

From the Tacoma Chapter, LPDOC

**INTERNATIONAL DAY IN SOLIDARITY WITH LEONARD PELTIER
FEBRUARY 4, 2012**

The Case Of Leonard Peltier

After a conflict between the Lakota people and the U.S. government and corporate interests a peace treaty was signed and the great Lakota reservation was created in the late 19th century. That peace treaty meant nothing to U.S. interests, for its terms were violated from almost the moment it was signed. Those interests continued to steal more Lakota land wherever they found gold and other minerals that they wanted. At the same time, they sought to destroy the Lakota way of life. U.S. interests outlawed Lakota religion and massacred the Lakota at Wounded Knee in an act of religious suppression. U.S. interests kidnapped Lakota children and placed them in internment, in schools where they were held for years away from their families, while their language and traditions were being beaten out of them. U.S. interests carried out a secret forced program of sterilization of Lakota women. Then, in the 1920s, acting upon the interests of oil and mineral companies, the U.S. forced a 'government' entity upon the Lakota people, to be controlled by those corporate and U.S. interests.

In the late 1960s uranium was found in the northwest section of the Pine Ridge Lakota Reservation. The U.S. interests wanted that uranium for their weapons of mass destruction and nuclear power plants.

The U.S. interests knew that the Lakota people would not give up any more of their land willingly: they had already refused to take payment for the Black Hills, stolen from them for its gold. U.S. interests then set out to suppress all possible resistance to further theft. That led the resisters' to request the help of the American Indian Movement (AIM). Upon a request by Lakota Elders, a stand was taken at Wounded Knee, on the Pine Ridge reservation of the Lakota people.

In the two and a half years after what became known as Wounded Knee II there was a 'Reign of Terror' the resisters on Pine Ridge was forced to suffer. Whole villages were shot up, people were run off the road, many Native people were wounded and over 67 of them were murdered. The Lakota people again asked AIM for help and an AIM encampment was set up. Most of the people in that encampment were from Northwest AIM. And Leonard Peltier was one of them.

The AIM people were under considerable oppression and lived there daily in danger from the death squad (they called themselves the Goon Squad). One day two cars came speeding onto the land of their encampment, in the same manner that earlier drive-by shootings by the death squad had taken place on Pine Ridge. The AIM members there that day defended themselves from what they saw as another murderous attack. In the firefight that took place two FBI agents and one AIM member died.

Norman Zigrossi, head of the local FBI office at the time, defended the illegal actions, saying, "Indians are a conquered nation and the FBI is merely acting as a colonial police force." He went on, "When you're conquered, the people you're conquered by dictate your future."

It is clear that the attack upon the AIM encampment was planned to start a conflict to draw away

resistance to the illegal signing away of Lakota land that had taken place in Washington, D.C. at that time. Before the firefight, hundreds of U.S. Government agents were brought on to Pine Ridge reservation, the roads leading to the AIM encampment were blocked before the firefight and local hospitals were given notice to expect casualties.

In the first trial of two AIM members, who had been in the firefight at their encampment, the jury came back with a verdict of not guilty by reason of self-defense.

The U.S. interests then put all their efforts into convicting Leonard Peltier. They fabricated evidence, intimidated witnesses and illegally changed judges, settling on one who would not allow Leonard's lawyers to present his case of self-defense.

Through appeals, Leonard's lawyers have been able to disprove the case against him to the point that the U.S. Government prosecutors have stated that they don't know what role Leonard played in the firefight-- he was just there that day and thus by default aided and abetted in the deaths of the agents. It can be reasoned that since the first two AIM members were found not guilty by reason of self-defense, then Leonard has been in prison all these years for aiding and abetting an act of self-defense!

Much of our focus should be on FBI political repression, COINTELPRO, and how they are connected to Leonard's case, for the FBI has been continually be used as the U.S. Government's and corporate interests' Political Police Force.

As you read this, Leonard's lawyers struggle to get all the documents that the FBI has withheld in his case. The FBI claims it needs to withhold those documents to protect national security. We need to ask, "Whose national security needs to be protected from the truth?" Given that documents already received by the defense team have exposed the U.S. Government's frame-up of Leonard to the point that the government's lawyers have had to admit that there is no evidence connecting him directly to the deaths of the FBI agents, and have shown that the FBI took illegal, aggressive actions to suppress the right of Native people to organize to air their grievances, there is no doubt that documents still withheld will show further evidence of FBI illegal actions.

Even the courts have recognized the repressive nature of the government actions against AIM and Leonard. Judge Heaney stated, "The United States Government overreacted at Wounded Knee. Instead of carefully considering the legitimate grievances of the Native Americans, the response was essentially a military one, which culminated in the deadly firefight on June 26, 1975."

And in 2003 the Tenth Circuit Court found that, "Much of the government's behavior at the Pine Ridge Reservation and in its prosecution of Mr. Peltier is to be condemned. The government withheld evidence. It intimidated witnesses. These facts are not disputed."

