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**USA**  
**Public Statement**

Amnesty International calls for release of Leonard Peltier

Amnesty International is not able to take a position regarding Leonard Peltier's guilt or innocence of the killing of FBI agents Ronald Williams and Jack Coler and does not consider him a prisoner of conscience. However, we continue to have serious concerns about the legal process which led to his conviction and sentence.

The evidence that he shot the two FBI agents is far from conclusive and AI has for many years advocated that he should be granted a fair retrial. We are disappointed at the authorities' failure to initiate such a proceeding. At this point, after so many years of imprisonment and having exhausted all available legal appeals, we recognise that a retrial is no longer a feasible option.

The fact remains, however, that Leonard Peltier's numerous appeals have failed to dispel substantial and lingering doubts about the fairness of the legal proceedings. While evidence was presented that he was involved in the firefight, we note that the two other defendants, who pleaded self-defense, were acquitted. If Peltier had been charged only with involvement in the firefight he may also have been acquitted or convicted of a lesser offence and sentenced to a prison term which would by now have long since expired.

In view of these concerns and given the fact that all available remedies have been exhausted and that he has now spent some 22 years in prison, Amnesty International has decided to call for Leonard Peltier's release from prison.

Amnesty International's detailed concerns about this case, and a summary of the evidence, are contained in several public documents on the case issued over the past few years, including *United States of America: Human Rights and American Indians*, AI Index: AMR 51/31/92 and News Service Release 120/95.  
ENDS.../

