



## ARCHIVED - Archiving Content

### Archived Content

Information identified as archived is provided for reference, research or recordkeeping purposes. It is not subject to the Government of Canada Web Standards and has not been altered or updated since it was archived. Please contact us to request a format other than those available.

## ARCHIVÉE - Contenu archivé

### Contenu archivé

L'information dont il est indiqué qu'elle est archivée est fournie à des fins de référence, de recherche ou de tenue de documents. Elle n'est pas assujettie aux normes Web du gouvernement du Canada et elle n'a pas été modifiée ou mise à jour depuis son archivage. Pour obtenir cette information dans un autre format, veuillez communiquer avec nous.

This document is archival in nature and is intended for those who wish to consult archival documents made available from the collection of Public Safety Canada.

Some of these documents are available in only one official language. Translation, to be provided by Public Safety Canada, is available upon request.

Le présent document a une valeur archivistique et fait partie des documents d'archives rendus disponibles par Sécurité publique Canada à ceux qui souhaitent consulter ces documents issus de sa collection.

Certains de ces documents ne sont disponibles que dans une langue officielle. Sécurité publique Canada fournira une traduction sur demande.

**IPPERWASH INQUIRY  
YOUTH AND ELDER FORUM ABOUT ABORIGINAL AND POLICE  
RELATIONS**

**Friday, April 22, 2005  
Forest, Ontario  
Forest Memorial Community Centre**

**NOTES**

*The opinions expressed at the Forum and reflected in these notes are those of the participants invited by the Commission to attend and not those of Commission staff nor the Commissioner of the Inquiry. The Commissioner will consider the comments made by participants when he writes the Inquiry report and makes recommendations to help avoid violence in similar circumstances in the future. However, he will not consider the comments to be evidence in making his findings of fact concerning the death of Dudley George.*

**1. Opening:**

Elder Fred Plain

**2. Participants:** see Appendix A, attached

**3. Purpose of the Forum:**

The Inquiry commissioned research about Aboriginal and police relations in Ontario. To compliment this research, the Inquiry hosted the youth and Elder forum. The purpose of the forum was as follows:

- 1) Hear the perceptions and ideas of Aboriginal youth concerning Aboriginal and police relations and incorporate them into the work of the Inquiry;
- 2) Supplement and inform the work of the Inquiry's researcher on "Aboriginal/Police Relations and Policing – Best Practices;"
- 3) Promote healing within the seven southwestern First Nations, whose members were affected by the events in 1995 at Ipperwash Provincial Park; and
- 4) Advance the important educational component of the Inquiry's mandate.

See the forum agenda attached as Appendix B.

**4. Welcome:**

Ipperwash Inquiry Commissioner, Mr. Justice Sidney Linden and Jodie-Lynn Waddilove, Assistant Commission Counsel and Chair of the Forum.

**5. Keynote Address:** Justice of the Peace Donna Phillips

Her Worship Donna Phillips explained that both of her parents attended residential schools. After they left school, they did not return to their First Nation communities. Ms. Phillips grew up in a farming community and went to school in London Ontario. She said that when she was a child, she attended Aboriginal ceremonies with her grandfather on occasion, but she did not really know who she was. Ms. Phillips married young, left school and had a family. She later returned to school after her divorce. She was taking an Ojibway language course when an individual from Oneida First Nation asked her why she was taking the course and suggested she go back to her own community to learn about herself. She decided to return to the Longhouse and learn about her history and her family's history.

Ms. Phillips explained that she was involved in the repatriation of the Canadian Constitution, the changes to the Indian Act in 1985 (Bill C-31), and the development of the Native Justice of the Peace Program.

Ms. Phillips said that the justice system as a whole does not understand First Nations people so it is important for First Nations people to revive their own laws and justice systems. Ms. Phillips believes that in order to make real changes in the justice system for First Nations people, it is important for First Nations people to be part of the system. As well, it is important to ensure proper First Nations representation, such as judges and justices of the peace, in the current justice system.

