

BUFFALO CHIP

OMAHA, NEBRASKA SUMMER 1999

♣♣ Mondo to Seek Commutation and Release ♣♣

Ronald Reagan's Policy: Forgive "Excesses" of the 60s

The following is an excerpt from a letter written to the Nebraska Board of Pardons by Ward Churchill. He has written extensively about COINTELPRO, and is tenured professor in the Dept. of Ethnic Studies at the University of Colorado/Boulder.

"...In 1980, former FBI Director L. Patrick Grey and Edward S. Miller, one-time head of Squad 47, the domestic counterintelligence section of the FBI's New York Field Office, were convicted of having 'conspired to injure and oppress the citizens of the United States.' The context of their crimes was the FBI's COINTELPRO (Counterintelligence Program) ... Neither Grey nor Miller ever spent a day in jail as a result of their convictions. In April 1981 President Ronald Reagan interrupted their appeals process to announce that he was bestowing pardons on both men. The reason stated was that their misdeeds had occurred during an especially turbulent and divisive period in U.S. history. It was time to 'put all this behind us,' Reagan said, and 'to forgive those who engaged in excesses' during the political conflicts of the era.

(cont. on p.6)

Justice in Black and White:

Prison population in 1930s: white, 75%; minorities, 25%.

♣ Who's in prison today: Blacks. who comprise 12% of U.S. population) -- 51%; Whites -- 30%; other minorities -- 19%.

♣ Blacks comprise 30% of monthly drug users, 35% of arrests, 55% of convictions, 74% of prison sentences for drug possession.

♣ Amount of crack requiring a mandatory sentence of 10 years -- 50 grams.

♣ Amount of cocaine requiring a mandatory sentence of 10 years -- 5000 grams.

♣ 14% of black males are now disenfranchised from voting.

♣ There are four times as many African-American men in California prisons as are in the California university system.

Letters Needed! Write to the Nebraska Pardons Board NOW

If you support Mondo's release after 28 years in prison, write now to the Nebraska Board of Pardons, and ask that his sentence be commuted to time served. Send your letter to Jericho Network, PO Box 80547, Lincoln, NE 68501, and we will compile it with others, and present it to the Board of Pardons at the proper time. The letter should be addressed to: Governor Mike Johanns, Secretary of State Scott Moore, and Attorney General Don Stenberg; Nebraska Board of Pardons.

Some background explanation: No one sentenced to a life term in Nebraska can be eligible for parole, unless the Nebraska Board of Pardons first commutes the sentence to a specific number of years, so this is a necessary step toward Mondo's release. **Some points to make:**

Mondo's record is exemplary in prison.

He has continued to serve his community, both in and outside of prison: he is the founder of the Harambee Cultural Organization which teaches young African-American inmates about their heritage and culture; and editor of that organization's quarterly prison publication.

It is a stupid society that runs an experiment to see what its breaking points are.

Lester Thurow

He is a talented writer, who has directed his talents toward community service. For example, he has worked both with the Nebraska Arts Council and the Metropolitan Arts Council, inaugurating an arts club within prison walls, and writing a play on teenage pregnancy which toured Omaha high schools.

He has been published as poet, storyteller, and journalist.

Release of government files through the Freedom of Information Act has shown that Ed and Mondo were convicted on evidence so dubious that Amnesty International and the NAACP have urged the State of Nebraska, either to release them or give them a new trial (see this page for excerpts from Ward Churchill's letter to the Board of Pardons).

PLEASE: Write now and send to the address above!

WHITECLAY/PINE RIDGE

This material was drawn from stories by Ben Corbett in the Boulder Weekly, and Associated Press reporter Carson Walker.

Three of the nation's best-known American Indian activists said Saturday they intend to respond to racial tensions along the South Dakota-Nebraska border. Russell Means, Dennis Banks and Clyde Bellecourte, founders of the American Indian Movement (A.I.M.), led a four-hour rally on July 3 that started peacefully on the Pine Ridge, S.D. reservation, and ended with a two-mile walk to nearby Whiteclay, Nebraska.

Organizers accused whites of prejudice against indigenous people, which they assert is the primary reason there are so many unsolved murders of Native Americans along the state line. The two victims mentioned by name were Wilson Black Elk, Jr., 40, and Ronald Hard Heart, 39, whose bodies were found June 8 in a culvert about half a mile south of Pine Ridge, near the Nebraska border.

