John C. "Jack" Ryan
[redacted]

January 3, 2017

BY FEDERAL EXPRESS
President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Av.
Washington, DC 20500
Re: Clemency Petition Leonard Peltier
Case No. C179410

Re: Clemency Petition Leonard Peltier
C179410

Dear President Obama:

I write in support of the 2016 Clemency Petition of Leonard Peltier, which seeks his release in the interest of justice and reconciliation. In my opinion, notwithstanding the crime charged, the circumstances surrounding the case in combination with the passage of 4 decades of time served support his request to live his final years at home.

I was an FBI Special Agent from 1966 through 1987. Although I was not directly involved in the Leonard Peltier case, and did not know Agents Jack Coler or Ronald Williams personally, when I learned that two of my fellow agents shot and killed on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, I, like all the agents I worked with and throughout the FBI was completely shaken, and drawn into the emotion of the incident.

I entered the FBI while J. Edgar Hoover was still fully in command, and became part of an era where agents were directed to discredit and neutralize social activists. We were taught to follow orders and we acted in good faith based on the directions given, believing we were doing the right thing.

The cumulative impact of targeting social activists, personally, came to a head in 1987 when I was fired from the FBI, 9 months before I could retire, for refusal to investigate, as terrorists or saboteurs, 4 veterans, fasting on the steps of the US Capital, protesting the government's funding of the Contras in Nicaragua. I was faced with a moral dilemma and did what I thought was right, though the consequences for me were dramatic and financially disastrous.

With the benefit of hindsight, the advocacy of the AIM and the Oglala Lakota on Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in particular, was misunderstood. The

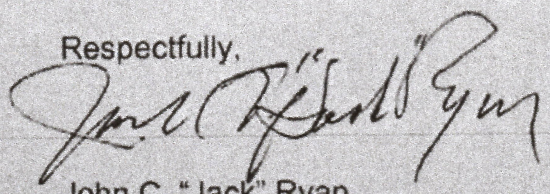
community was polarized, impoverished, marginalized, and had a tumultuous history with the American government and with federal and state law enforcement. Following the 1973 siege of Wounded Knee by AIM, the reservation had an extremely high crime rate; it was a dangerous place for its residents as well as visitors.

When Agents Coler and Williams lost their lives it was a devastating loss to us agents. Emotion ruled the decision-making process and likely clouded the judgment of the massive team of whom were driven to hold someone responsible for our loss.

If the government could do it all over again, it would respond differently. Through today's lens, Leonard Peltier was not treated fairly and did not get a fair trial. The very fact that humanitarians and Nobel Prize Laureates around the world have advocated for his release for more than 4 decades, validates that position.

For these reasons and many more, I respectively urge you, Mr. President, to grant the Clemency Petition of Leonard Peltier in the interest of the system of justice for which my two fellow agents died, and in the interest of reconciliation and compassion.

Respectfully,



John C. "Jack" Ryan

cc: Robert A. Zauzmer, Pardon Attorney
Honorable Loretta Lynch, Attorney General

Statement by former FBI agent condemning FBI anti-Peltier demo

December 21, 2000

In response to the inbalanced national media's coverage of last Friday's FBI march to oppose clemency for Peltier, while the larger pro-Peltier Rally was basically ignored, consider submitting an OpEd piece or Letters to the Editor to your newspaper / TV / radio / news-website. This can provide them with a counterpoint balance to their coverage. Please use the powerful rebuttal statement given last Friday at the National Press Club in Washington DC, by former Rep. Don Edwards, who was also a former FBI agent. The text of his statement follows.

Hon. Don Edwards
P.O. Box 7151
Carmel, CA 93921

STATEMENT

As a former Congressman from California for over thirty years, a former FBI agent and a citizen committed to justice, I wish to speak out strongly against the FBI's efforts in opposing the clemency appeal of Leonard Peltier.

I served as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights in the U.S. House of Representatives. I took a personal interest in Mr. Peltier's case and became convinced that he never received a fair trial. Even the government now admits that the theory it presented against Mr. Peltier at trial was not true. After 24 years in prison, Leonard Peltier has served an inordinate amount of time and deserves the right to consideration of his clemency request on the facts and the merits.

The FBI continues to deny its improper conduct on Pine Ridge during the 1970's and in the trial of Leonard Peltier. The FBI used Mr. Peltier as a scapegoat and they continue to do so today. At every step of the way, FBI agents and leadership have opposed any admission of wrongdoing by the government, and they have sought to misrepresent and politicize the meaning of clemency for Leonard Peltier. The killing of FBI agents at Pine Ridge was reprehensible, but the government now admits that it cannot prove that Mr. Peltier killed the agents.

Granting clemency to Mr. Peltier should not be viewed as expressing any disrespect for the current agents or leadership of the FBI, nor would it represent any condoning of the killings that took place on Pine Ridge. Instead, clemency for Mr. Peltier would recognize past wrongdoing and the undermining of the government's case since trial. Finally, it would serve as a crucial step in the reconciliation and healing between the U.S. Government and Native Americans, on the Pine Ridge Reservation and throughout the country.

12/14/00

[signature] Don Edwards (D-CA), ret. Member of Congress, 1963-1995

James H. Reynolds
Former United States Attorney
[redacted]

President Barack Obama
White House
Washington, D.C. 20500
RE: Clemency Request of Leonard Pelitier

Dear President Obama,

I was the United States Attorney, whose office handled the criminal case prosecution and appeal of Leonard Pelitier. I was also later specially appointed by US Attorney General, Benjamin Civiletti, as United States Attorney for South Dakota to handle a conflict in another different Indian on Indian murder case on the Rose Bud Reservation.

After my appointment by President Jimmy Carter and Senate confirmation I kept on as an Assistant United States Attorney, Evan Hultman, who preceded me as United States Attorney and had handled the prosecution of Leonard Pelitier. I directed Hultman's handling of the appeal of Leonard Pelitier after my appoint.

I would join in any Request for Clemency of Leonard Pelitier by you as being in the best interest of Justice in considering the totality of all matters involved.

Thank you for our attention in this matter, I am

Sincerely,

James H. Reynolds
United States Attorney (1976-1982)

cc: Attorney General, Loretta Lynch
Pardon Attorney, Robert A. Zauzmer