Ms. Phillips explained that when she originally considered applying to be a Justice of the Peace, she required letters of support from her community as part of the application. Her own community would not give her the letter of support she requested because they said the justice system that she wanted to join was not her community's justice system. A number of years later when there was some discussion amongst federal, provincial governments and First Nations communities about a possible third level of government, her community supported her Justice of the Peace application because of the need to train people to work in a possible third level of government.

Ms. Phillips emphasized how important it is to educate both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities on an on-going basis about First Nations history and current issues. Ms. Phillips was at Oka during the 1990 events and has spoken often about Oka to ensure people know what occurred there and why.

In Ms. Phillips' view, many students do not know about the history of First Nations people and how the laws were used to repress them. First Nations people had to fight to survive. Ms. Phillips explained that she had to be part of the process to educate people about First Nations history. She emphasized that, First Nations people as well need to know their own history and their rights so they can take their place in society and stand proud with their heads held high.

## **6. Discussion:**

The participants were divided into four small discussion groups. Each group consisted of about 10-12 students, an Elder who acted as facilitator, a First Nations youth or education

worker and a note-taker. The Elders rotated through each of the four groups so that all of the students could meet and learn from each Elder.

The discussion questions for the forum are listed in Appendix C.

The most frequently heard comments are summarized at the beginning of each section below. After each summary, other comments, which reflect some of the ideas and convey some of the feelings of participants, have been noted, usually in the participant's own words.

### ***What does policing mean to you?***

For many participants, policing means protecting and serving people and communities. However, some participants said the word "policing" is confusing. Some people think of "the law," and "guns," rather than seeing the police as people whose job it is to ensure the community is safe and that everyone is abiding by the law.

Some participants said that there is no such thing as a "policing" system. There is the two-row wampum i.e. two peoples cannot mix. Traditionally, crime in First Nations communities brought severe penalties. Participants also discussed the Aboriginal approach to policing that involves facing one's community if one did something wrong.

Participants said it takes time to get back to the traditional ways, to understand history and culture and to feel proud; if First Nations peoples go back to the traditional ways, there would be work for everyone and a role for everyone.

Other comments about policing and police included:

- The main role of the police is to ensure we feel safe; if Aboriginal youth fear the police, the police are not doing a key part of the jobs;
- Policing is to make sure there are no bad guys;
- Some police are slackers, are crooked and get drugs from drug dealers;
- Police respond differently to different families;
- Police respond to small things like complaints about dogs but not more important issues such as drunk driving on reserves;
- Police go after you because you're brown;
- Police are power trippers;
- Policing is often harassing rather than trying to understand and help with the root cause of problem.

### ***Do you think police understand youth?***

Many participants said that most adults do not understand youth, unless they experienced the same things when they were young. Whether the police understand youth depends on why they became police officers.

Participants indicated there are cultural barriers, that police tend to stereotype Aboriginal youth and that non-Native police do not understand that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal are two different worlds and cultures.

Participants said that youth still fear the police and many other authority figures. Youth are taught not to respect the police. Some participants said this attitude must change for relations between Aboriginal peoples and the police to improve.

It was suggested that the police need to be more involved with First Nations communities in order to understand Aboriginal youth better. As well, the police need more training to help them understand and work with young people in general.

Other comments included:

- Police are always harassing young people – youth will lash back;
- The negative attitude of some youth towards police is uncalled for;
- Police should understand youth as they were young once;
- Police need to learn from their mistakes;
- Police do not participate in the community enough to understand the young people they are serving;
- Some police resent First Nations youth because they feel all First Nations people are getting a “free ride;”
- Cops on reserves want to be cops for the wrong reasons.

***Do you think First Nations policing services on reserves are different from policing services off reserve?***

Some participants said that First Nations and non-First Nations police are the same if they want to become police officers for the wrong reasons – to look macho and have authority.

Many participants said that because they feel there is so much prejudice in the non-Aboriginal police forces that they would rather deal with Native police officers. Some participants said that Native officers should be able to understand them, given the similar backgrounds. However, other participants did not think there was much if any difference in the way Aboriginal police forces and non-Aboriginal police forces delivered policing services. Native police officers “give up the eagle feather for a badge and a gun.”