"Indian people in this country are still hunted," said Means, co-founder of AIM and a resident of Pine Ridge. "In the last five years, there have been over a dozen uninvestigated murders of Indian people who have been beaten to death on Pine Ridge. The coroner always says the cause of death was, not trauma to the head, but exposure. And they're buried without fanfare."

The unresolved issues in Whiteclay date to the 1972 fatal beating of Raymond Yellow Thunder, whose death spurred a 71-day siege of the Wounded Knee hamlet led by the newly formed A.I.M. "Yellow Thunder was beaten and thrown into the American Legion half naked," says Tom Poor Bear. Poor Bear is a brother of one of the latest victims found murdered just yards inside the Pine Ridge Reservation line on June 8. He took part in the 1972 Wounded Knee siege. He alleges the perpetrators "just got slaps on the wrists and walked away."

Only two men have been convicted to date in South Dakota of any of the killings. "Everyone who kills an Indian here gets exonerated by all-white juries," says Means. "The racism is endemic in the conscious and subconscious of America. But nobody cares. We're out of sight, out of mind."

Whiteclay, an unincorporated town (pop. 27) reported upwards of \$4 million in liquor sales last year, 99% of which were purchased by Native Americans. That's approximately 2,800 cans of beer sold every day to Lakota patrons, who are forbidden by federal law to purchase and consume alcohol on the reservation only two miles away.

Means, Banks, and Bellecourte, founding members of the American Indian Movement, were arrested, during the July 7 march, but released soon afterward. "They figured out there's this thing called the Constitution," said Means, addressing 200 marchers.

(cont. on p. 8)

TO WALK FAMILIAR STREETS IN OMAHA

What if i could walk the streets
of the city where i was born
in the African community
and see buildings with names
like "Akhenaton Academy"
"Queen Nzinga High"
where students clad in dashikis
bubas and other of our people's clothes
were learning to speak in Yoruba
kiSwahili, Ibo, Zulu, Fon
and had "nigger" nowhere on their tongues
were thrilled to be learning our history
and of the genius of our people
locking up to Imhotep
Ida B. Wells or Malcolm X
and not wanting to be like Mike
what if i could make my way
along Nat Turner Drive
Harriet Tubman Avenue
Shamba Bolongongo Street
to stop and rest my feet
at the Church of the African Ancestors
where there would be no cross
and our Creator would be called
"Ngai" or "Shango" or "Amon Ra"
and the prophets and saints would look like us
and honored martyrs would have died for us
what if red and blue were only colors
and i could walk for miles
without the sight of chalk outlines
or crime-scene tape
and could knock on any door and be let in
because of trust
and brother and sisterhood
more resilient than plexiglass windows
with double panes
stronger than dead-bolt locks
what if i could lay down my pen
and not write of this
because my dreams had come
to be

mondo

U.S. Political Prisoners & the Prison Industry



Ed & Mondo awaiting trial, 1971

Buffalo Chip is about justice issues in the U.S., with a special emphasis on political prisoners — especially Nebraskans Ed Poindexter and Mondo Wopashitwe Eyen We Langa (formerly David Rice), who are serving their twenty-eighth year in prison for the bombing murder of Omaha policeman Larry Minard. Both continue to assert their innocence; and evidence withheld at their trial and obtained years later through the Freedom of Information Act raises such doubts about the actions of the Omaha police and the FBI that Amnesty International and the NAACP have asked for a new trial, or their release.

Buffalo Chip is dedicated to the release of Mondo and Ed, and all U.S. political prisoners. But the injustices now so pervasive have forced Amnesty International, the United Nations, and others concerned with human rights abuses, to relegate the issue of the one-hundred-plus U.S. political prisoners — many of whom have served for 25 to 30 years — to a lower priority. These men and women are the victims of the collusion between local police forces and the FBI inaugurated by J. Edgar Hoover to counter civil rights and antiwar dissidents of the sixties.

Anyone who monitors what's happening day by day on our streets, police precincts, courts and prisons very soon learns that the U.S. incarceration rate for non-political crimes now exceeds just about anybody else's on earth. And the faster the prison system grows, the more cruel it becomes.

