for the season three years ago, contending that it contained a native burial ground.

The document indicated police believed they faced a sophisticated enemy that might have the ability to intercept law-enforcement radio transmissions. The first entry after the shooting called the dispute a "First Nations Uprising."

Two days after the shooting of Dudley George, the document noted that "some police officers have moved families out for security reasons."

Portions of the document were censored and there was no indication how many officers moved their families.

Police were so worried that the Ipperwash dispute might escalate into a major showdown with aboriginals elsewhere in Ontario that they drafted a list of potential First Nations hot spots and faxed them to all major OPP offices across the province,



*After the shooting of Dudley George (inset) by OPP in 1995, Natives barricaded the road into Ipperwash Provincial Park.*

according to the record.

Although the OPP have a policy of trying to resolve aboriginal land claims through negotiations, the incident at Ipperwash turned violent. A police riot squad fired at the protesters two days after the occupation began, killing George.

The killing has sparked a lawsuit against Premier Mike Harris and several other senior government officials by relatives of George and has prompted repeated calls for a public inquiry by opposition politicians who suspect political interference in police conduct at the park.

This claim has been denied by Harris.

The documents obtained by the Globe were compiled by OPP Supt. Ron Fox, who was a member of a committee of government officials who helped develop

the province's response to the occupation.

The Ministry of the Solicitor General initially could find only three pages of records by Supt. Fox.

But after a recent order by Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner, the ministry released another 111 pages, including the OPP incident summary.

Under the order, both Fox and the province's deputy solicitor general had to swear affidavits outlining the nature of the efforts undertaken to locate documents and whether any records on Ipperwash have been destroyed.

Last July, acting Sgt. Kenneth Deane was convicted of criminal negligence causing death for shooting George and sentenced to two years less a day. Deane is appealing the conviction.—CP-