Many participants expressed similar concerns about the Aboriginal police forces that serve their communities. Aboriginal police forces are grappling with a number of serious systemic problems that impact on service delivery: these forces do not have enough police officers, there is sometimes little community support for these officers, training for the officers is inadequate, the police forces do not have enough resources, officer response time is slow, communities are under-policed and there is a lack of support from governments.

Participants questioned whether there is any difference between the training received by First Nations police and OPP officers and whether First Nations officers are paid the same

as OPP officers. It is particularly difficult for on-reserve police officers to police their own family members and friends.

Other comments included:

- Under policing is a problem in First Nations communities. Sometimes when there are no Aboriginal police officers on duty, the OPP say they are too busy to deal with what they consider to be smaller matters so they don't respond to calls for assistance;
- When they do respond, the OPP response time tends to be much faster than that of the on-reserve police force response;
- On-reserve police don't enforce some of the laws such as speed limits and under-age drinking;
- Sometimes you can talk your way out of a charge if you know the Aboriginal police officer;
- Sometimes, people may prefer to deal with a police officer from another reserve rather than someone from their own community;
- First Nation police usually do community work as well as policing duties. This makes it easier for them to understand the communities and to feel compassion for the people they are serving. The OPP do not get to know individuals the same way.
- OPP officers come from across the province and are therefore less likely to have an understanding of individual First Nations;
- Both OPP and First Nations police should be physically fit;
- If OPP and Aboriginal police undergo the same training, why do Aboriginal police have a tendency to become less fit? All police forces should re-test officers on occasion to ensure they are still fit for the job;
- Most Aboriginal people like having their own First Nations police but they need to have some standards, such as staying in shape for the job and getting more involved in the community they are policing;
- If Aboriginal youth see their own police drinking and behaving inappropriately, they are less likely to respect them. Police need to be held to high standard and they should try to act as role models for youth;
- Youth would respect police more if they would shut down the "drug houses" and "boot leggers;"
- Off reserve police will watch the Natives more than non-Natives;
- The closer the police force is located to a reserve the more racist the cops are;
- Native police don't respond to emergencies and often the OPP will not go onto the reserves;
- People on reserves feel they can't approach their own police;
- The closer the police get to reserves, the more they stereotype, the more racist they get;
- Reserve police don't respond-they come the next day when it's urgent-can't call OPP because the reserve cops don't want them;
- There was a time when First Nations didn't need police-there was an honour system for the people;
- Some First Nations want the OPP back because there are too many shootings;

- When they come from their own community, they can't or won't police their own families;
- Do First Nations police have any jurisdiction off the reserve? How are they treated by the OPP? What happens if they pull over white people? It would be hard to be a Native police officer;
- Should band councils be the bosses of the on-reserve police?
- What if a councillor's brother is an officer, and councillor is drinking and driving?

### ***Policing and Schools***

Comments included:

- It is sometimes difficult for Native youth to deal with non-native police if something happens in school;
- Native education workers need to advocate assertively for Aboriginal youth, but there are often not enough of these workers;
- If police come to the school, are the youth advised of rights and given the opportunity to call an adult?;
- If there is an incident at school involving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth, the Native cops speak with the Native kids and the non-Native cops speak to the non-Native kids and it is usually the Native youth who get kicked out or suspended;
- Schools tolerate nothing from Native kids. They are expelled. Other kids might get suspended only;
- The school puts the Aboriginal kids in anger management group because they think we won't associate with white people, which is wrong; many of my friends are white;
- There was a fight at school between Native kids and white kids. The white kids were sent to the office. The Native kids were put in the paddy wagon and taken to police station. Native kids who weren't fighting were questioned by police. The police questioned me, and then I got into trouble for being late for class.

### ***What kinds of experiences have you had with the police?***

Some participants explained that many First Nations in southwestern Ontario are situated close to small towns. Some of the residents of these towns, including police officers, have racist attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples.

