

Executive Review

An innocent man, Leonard Peltier was wrongfully convicted in 1977 and has served over 30 years in federal prison despite proof that he was convicted on the basis of fabricated and suppressed evidence, as well as coerced testimony. This is not just whimsy on the part of Peltier supporters, as some claim. These are facts acknowledged by the courts and even our politicians... and, yet, all have refused to take corrective action.

On June 23, 1995, Amnesty International submitted a letter of concern about the Peltier case to then Attorney General Janet Reno. The world renowned human rights organization sought but failed to obtain an Executive Review of the case.

On August 21, 2009, upon hearing the news that Leonard Peltier had again been denied parole, we renewed the call for an Executive Review of the Peltier case by the U.S. Department of Justice. We want justice... EQUAL justice... and we want it now.



This past April, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder announced that he had ordered the dismissal of the indictment against former Senator Ted Stevens on corruption charges. Stevens had been tried and found guilty, but hadn't been sentenced; Holder's action effectively vacated Stevens' conviction. Holder was reportedly very angry that the prosecutors had withheld potentially exculpatory evidence from Stevens' attorneys. After the prosecutors had been held in contempt of court for failing to turn over required documents, Holder replaced the entire trial team. Soon afterward, the Justice Department discovered a previously undocumented interview with the prosecution's star witness. In the interview, the witness gave statements that directly contradicted his testimony at trial.

This statement made by Stevens' attorneys is reminiscent of the Peltier case.

"This jury verdict was obtained unlawfully. The government disregarded the Constitution, the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, and well-established case law ... which require the government to reveal to the defense all evidence that demonstrates the innocence of the accused...The misconduct of government prosecutors, and one or more FBI agents, was stunning. Not only did the government fail to disclose evidence of innocence, but instead intentionally hid that evidence and created false evidence that they provided to the defense."

What's the saying? If it's true, you're not paranoid. And what is the truth? If it happened to Leonard Peltier, it can happen to anyone... even a U.S. Senator.

By nearly all accounts, Holder wanted to send a message that he would not tolerate any behavior he deemed to be prosecutorial misconduct. On April 8, 2009, Attorney General Eric Holder sat down with Katie Couric (CBS) to discuss the direction he wants to take the DOJ. (See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBM76VF9vwM>). During that interview, Holder said, "It's my job to do the right thing." The RIGHT thing is to conduct an Executive Review of the Peltier case.

- Write to the Attorney General. Demand an Executive Review of the Peltier case: Attorney General Eric Holder, US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20530-0001.
- You also can send an e-mail to AskDOJ@usdoj.gov. Be sure to mark your e-mail message to the attention of AG Eric Holder.
- Call the Office of the Attorney General Public Comment Line - 202-353-1555.
- Sign the online petition at http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/executive_review/.

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