

More than 50 demonstrators blocked Highway 17 near Schreiber for three hours.

On Saturday, August 18, CP Rail employees blocked Highway 17 to protest the lack of action taken by the government over the native blockade of the railway's main line.

A public meeting was held Saturday afternoon. More than 50 concerned citizens and CP employees participated, and through a unanimous vote the decision to follow through with the demonstration was made. Natives in Mobert had been blocking the main line since Thursday and the men wanted to go back to work.

The highway was blocked at Rongie Lake, just west of Schreiber from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. A sign was erected in Schreiber, warning westbound motorists of the blockade. In Nipigon, OPP officers stopped all eastbound traffic to offer them an alternative route along Highway 11.

Although the protest was

peaceful, OPP officers were also at the scene of the blockade to ensure that there were no problems between motorists and the demonstrators.

"Our position right now is strictly to keep the peace and watch for any confrontations," said Sgt. Gerry Tryon from the Nipigon O.P.P. "The co-operation has really been great."

"We're here for a peaceful demonstration to inform the people of Canada what's going on," said Bob Krause, the spokesman for the demonstrators. He said the blockade was not aimed against the natives blocking the railway, but instead at the government.

"We're sending a message to the government to do something and get the railway open," said Krause. "We want the government to resolve the problem."

Krause said he expected the support that the blockade

received.

"People of Schreiber support things that are for a good cause," he said.

As the blockade continued, people from the local communities joined in to support the CP employees. Most motorists stopped at the blockade were understanding, and gave their support to the demonstrators. Yet some were upset and annoyed by the inconvenience the blockade caused them.

"I think it's lousy we're involved in this," said Dave Salyer from Ohio, who came to Northern Ontario for a one week fishing holiday. "I'm going to tell Americans not to come here."

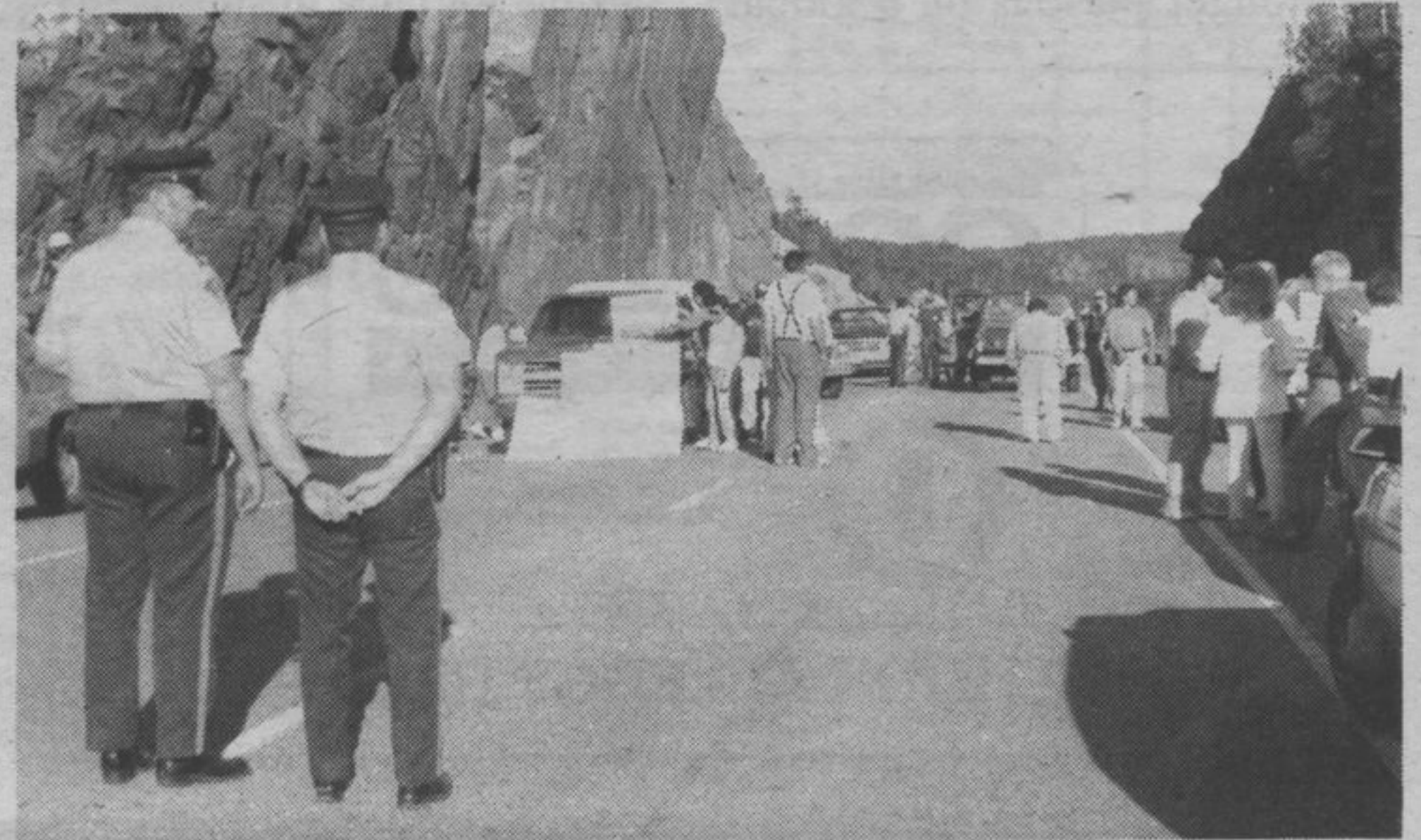
But Valarie Lackner from Montana made the best of the situation. She and her travelling companion hadn't eaten, so she pulled a portable burner from the car and started cooking at the side of the road.



Valarie Lackner cooks up supper at the side of the road while waiting for the Highway 17 blockade to end.

"I'd be mad if it (the blockade) was later," said Tammy Boucher of Terrace Bay. She and her friends were caught by the blockade while returning from Thunder Bay.

More than 200 cars were lined up in the eastbound and westbound lanes of the highway by the time the blockade was lifted shortly before 9:00 p.m.



OPP officers kept the peace at the blockade on Highway 17.



Putting the blockade up at Pays Plat.



Several women sang quietly beside the CP Rail tracks after the blockade was dismantled in Pays Plat.



This young boy took a break from spray painting signs as the blockade went up in



Waiting patiently under the tarp beside the tracks for the outcome of negotiations in Pays Plat.