It was also said that some First Nations youth are told by parents, friends and community members that non-Native people are racists. When First Nations youth leave the reserve to go to high school and encounter non-Native people more frequently, they have to confront and deal with their own ingrained attitudes towards non-Native people.

A number of participants made the point that there should have been police officers present at this Forum to hear what was said about Aboriginal and police relations. (*The Inquiry considered inviting police representatives, however in the interest of encouraging candour by the youth participants, the Inquiry decided not to*).

Participants related many negative, personal experiences with the police to underline their view that the police treat Aboriginal peoples more harshly than non-Aboriginal peoples. The comments included:

- The police make themselves look bad, e.g., in one case they could not handle a group of girls so they ‘pepper-sprayed’ them;
- The OPP stopped me three times and kept asking me questions and then they took me to jail;
- Off reserve, when police hear Natives are involved, they bring a paddy wagon;
- I’ve been thrown on the ground by police;
- After a robbery on a First Nation, they questioned my sister’s boyfriend if he heard anything because he looks like a bad guy so they assumed he knew who did it;
- I went to boarding school so I was taught to obey authority. When I had small children, I was stopped and given a ticket for a vehicle infraction; it might have been a burned out taillight. I didn’t pay the fine. The OPP came to my house and threatened me with jail for not paying the fine. Luckily, my mother came over and paid the fine, so I wasn’t arrested;
- I’ve had all kinds of experience with the police, but the one that still affects me is that when I was a baby, the OPP shot my uncle. I never got to meet him, but I hear his name all the time, I saw pictures, family photos. I don’t like police officers. Uncles are like a father, and I had no father. Nothing was done about the shooting. I’m uneasy around police even if they are from the reserve. I grew up with them. I was picked on by them and beaten up by them, and now they are police officers. I always get questioned by them. I had plenty of chances to fight them, but I keep my anger inside;
- The police pulled me over three times in one day. I called the police to report harassment, but they denied it. Police jumped my son when he was moving; police said they were looking for guns. He was beaten up by police-they said he’d beaten his head against the wall in jail;
- For 17 years, the police harassed me not because I was Native but because I was a biker. I began to change my attitude-I became interested in who I was-police noticed the change. I still consider them the other side, but there is more respect because my beliefs have changed;
- We need jobs to have a better attitude. Women are forced into prostitution or selling drugs to survive. There is no support for young people. Racism is one of the main issues;
- My sister and I were arrested and the police pulled her over the fence and were rough with us; they pushed my sister up against the car; Native kids go through similar experiences with the police so maybe a Native police officer will treat us differently;
- I was accused of shoplifting and the police handcuffed me and took me to jail, threw my bag around and told me to take off my shoes, socks and charged me with shoplifting. One police officer believed me and he talked to my school and the charges were dropped;
- I was with two other kids and we were going home and as we passed a police car, the cop pulled us over and asked for our license and said it was a “routine” check and asked where we going. We told him we were going home to Army Camp road



and then he asked if anyone had a criminal record, which I know is not a question a police officer is supposed to ask in these circumstances;

- I was not comfortable calling the police when a white guy was stalking me so I called relatives. The guy called the police on me and they arrived with three police cars and a paddy wagon. The school did nothing about the incident;
- I heard about two young Aboriginal men taken by the police to a boathouse. The police hit them with gun handles and told them to lie on the floor and to “say your prayers” and when they find you, they’ll think you broke into the boathouse;
- The police have searched me many times. Once the police know who you are, and have your name, you have a bad reputation and are treated badly by the police;
- The way police treat you also depends on the way you present yourself; police don’t only judge you because of race, but also by the way you dress. Police may jump to the wrong conclusion if you have tattoos and wear baggy pants. If you are well-dressed and look like you have good intentions, you may be treated differently by the police;
- I was driving van with visible dream catchers and turtles. The police stopped me and told me to get out of the van. I was scared. I was told to open the rear door-my baby was in the car seat. He said the car seat was improperly installed because there was no tether. I still don’t know what that means. I have four children-I don’t know what a tether is. He asked for my license and insurance, and he was standing very close in my space. I asked him to step back, he refused. I got a ticket. I felt intimidated and scared. I went home and cried. I felt violated that day. When I fought it in court, I lost;
- We had a break and enter and we know who did it. We called police, but they did not come until a week later;
- There was a man standing in our yard threatening to shoot us and the police did nothing at first. Finally, the police charged him with uttering threats, but he didn’t lose his gun. Also, my cousin is threatening to kill us and is sending threatening letters. All the police did was to tell us to keep the letters.

