

They reject PM's view, native lobby chiefs say

OTTAWA (CP) — About 500 native men, women and children were welcomed with drums and chanting as they disembarked here yesterday to lobby for the entrenching of native rights in the new constitution.

But leaders of the group, whose Constitution Express had just completed a five-day trip from Vancouver that included a bomb scare and a controversial route change, brushed past Indian Affairs Minister John Munro, National Indian Brotherhood president Del Riley and other Indian leaders who stood waiting to greet them.

The group was led by Bob Manuel, national representative for the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, who told reporters at a stormy news conference that Indians demand that Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau guarantee their rights in the constitution before he asks Britain to send it home next year.

Organizers said there are no plans to hold a demonstration on Parliament Hill or occupy any federal buildings. They plan to co-operate with RCMP and city police to ensure there

is no repeat of the violent demonstration over Indian living conditions on Parliament Hill in 1974.

The Indians from the train will coordinate their efforts with 400 chiefs who are here for a conference and with other natives driving in from Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes. Indians will sit in the Commons gallery for question period, attend committee hearings and form small groups to lobby each of the 282 MPs. Many will also attend the special constitutional committee when several native groups appear.

At the news conference, Mr. Manuel said that if Mr. Trudeau does not respect their vision, the Indians will go to the United Nations next week to protest there. "We will work toward establishing our seat as a nation."

About 350 Indians began the trip on Monday in Vancouver on two trains, which were merged in Winnipeg.