

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

November 16, 2000

President William Jefferson Clinton
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C., 20500

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Dear President Clinton,

As the 57th Annual Conference of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) convenes to address issues intrinsic to the well being of Native American communities across the United States, we write to you out of our shared concern for Mr. Leonard Peltier. As the oldest, largest and most representative national Indian organization, we have passed numerous resolutions over the years and have a standing position, regarding support of executive clemency for Leonard Peltier. We join with hundreds of international members of the academic, literary, governmental, film, music, civil rights and tribal communities in requesting immediate executive clemency for Leonard Peltier.

We trust that you are acquiring a deep understanding of the very serious questions surrounding Leonard's arrest, extradition from Canada, and subsequent trial and conviction. The overwhelming evidence of FBI misconduct, including the coercion and intimidation of witnesses, the use of false testimonies and the concealment of a ballistics test reflecting Mr. Peltier's innocence, casts grave doubts upon the process under which Mr. Peltier was convicted. There is widespread concern that Leonard Peltier never received a full and fair trial.

As you study his clemency petition during the final days of your Administration, we urge you to recognize that Mr. Peltier's ongoing incarceration has become a powerful symbol of the federal government's mistreatment of its indigenous peoples. Granting executive clemency to Leonard Peltier sends an equally powerful message to human rights defenders around the world that the U.S. government is committed to healing a painful chapter in its history with its first peoples.

Mr. President, you are faced with a profound opportunity to build upon your historic visit to the Pine Ridge reservation and further your legacy of righting the wrongs committed against oppressed peoples throughout this nation's past. Now is the time to make a strong statement to the American public, and the world, reflecting this important ideal-- that injustice towards this country's indigenous peoples will no longer be tolerated, nor sanctioned by, a just U.S. government. With your help, we can take a giant step forward in our shared effort to mend the trail of broken promises and injustices that typifies the federal government's relationship with the Native American community.

Mr. Peltier's health is failing him, and he may well suffer serious physical consequences, including disablement or even premature death, as a result of inadequate treatment

options for his chronic medical problems at the prison. By granting him clemency now, you offer him the chance to live the remaining years of his life in the freedom that has been denied him for far too long. Mr. Peltier has paid with 25 years of his life for this miscarriage of justice; his release is long overdue.

Your past support on issues important to our peoples is deeply appreciated, and we now ask that you exert your leadership once again on Mr. Peltier's behalf, by granting him immediate executive clemency.

Thank you for the considerable time and effort you are giving to this important decision.

We, the undersigned, formally request that
President William Jefferson Clinton grant immediate
executive clemency to Leonard Peltier.



Susan Masten
President



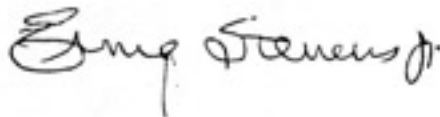
W. Ron Allen
1st Vice President



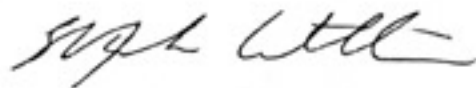
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Bernida Churchill
Minneapolis Area Vice President

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Stanley Pino
Albuquerque Area Vice President

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S. Diane Kelly
Muskogee Area Vice President

Handwritten signature of Thomas Ranfranz in cursive script.

Thomas Ranfranz
Aberdeen Area Vice President