***As youth, do you see yourselves as having a role in your community?***

“Youth are going to be our future; they need to know who they are so they can teach our children ...youth and children are medicine for our community.”

Many participants were very positive about their role in their communities. They see themselves as future leaders and role models for those both younger and older than themselves. Many participants were involved in their communities, through youth council, sports, theatre, educational achievements, after school and evening activities for younger children. Participants explained how important it is to be a positive role model for younger children by not smoking or drinking, and by staying in school.

Other participants said they did not have a role in their communities or did not know what their role was.

Other comments included:

- Part of the education process is helping to build a pride in young people about the Anishinabe ways. This is difficult because Aboriginal adults and Elders often lack pride themselves because of the history of culture and language oppression, the history of residential schools and cultural genocide;
- If you don't take part in a decision, then you have to live with it. Youth have to become involved; they are the future teachers, leaders, and police. It is always a learning process in First Nations communities because most of the grandparents went to residential schools and had to relearn their cultures, languages, crafts, and ways of life;
- Often there is no or little economic base in First Nations communities to support youth initiatives. We need more young people to get a good education and come back to the communities to help build an economic base;
- Youth will have to take over some day and do what the elders do now;
- You have to know where you come from, get an education, get a degree, get respect;
- If we could bring what we learn at this forum back to every reserve, that would be a positive thing;
- There should at least be youth representation on the band councils; youth have insights that older people don't have;
- We have a youth council; the band council members like it and say they never would have thought about things the way youth do;
- If there's a youth council, this may help youth avoid getting into trouble;
- Youth are interested in music and politics, not fishing;
- I sit on the youth council. It's hard to trust because the band council makes promises to the youth that it does not fulfill;
- In order to do things for your community, you need to know yourself, spiritually; you need to know and understand your clan; you need to seek out your traditional role and teach others, both Native and Non-Native.

***When you look at various First Nations protests e.g. Oka, Gustafsen Lake, we see a lot of First Nations youth becoming involved. What are your thoughts on why this is happening?***

Many participants said Aboriginal peoples should not have to occupy or protest for the return of land that is rightfully their land. However, an occupation or protest draws the attention of the media and people with power and authority, the people who need to pay attention to these issues.

Some participants said people can protest through words rather than standing out in front of a building, and talk rather than yell.

Many participants explained that protests give youth a voice. Protests are not always violent. They are a way for people to stand up, physically, for what they believe in. This "standing up" way of choosing is the traditional way chiefs were selected.

Youth like to fight and are determined to achieve their goals. When in a group, youth are stronger, whether for negative or positive purposes. Protests may become violent out of frustration and because people way change so badly.

Other participants said it is important for Aboriginal peoples to learn about their own history and themselves. As well, non-Aboriginal peoples need to be better educated about First Nations history so they understand more fully the reasons behind a protest.

Other comment included:

- Protests are a way for youth to express themselves and support each other;
- The community needs to stand up for our rights;
- Protests are a way to show we will not be assimilated;
- Protests are a way to get out views out to general public;
- We have to participate in protests in order to be heard;
- Communities that get together (in protests) show that they care about each other;
- Youth will be the future leaders so they need to be involved in protests to understand them and the reasons behind them;
- We want to be informed and involved to make a difference and to change the course of our history;
- There is usually no point to a protest. There are better ways to settle disagreements. A protest is only an excuse for youth to get out of school;
- Protests seem to be the only way to get real change;
- Youth need to be involved in protests because we are the most affected by bad government policy towards First Nations people;
- Protesting for a good cause makes you feel proud of yourself, that you are standing up for your rights and those of other Aboriginal peoples;
- Protests are the only way white people will listen to us; protests are power struggles;
- Youth protest because we want our culture back;
- Nothing has changed since I was younger - no one listened to youth last generation- have to make yourself heard-offer solutions if you disagree-this is an opportunity for you to stand up and make changes through peaceful protests;
- Violence does not get you far; we must settle our differences through peaceful means;
- Youth are more likely to take up arms to get land back, unlike elders who want to do it peacefully.

