



International Indian Treaty Council
Consejo Internacional de Tratados Indios

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Congressman Tom Cole & Representative Sharice Davids
Co-Chairs, Congressional Native American Caucus
United State House of Representatives
2207 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Respectful Greetings,

We are writing to you today with an urgent request for the Congressional Native American Caucus to initiate congressional action on behalf of our colleague and relative Leonard Peltier. The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) expresses our support for the immediate release of Indigenous Human Rights Defender Leonard Peltier, Anishinaabe enrolled citizen of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, currently incarcerated at USP Coleman 1, Coleman, Florida. In doing so, we have added our voice to many human rights organizations, Tribal Nations and organizations, including the National Congress of American Indians, and are again calling for Mr. Peltier's release. We respectfully urge you to support efforts to find relief and release for Mr. Peltier and allow him to return to his family.

The IITC affirms the widely held view that Mr. Peltier's conviction was an egregious miscarriage of justice and, among other things, a violation of his due process rights. He was sentenced in 1977 to two consecutive life terms in connection with the June 26, 1975, shooting and deaths of two agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on the Pine Ridge Reservation, SD, after a trial which has been widely criticized over the blatant FBI and U.S. Attorney General misconduct. The incident occurred during a time of considerable violence and extreme tension on Pine Ridge, and members of the America Indian Movement such as Mr. Peltier were targeted for persecution by federal law enforcement. We are certain that had he gone to trial with his co-defendants, who were acquitted on grounds of self-defense; had he been allowed to present all of the evidence in his defense, including instances of FBI intimidation of witnesses and suborned perjury; had a racist juror exposed during trial not been allowed to remain on the panel; and had critical ballistics evidence reflecting his innocence not been withheld from defense counsel and the jury, Leonard Peltier would be a free man today.

Working for the Rights and Recognition of Indigenous Peoples
Trabajando por el reconocimiento y los derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas

As a signatory to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the United States of America must undertake to prohibit and eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, including Indigenous Peoples, to equality before the law. Prohibitions against discrimination are also contained in the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

In paragraph 91 of the report on his official country visit to the United States issued on August 30, 2012, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Professor James Anaya made a similar recommendation:

Other measures of reconciliation should include efforts to identify and heal particular sources of open wounds. And hence, for example, promised reparations should be provided to the descendants of the Sands Creek massacre, and new or renewed consideration should be given to clemency for Leonard Peltier.

Leonard Peltier is now 76 years old, a great-grandfather in poor health and at risk for premature death due to his harsh living environment. He has fulfilled his federal sentencing guideline requirements yet has been repeatedly denied parole. We are convinced that this may be the last opportunity for healing and reconciliation to be done in this case. Support by you and the Caucus is critical to gaining executive clemency. We have faith that your clear and ongoing commitment to a respectful relationship with Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Nations in this country will once again be demonstrated through your leadership on this matter and for your support of fellow Members of Congress who have called for the release of Leonard Peltier.

Respectfully,



Ron Lameman, President
International Indian Treaty Council



Andrea Carmen, Executive Director
International Indian Treaty Council



Summer Blaze Aubrey, Staff Attorney for Human Rights
International Indian Treaty Council

Please contact Summer Blaze Aubrey via email, summer@treatycouncil.org, or via cell phone, (509) 823-6951 with questions, concerns, etc.

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