
79th BIRTHDAY STATEMENT¹©
LEONARD PELTIER
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Relatives, 79 years and who has won? We have won. Bars cannot contain our movement. They only have me, but they cannot contain a WE.

Because we are a unified Oyate
47 years. We have won. Yet we have only just begun.

I have to tell you the truth, I never thought it would go this far. I never did. But here we are.
Take heart.
The world is watching.

Everything has been done to break my spirit. Every last shred of evidence used to convict me has been proven false. Because of this false evidence and unfair trial, even the International Criminal Court has noted the deep injustice of my case. Listen to me, my People, \$55 million dollars in U.S. foreign aid to Canada was used by this government to coerce my extradition based on, not once, not twice, but four instances of completely fabricated and manufactured evidence extracted from a mentally ill woman. That is bribery, pure, and simple. And it goes to show you the value of a freedom fighter. Just like they tried to buy the Black Hills, they tried to buy me, too.

The trial was no better, riddled with racism by the presiding judge and the suppression of key evidence. Not to mention being separated from my co-defendants. I was placed on death row and in solitary confinement to coerce a false statement, which I refused to give. Just for defending myself and my people against a colonial state massacring and terrorizing my people. In 1976, I was protecting people from being murdered. There were over sixty people killed. The federal government will not investigate those murders because our killers, the GOON Squad, admitted that the FBI was supplying the weapons and ammunition used against us. A trail of bodies, that era tinged and stained in blood. Mass sterilizations of all genders were taking place. Our children kidnapped. Our language and right to bear arms, forbidden. This is nothing short of genocide. I will never forget. Colonization requires erasure: genocide, homicide, and extermination. They wanted nothing less than the extermination of our people. And, uranium. They wanted to force the mining on our reservation. Disrespecting the land, poisoning the waters, which still causes high rates of cancer. I stood in their way.

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So, I will not apologize. I will not yield: my people are owed an apology. During my sentencing decades ago, I made this plain. I will not do it. Because every time I have been called upon by my people, I serve them body, heart, and spirit. It must be done just like that, you see.

I will not do it because there is Power is resistance and I have never given up. I won't start now either.

What is even more false, Brothers, Sisters, and Two Spirits, is that bars, barbed wire, and beatings, could ever defeat Justice. Today you have won, you are winning. When I see the gleam in our babies' eyes, I remember that we are winning. In the defense of the land, we are winning. In the protection of the waters, the womb of Mother Earth, we are winning. To protect our sacred ritual, we are winning.

There are good people who have come forward. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. Former Special Agent Jack Ryan, who said that no one had looked at the role the FBI played. It is time to look at what took place here on this soil, on this land, the same way the U.S. looks at the human rights abuses of its so-called enemies.

Former Special Agent Collen Rowley had the courage to come forward and say that I am being held because of an FBI vendetta. My good friends Paul and Virginia Berg were there. Paul has spent decades trying to tell people what the FBI was doing to us. It is time for someone to listen in the same way the U.S. urges its allies to consider the position of their foes.

Your presence is a gift this 79th birthday. Your protest, a unified Peace. In you, I plant a seed. Hand in hand, we will rise up: Rise up sovereign Nations and all peoples.

Join my Ad Hoc Committee. Because next year: 80 years, no fear! You see, that's what I mean because it's true, My Dears.

And here we are: outside of a house for all the people, built on stolen land and labor of some of them. It is true, and no amount of tip toeing around it will make it any different. Do not turn back. All turn into one. The Spirit of history is on our side. Look upon it now and know it is done. All Power to the People. Thank you for your support and solidarity. Miigweech

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse,
Leonard Peltier