***Do you think the police treat Aboriginal peoples and non-Aboriginal peoples differently?***

Many participants said that the police stereotype Aboriginal people and use racial profiling when stopping Aboriginal people to question them. Participants indicated that, in their experience, teachers and store clerks also tend to treat Aboriginal peoples differently than non-Aboriginal peoples.

The anger and frustration is illustrated by the joke told by one participant: An Indian guy and a Black guy are riding in a car. Who's driving? Answer: A cop.

Participants pointed out that the jails and courts are full of Aboriginal peoples with mostly alcohol and drug related charges; Aboriginals are considered guilty until proven innocent.

Participants said that the media plays a large role in perpetuating stereotypes of Aboriginal peoples. When there is a major event involving Aboriginal people, such as a protest, the media dwells on the negative aspects of the story. “Good news” stories about Aboriginal peoples and their communities are rarely reported in the mainstream media.

Other comments included:

- I you go into store at the same time as a white person, the white person is helped, and you get ignored;
- The racism experienced by Aboriginal peoples in Canada is similar to the racism experience by Black people in the U.S.;
- Police should treat Native and non-Native people equally, particularly in the policing of protests;
- The Unity Run last summer was a peaceful protest that served a purpose. It was also well organized and thus well respected by the police;
- Why are youth harassed by the police more than adults? Police pick on the weak and powerless, such as Aboriginal youth;
- We have a bad reputation. Police are afraid of reserves so they approach Aboriginal peoples differently;
- Just because we’re brown, the police think we’re going to cause trouble;
- The police don’t understand our culture; they judge us before they get to know us;
- Aboriginal students get blamed for all bad things at school; the principal goes to the Native kids first to ask if we know what happened.

### *Should police treat Aboriginal peoples differently?*

Participants were divided on this question. Some of them said that the police should treat Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples equally; if a person breaks the law, he or she needs to answer for it: skin colour should not matter in policing – both enforcement and protection.

Others said police and the justice system should take into consideration the discrimination against First Nations people built into the criminal justice system. Still other participants said police should treat Native people differently because of the deep mistrust Aboriginals feel towards the police, based on a history of discrimination and abuse.

Participants suggested that police should be educated to understand that Aboriginal peoples do not trust them and why. The OPP who police reserves should be educated about the First Nations communities and histories. Police need to understand that First Nations peoples and communities are not all the same. Laws are not the same or are not enforced in the same way on and off reserves, so it can be confusing for people. The police need to take this into consideration.

### ***What are some of the effects of the way police treat Aboriginal people?***

The lack of communication between the police and Aboriginal peoples, the perception that police stereotype and use racial profiling against Aboriginal peoples, and the systemic discrimination against Aboriginal peoples in the justice system are creating an army of angry Aboriginal youth, according to many participants.

Other comments included:

- I was 13 years old when Dudley George was shot and killed and I totally lost trust in the cops. My brother fought with a white kid who told him to “go back to Stoney Point.” When the cops came I wouldn’t talk to them after what happened. Native OPP officers were sent to talk to the Native kids, white cops talked to the white kids. Everyone there was arrested;
- If you say something, the police won’t believe you;
- Situation is not improving. Negative feelings are growing-nothing’s getting better;
- Some youth “hate” the OPP; What happens if they have to deal with OPP?;
- It’s easier to say, “hate” than “scared”. Aboriginal youth are afraid of being gunned down;
- Do police go to social events in the community? Do they do programming in the public schools? You don’t see them as “police” at social events if they are not in uniform;
- In my community, young people don’t want police at social events. They’ve been asked to leave;
- I was at a birthday party, and when a Native cop drove by, a guy started yelling at the cop. There is no respect for the police;
- Police are painted with the same brush;
- There is a lot of anti-police graffiti in my community.

