



Clemency Now

Not One Day Longer Free Leonard Peltier

December 11, 2000

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

Dear President Clinton,

We are writing to you today to express our full support of executive clemency for Leonard Peltier, whose case touches all of us concerned with human rights and justice. As individuals who are in the public eye, each of us feels a responsibility to speak to injustices that might otherwise find no voice for grievance.

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.

We trust that you are acquiring a deep understanding of the very serious questions surrounding Mr. Peltier's extradition from Canada and subsequent trial, conviction and post trial proceedings. 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.

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 Mr. 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. 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. His fate now lies firmly in your hands.

Leonard Peltier has proven to be an exemplary candidate for executive clemency. During his years behind bars, he has established a remarkable record of humanitarian work, including sponsoring a Native American scholarship fund; supporting battered women's centers and substance abuse programs; and sponsoring annual clothing and toy drives for children on the Pine Ridge reservation, amongst other efforts.

You have proven yourself to be both a compassionate and a responsible leader. We believe that the merits of Mr. Peltier's case speak for themselves and they alone are enough to guide you in making the correct decision. We find it important to express our strong support for Mr. Peltier's release. His return would be a gift to us all.

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.


Sister Helen Prejean


Archbishop Desmond Tutu


Coretta Scott King

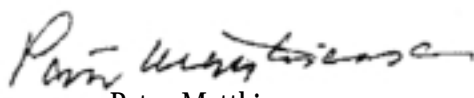

Gloria Steinem

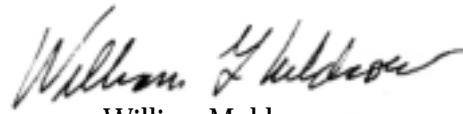

Rigoberta Menchu Tum

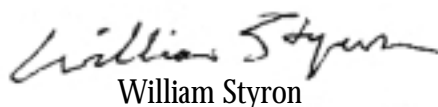

Wilma Mankiller


Robert Redford

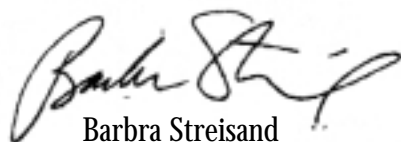

Ernie Stevens


Peter Matthiessen



William Muldrow


William Styron


Rose Styron


Barbra Streisand


Thom Whitewolf Fassett


KURT VONNEGUT, JR.