Even with this acknowledgment Leonard has been in prison for over 28 years. Leonard is not in prison based upon the laws of this land, for the courts have stated over and over again that the U.S. government has violated those laws in Leonard's case. Leonard Peltier is in prison for one reason and one reason alone, and that is because it is in the interests of the few to keep him locked up: because he represents the essence of this land, the wrong upon which the United States was established, a simple truth which has to be recognized before the country can ever be sound. Leonard suffers under the same interests that hung Chief Leschi, the same interests that

massacred the Lakota at Wounded Knee, the same interests that are behind many of the wars around the world, the same interest behind the WTO, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the same interests that strips our schools of basic funds, that strip you of your unemployment benefits and overtime pay, and the same interests that we all find ourselves struggling against in our common pursuit of peace and well-being. Justice for Leonard and the end to political repression by the FBI will only come from the organized spirit of solidarity of all people struggling in their true interests.

Illegal actions by the FBI should be the concern of all American people who believe in social justice, because Leonard was not and will not be the only victim of political repression. Among those that were targeted by the FBI's COINTELPRO were: Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights activists and organizations including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Jesse Jackson (note that the FBI also carried out intimidation of Jackson supporters in the south when he ran for U.S. president), Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW), the National Lawyer's Guild, antinuclear weapons campaigns (SANE-Freeze), the National Council of Churches, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), antiwar organizations, the alternative press, student organizations including the National Students Association (TNSA) and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), environmental, anti-racism and feminist organizations, the alternative media, GI organizations, the Industrial Workers of the World, organizations of self-determination for people of color, and Native organizations such as the American Indian Movement (AIM).

The political repression carried out by the FBI has never ended. It was seen this year with the FBI's intimidation of antiwar protesters who planned to protest at the national conventions of the two major political parties. Though the FBI claimed it needed more power, money and agents to deal with the threat of terrorism after 9-11, the agency still had the time, money, and forces to harass people who questioned the war in Iraq.

The same drive to acquire enormous profits that keep this country in Iraq over the opposition of its own people is also what led to the U.S. Government's suppression of traditional indigenous people, AIM and in its frame-up of Leonard Peltier.

And as to making connections, the war on Iraq was justified by using false documents, lies about weapons of mass destruction and sham connections to terrorists. That is the same tactic the U.S. Government used in its suppression of AIM and in its frame-up of Leonard Peltier. The government used the war in Iraq in the interest of bringing global U.S. company's huge profits, and on the Pine Ridge reservation that same government carried out its repression in the interest of U.S. energy corporations.

We call on you as sisters and brothers to join us for **THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH LEONARD PELTIER, LEONARD PELTIER MARCHES AND RALLIES FOR CLEMENCY, FEBRUARY 4, 2012**, either at the Tacoma Regional March, or by organizing a march and rally where ever you maybe in the world, as we send the message: We will not give up! We will not surrender! We will continue to stand for justice for Leonard Peltier and for justice for all that he represents for as long as it takes to set him free! Our strength is building and time is on our side, the sweep of justice is moving throughout the world and we are a part of that great wave of truth and justice. Please join with us on February 4, 2012 for a tremendous show of solidarity, a march and rally in Unified Solidarity for Justice for Leonard Peltier. All of us working together will free Leonard Peltier.

In The Spirit Of Crazy Horse
Tacoma Chapter, Leonard Peltier Offense/Defense Committee
Susan Morales
Steve Hapy
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For donations for the NW Region March: Please make checks payable to the Leonard Peltier Defense/Offense Committee (mark them for NW March) and send them to: Tacoma Chapter LPODC, P.O. Box 5464, Tacoma, WA 98415.

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LINKS

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Subscribe to: Northwest Peltier Support at: nwpeltiersupport-subscribe@lists.riseup.net

For more information: www.whoisleonardpeltier.info

March web site; <http://leonardpeltiermarch.wordpress.com/>

On the web

<http://zinelibrary.info/international-day-solidarity-leonard-peltier-feb-4-2011-fliers-and-info>

Two page flier for NW Regional March: http://zinelibrary.info/files/Peltier_March_2011.pdf

One page flier for NW Regional March: http://zinelibrary.info/files/Peltier_March_2001_info.pdf

Portland flier for NW Regional March: http://zinelibrary.info/files/Portland_Peltier_Flier.pdf

March statements and flier: http://zinelibrary.info/files/Peltier_March_2001_info.pdf

[The Case of Leonard Peltier - short summary www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

LPDOC NW Regional Organizer & Tacoma LPDOC Chapter member Arthur Miller speaking about the case history of political prisoner Leonard Peltier.

LPDOC: Constitutional Violations in the Peltier Case:

<http://www.whoisleonardpeltier.info/violations.htm>