### ***What is the ideal police force?***

Many participants said that the ideal police force is there to serve and protect the people, regardless of race. The ideal police force polices 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Ideal individual police officers are drug and alcohol free and act as good role model for young people.

An ideal police force would prepare officers to work with First Nations people by trying to ensure that they are not racist, that they are aware of Aboriginal rights and treaties, and understand the customs, and traditions of the communities they are policing.

Many participants said the ideal police force for First Nation communities would be an Aboriginal police force composed of officers who are not members of the community they are policing.

Other participants said that there will never be an ideal police force until no one race dominates another and until racism is eliminated or at least controlled

Other comments included:

- The ideal police force is one in which police do their jobs;
- Aboriginal justice systems are built on honour and shame. We want to keep pride in our family so we should not do anything to shame them; we don't need the police to deal with our issues;
- On-reserve police are supposed to be "peace-keeping" service rather than "police-service;"
- An ideal police force would have the best interests of all in mind, regardless of one's last name;
- Non-Native police should have some cross-cultural training to dispel the stereotypes about Aboriginal peoples;
- Policing should start with on-reserve peace-keepers who would have the authority to go to the OPP if they can't handle a situation;
- Aboriginal police forces and the OPP need to work more closely together in order to serve and protect First Nation communities properly.

***What should be done to improve the relationship between Aboriginal Peoples and the Police?***

Many participants said that respecting treaties and returning First Nations' land would improve the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, including the police.

Participants pointed out that the OPP tend to go to First Nation communities only when something bad has happened and at no other time. They should visit First Nation communities when something positive is happening; they should tour the reserves, see the landmarks, and get to know the communities and the people.

Participants said that communication is vital for good policing; informal relationships and communication between youth and police are very important to building the bridges that will help in difficult times.

Other comments included:

- What do First Nation communities expect from their youth? Kids spend much of the day immersed in Euro-Canadian culture. We need to ensure our youth understand themselves and their place in our communities and that they can bring both honour and shame to their families. We need to instill proper Aboriginal values in our youth;
- Police have to understand that people can change;
- Police need to understand why Aboriginal peoples do not trust them;
- There was a loss of trust in the police when Dudley George was shot and killed. The police have not come to us to try to rebuild the trust. As one participant said, "it's like friend who you have lost trust in; you have to work to rebuild the friendship";
- We all need to treat people the way we would want to be treated;

- Our youth need to know their rights, particularly in encounters with the police;
- It is important for police to understand Aboriginal and treaty rights and the meaning of s.35 of the Constitution;
- In our youth centre we are working with the OPP. They come in to speak about cocaine, or bullying. We teach them about Native culture e.g. we taught them to make moccasins. I told them we want to phase out the police. We need to work on our identity-who we are as a people. We are teaching youth from the creation story to the present. It instils pride. I'm proud to be Iroquois; I'm proud of our history and our culture. Our values are pride, honour and shame;
- Why can't police step in when they see incidents that can be prevented? Police are there to help the people feel safe;
- The police should deal with youth differently than they do adults i.e. not slapping the cuffs on and shoving them into the police car;
- Police should participate in powwows and other events and celebrations so they see that Aboriginal youth do good things;
- Police initiatives never come from the grass roots-they always come from higher levels of government or higher levels of the police, like the "take kids out to lunch" programs. Initiatives have to come from the front line police officers because these are the people who are doing the policing;
- The police should be accountable to the community they are policing;
- Police need to be much more involved with the schools from kindergarten on;
- Police need to give respect before they can get it. Aboriginal youth always receive less respect from white police officers. Why is this?
- It is not just a question of respect. Police need to understand the community they are policing.