It has become commonplace to flaunt our own Constitution, as well as the Declaration of Human Rights and treaties and agreements on human rights (ironically, declarations that the U.S. was most influential in establishing). We try juveniles as adults and place teenage boys with adult inmates. We impose the death penalty,

even on the retarded and on juveniles. We tolerate sexual abuse of women inmates by male guards, extended periods of solitary confinement of inmates.

So many complaints have been filed with United Nations Commission on Human Rights and Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International that these organizations now regularly monitor and issue reports on U.S. prison abuses.

Since WWII, a consensus has evolved on what constitutes human rights. The U.S. now ignores that consensus, and is earning the contempt of the civilized world..

Since outside review of either the police or of prison authorities is a rarity here, the system remains self-perpetuating, and few are punished for abuses.

It is both sad and ominous to observe the reaction of both the media and the public to this outcome of the "War on Crime." But, like everything else in the culture, law enforcement and prison systems are now judged less by any criteria of ethical considerations, or even of effectiveness. The primary criterion is profitability -- and the the prison-industrial complex is enormously profitable

Those who benefit are politicians who use fear of crime to garner votes, low-income rural areas which compete for new prisons to generate jobs and visitors, private companies which vie for their market share of this lucrative \$35-billion-a-year "business;" and of course, government officials eager to expand their bureaucratic empires and keep their jobs.

But mindlessly pursuing an imaginary war on crime by imposing draconian punishment on nonviolent offenders is a threat to our democratic system. That there are now so many individuals and companies with a vested interest in maintaining — and growing — the U.S. prison system may yet bring this country to a crisis of democracy more dangerous than any experienced throughout the Cold War. We have met the enemy and it ain't Russia.

The phone companies, the food suppliers, the vending machine distributors, the prison guards in those "lucky" small and dying rural towns who have successfully vied to "win" the competition to build a new prison, because it will mean jobs — all have more motive for allocating tax dollars to building prisons and sustaining a high incarceration rate, than they do for putting those inmates through college. And everything we do to make building new prisons a priority over building new universities will create more and more incentive to generate more profit from prisons. As the Restorative Justice people say, "We are the prisoners of those we imprison."

Russell Means says indigenous people are the canaries in the mines. The same could be said for U.S. political prisoners, who are an early warning that the atmosphere is poisoned, and should have been released when President Reagan pardoned convicted FBI officials L. Patrick Gray and Edward S. Miller for their crimes of

(cont. on p.8)

☛☛☛☛
Leonard Peltier
On Whiteclay
☛☛☛☛

by Leonard Peltier

As I sit "in here" and read about what's going on "out there" in places like Whiteclay, I can't help but be reminded of what happened nearly a quarter of a century ago at Pine Ridge, of the events that put me in the cell in Leavenworth. It seems that we have come full circle. Over the years, I've had a lot of time to think back about Pine Ridge. I can still see the faces of those elders, the Traditionalists who asked for our help. They knew who they were and where they came from. They didn't just talk about their spirituality, they lived it. Those elders knew the power of thought, and they taught us that when we become of one mind, all things are possible. When people look back at what happened there on the Jumping Bull property, they seem to forget that our little camp was a spiritual camp and that we were spiritual warriors. That is, until that now infamous day in 1975 when the sound of gunfire shattered our unity, shattered our world. In an instant, so many lives were changed forever. And I know I'm not the only one doing time because of it. Each and every one of us whose lives were touched, no matter which "side" we were on, is serving a life sentence, because those tragic, mind-numbing events are burned in our collective memory forever. Nothing can bring back those lost lives or take away the pain of grieving families. Nothing can change what happened that day.

We are now back at the beginning. We have come full circle and we have a choice to make. We can either mend the hoop once and for all, or we can go back around and repeat the cycle of violence and destruction. It's up to us. We have to trust in what our elders teach us. They aren't just making it up, you know. Our traditional ways have sustained us for thousands of years, through

(cont. on p.7)

☛☛☛☛
Mondo
On Whiteclay
☛☛☛☛

From the Seminole Wars to White Clay

by mondo

Leonard Peltier is in prison because A.I.M. (American Indian Movement) spoke too loudly and said too much. I am in prison because the Black Panther Party spoke too loudly and said too much. But whom was the volume turned up too high for and the number of words too many? We know the names of some of them — J. Edgar Hoover. Richard Milhous Nixon. Gerald Ford. There are many other names, names of middle-aged and elderly European males who had the arrogance to claim the name, "American," while casting the horrid shadow of their fake democracy over the land that Leonard's people had lived on for thousands of years before the bloody dawn of the age of Cristobal Colon and colonialists.

