



International Indian Treaty Council



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IITC Statement on the Murder of Clarence Leading Fighter

May 12, 2019

The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) joins the Oglala Lakota Nation and Rosebud Sioux Tribe in expressing our outrage and call for justice in response to the murder of Clarence Leading Fighter, 32 years old, carried out by Police in Rushville, Nebraska at a Catholic Church on Palm Sunday, April 14, 2019. The Board of Directors, staff and affiliates of IITC express our heartfelt condolences to his mother and other family members and pray for the healing of their broken hearts, remembering especially that today is Mother's Day. A community demonstration in support and solidarity is planned for today in Rushville.

Sheridan County, Nebraska where the murder occurred has a history of murder and Human Rights violations going back to the murder of Raymond Yellow Thunder in 1972 and including many unsolved murders of Tribal members in the town of White Clay. Mr. Leading Fighter was tazed twice before he was shot twice by the police. He was unarmed and was inside the church when he was shot and killed.

The United States endorsed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on December 16, 2010. Article 7 affirms that "*Indigenous individuals have the rights to life, physical and mental integrity, liberty and security of person*" and Indigenous Peoples have the collective right to not be subjected to "*any act of genocide or any other act of violence*".

On May 3rd, 2019 the White House issued a Presidential Proclamation declaring May 5, 2019 as "Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives Awareness Day" [<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/missing-murdered-american-indians-alaska-natives-awareness-day-2019/>]. The Proclamation stated that "Ending the violence that disproportionately affects American Indian and Alaska Native communities is imperative." This may be the first time that the IITC has agreed with a proclamation issued by this US President. However, we also call on the US government to officially recognize that acts of violence, including murders, suffered by Native Americans and Alaska Nations are too often carried out by police and other agents of "law enforcement" themselves.

At the request of Mr. Leading Fighter's family and attorney, IITC will formally submit this statement to Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Attorney Chase Iron Eyes, attorney for the Oglala Lakota Nation, is assisting the family to seek justice. He has interviewed an Indian eye witness and other people involved including the county sheriff. Chase Iron Eyes Esq. can be reached at the Oglala Sioux Tribe, (605) 407-8116 or ironeyeslaw@gmail.com. Additional information and updates can also be provided by Bill Means, IITC Board member, (612) 386-4030, bill.means73@gmail.com.

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