## Appendix A – Participants

1. Fred Plain, Elder and member of Aamjiwnaang First Nation – delivered the opening and closing for the forum and facilitated discussion groups
2. Justice of the Peace Donna Phillips, member of Oneida of the Thames – delivered the key note address and facilitated discussion groups
3. The following individuals facilitated discussion groups as well:
  - Bonnie Bressette, member of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation
  - Ada Plain, education worker and member of Aamjiwnaang First Nation
  - Harriet Jacobs, member of Bkwejwanong Territory – Walpole Island First Nation
4. Approximately 45 youth from the following First Nation communities and settlements:
  - Aamjiwnaang First Nation
  - Aazhoodena
  - Bkwejwanong Territory - Walpole Island First Nation
  - Chippewas of the Thames
  - Delaware Nation (Moravin of the Thames)
  - Kettle and Stoney Point First Nation
  - Munsee-Delaware Nation
  - Oneida of the Thames
5. Youth and/or education workers from the First Nation communities and settlements listed above
6. Ipperwash Inquiry Commissioner, Mr. Justice Sidney Linden
7. Assistant Commission Counsel and Chair of the forum, Jodie-Lynn Waddilove
8. Commission staff: Derry Millar, lead Commission Counsel; Don Worme, Commission Counsel; Noelle Spotton, Policy Counsel; Debbie Strauss, Manager of Operations and Executive Assistant to the Commissioner; Peter Rehak, Communications Coordinator and Media Relations Officer



## Appendix B

### YOUTH AND ELDERS FORUM ABOUT ABORIGINAL/POLICE RELATIONS

FRIDAY, APRIL 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2005

---

#### AGENDA

- 9:45 – 10:00 a.m. Arrival of participants
- 10:00 – 10:30 a.m. Opening Prayer & Morning Address by Elder Fred Plain
- 10:30 – 10:40 a.m. Welcome and Overview of the day by Jodie-Lynn Waddilove
- 10:40 – 10:50 a.m. Remarks by Ipperwash Inquiry Commissioner Sidney Linden
- 10:50 – 11:30 p.m. Keynote Speaker – Donna Philips
- 11:30 – 12:15 p.m. Lunch break (Lunch will be provided)
- 12:15 – 12:30 p.m. Group Picture
- 12:30 – 1:00 p.m. Small Discussion Group #1 (see questions on back of this agenda)
- 1:00 – 1:30 p.m. Small Discussion Group #2 (see questions on back of this agenda)
- 1:30 – 2:00 p.m. Small Discussion Group #3 (see questions on back of this agenda)
- 2:00 – 2:30 p.m. Small Discussion Group #4 (see questions on back of this agenda)
- 2:30 – 3:00 p.m. Afternoon Break
- 3:00 – 3:45 p.m. Full Group Discussion
- 3:45 – 4:00 p.m. Closing Prayer and Final Comments

## Appendix C

### Group Discussion Questions

#### *Small Discussion Group #1:*

- What does “policing” mean to you?
- Do you think the police understand youth? Why or why not?
- Do you think the police understand Aboriginal youth? Why or why not?
- Do you think First Nations policing services on reserves are different from policing services off reserve? If yes, what are some of those differences?

#### *Small Discussion Group #2:*

- As youth, do you see yourselves as having a role in your community? Why or why not?
- Do you feel comfortable in becoming involved in your community’s affairs? Why or why not?
- What is the role of the police in your community?
- When we look at various First Nation protests, i.e. Oka, Gustafsen Lake, we see a lot of First Nations youth becoming involved. What are your thoughts on why this is happening?

#### *Small Discussion Group #3:*

- Do you think the police treat Aboriginal peoples and non-Aboriginal peoples differently? If yes, in what ways?
- Do you think the police should treat Aboriginal peoples differently from non-Aboriginal peoples? Why or why not?
- What are some of the effects of the way police treat Aboriginal people? Do you think this impacts on the way Aboriginal people see themselves? Do you think this impacts on the way non-Aboriginal people see Aboriginal people?
- From your point of view, what is an ideal police service?

#### *Small Group Discussion #4:*

- What has been your experience with the police? Describe.
- What do you think should be done to improve relations between Aboriginal youth and the police?

#### *Full Group Discussion:*

The Forum will end with a full group discussion about the following question: “**What is justice?**”