

# URGENT ACTION

## DEMAND TRANSFER FOR NATIVE AMERICAN ACTIVIST

Native American activist Leonard Peltier has been imprisoned in the USA for over 40 years despite concerns over the fairness of his trial. The Bureau of Prisons should grant his request for a transfer, so he can be in a facility that is closer to his relatives and with better access to medical care facilities to treat his chronic health issues. We also continue to call for Leonard Peltier to be granted clemency and be released.

**TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER**

**Chief John O'Brien**  
Designation & Sentence Computation Center  
Federal Bureau of Prisons  
Grand Prairie Office Complex  
346 Marine Forces Drive  
Grand Prairie, TX 75051  
Phone: 972-352-4400 | Fax: 972-352-4395  
Email: [GRA-DSC/PolicyCorrespondence@bop.gov](mailto:GRA-DSC/PolicyCorrespondence@bop.gov)  
Contact form: <https://www.bop.gov/inmates/concerns.jsp>  
(Coleman I USP, inmate #89637-132)

Dear Chief O'Brien,

**Leonard Peltier** (inmate register number 89637-132) was a member of the American Indian Movement, which promotes Native American rights, he is 74 years old and has been incarcerated for more than 40 years. He has applied for a transfer to the Federal Correctional Institution in Oxford (Wisconsin) to be closer to his family and medical facilities.

Leonard Peltier is imprisoned in Florida, approximately 2,000 miles from his family in North Dakota and Minnesota. It is both a physical and financial hardship for his family to visit him. If transferred to the Federal Correctional Institution in Oxford, Wisconsin, a medium security facility, his relatives would be able to visit him more frequently and provide him with additional support.

James H. Reynolds, former US Attorney and the supervisor of the attorneys who prosecuted Leonard Peltier and handled his appeal, has publicly called for clemency and the release of Leonard Peltier.

After decades of incarceration, some of which was spent in solitary confinement, there are serious concerns about Leonard Peltier's health. He suffers from diabetes, and in January 2016 was diagnosed with an abdominal aortic aneurysm, which can be fatal if it ruptures. More recently he has developed issues with his prostate that he describes as both painful and bothersome.

**I urge you to see that Leonard Peltier is transferred to the Federal Correctional Institution in Oxford, Wisconsin, to be in closer proximity to his family as well as proper medical facilities to address the chronic health issues he faces after more than 40 years in prison.**

Yours Sincerely,

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 26 June 1975, during a confrontation involving American Indian Movement members on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation in South Dakota, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents Ronald Williams and Jack Coler were shot dead. In 1977, Leonard Peltier was convicted of their murders and sentenced to two consecutive life sentences. Leonard Peltier does not deny that he was present during the incident, however, he has always denied killing the agents as was alleged by the prosecution at his trial.

Myrtle Poor Bear, a Lakota Native woman who lived at Pine Ridge, was a key alleged eyewitness to the shootings, and on the basis of her statement that she had seen Leonard Peltier kill Ronald Williams and Jack Coler, Leonard Peltier was extradited from Canada, where he had fled following the shootings. However, Myrtle Poor Bear later retracted her testimony. Although not called as a prosecution witness at trial, the trial judge refused to allow Leonard Peltier's attorneys to call Myrtle Poor Bear as a defence witness on the grounds that her testimony "could be highly prejudicial to the government". In 2000, Myrtle Poor Bear issued a public statement to say that her original testimony was a result of months of threats and harassment from FBI agents.

In 1980, documents containing evidence which might have assisted Leonard Peltier's case, but which had been withheld by the prosecution at trial, were released to Leonard Peltier's lawyers as a result of a lawsuit under the Freedom of Information Act. However, in 1986, the U.S. Court of Appeal for the Eighth Circuit denied Leonard Peltier a retrial stating that: "We recognize that there is some evidence in this record of improper conduct on the part of some FBI agents, but we are reluctant to impute even further improprieties to them".

The U.S. Parole Commission has held a number of parole hearings on Leonard Peltier's case. However, it has denied parole on the grounds that Leonard Peltier did not accept criminal responsibility for the murders of the two FBI agents. This is despite the fact that, after one such hearing, the Commission acknowledged that, "the prosecution has conceded the lack of any direct evidence that you personally participated in the executions of two FBI agents".

Due to the numerous issues at trial and the exhaustion of all of his legal avenues for appeal, Amnesty International supports ongoing calls for clemency for 74-year-old Leonard Peltier.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** English

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 28 May 2019

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN:** Leonard Peltier (he/him)

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** [www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/3419/2016/en/](http://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/3419/2016/en/)