Leonard and I are locked up — one man indigenous to the country, one who is a native of a foreign land, both, victims and survivors of the rule of foreigners who settled and will settle for nothing less than a never-ending fulfillment of dreams (delusions) of manifest destiny. But A.I.M. and the Black Panther Party said, "We will determine our own destiny." Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Geronimo, Nat Turner, Marcus Garvey, Fannie Lou Hamer, Omowale (Malcolm X), and others said this same thing. For some they spoke too loudly and said too much.

At Pine Ridge, indigenous people are speaking too loudly and saying too much. In Omaha, Africans are speaking too loudly and saying too much (but to themselves, because fear and complacency muffle voices). But Ernie Chambers' voice hasn't been muffled, so there are indigenous people who called upon him to speak at Whiteclay. And he did this because he stands with the oppressed and is fearless and because he knows there

(cont. on p. 5)

☛☛ **Winning the War on Crime In the Midlands** ☛☛

- ☒ A new \$40 million state prison was approved for construction in rural Nebraska in 1998 — the same session of the Legislature in which Gov. Nelson vetoed a \$40 million bill for aid to education.
- ☒ Cass County — bond issue scheduled 9/14/99 for 96-bed city-county jail and law enforcement center in Plattsmouth, on an Historic Preservation site. The *World-Herald* says "Progress appears to have won out over preservation."
- ☒ Geneva, NE — The former Holy Protection Gnostic Orthodox Monastery has been purchased to house juvenile delinquents whose behavior does not yet warrant incarceration, by Young Management, which already operates 2 juvenile "treatment" facilities in Papillion, NE. Fillmore County officials told the *World Herald* they were glad to see the facility used by a private firm, which would "pay property taxes on the land and employ local workers."
- ☒ Pottawattamie County, IA — A new 5-storey, 288-bed jail will open soon, replacing a 43-bed jail which now consistently houses almost 100 .

Mondo

are parallels between the situation of his people and that of the so-called "Indians."

'Indigenous people at Pine Ridge want the liquor sales at Whiteclay shut down. They see the liquor for what it is — chemical warfare. Africans whose eyes are open see this same chemical warfare being conducted in our communities — bars and liquor stores, cheap wines, potent malt liquor, forty-ounce insanity. Indigenous youth being destroyed by the sniffed fumes of paints and solvents and African youth being destroyed by crack cocaine are chemical warfare.

African communities ("ghettos") are our (Africans') reservations, enclaves of dependency on European-usurped resources, Europeans' laws; enclaves at the "mercy" of Europeans' government and agencies. Indigenous people struggle to hold on to their languages. African people here have, for the most part, no knowledge of our own languages. How many of us can speak Fon, Hausa, Yoruba, or other of the approximately 2,000 languages spoken in our Motherland? Indigenous people have had to survive being looked upon and treated as "redskins" and "savages." Africans have had to survive being looked upon and teated as "niggers," "sambos," etc.. African and indigenous children and youth sit in schools where they are taught of European greatness and "black" and "Indian" insignificance. Lakota, Dine, Arapaho, and the other nations of the indigenous in this land must cope with invisibility in the eyes of this country's illegitimate rulers, while Africans must cope with the *visibility* of negative images.

Frank Lamere called upon Ernie to address his people. At the recent conference on freedom for Leonard Peltier, held in Lawrence, Kansas, Geronimo Pratt spoke. A representative of Ed Poindexter and myself addressed the participants. But these examples of cooperation between African and this country's indigenous people represent relative rarity. The fact is that, for the most part, we don't know each other. The U.S. school system and commercial media have done an effective job of keeping us ignorant of those things which would bring understanding to us that, in many ways, we are not only people victimized by the same system of European domination, but kindred peoples. The U.S. school system and media have made Africans "niggers" in the eyes of too many indigenous people and indigenous people "redskins" in the eyes of too many Africans. We have been told about the exploits of the horribly misguided "buffalo soldiers," who assisted Europeans in their "pacification" of the "Indians," but not about the African and Seminoles who fought together against the U.S. government for nearly forty years, nor about the 1,500 or so Africans who fought alongside Comanches in 1850 in Texas to repel European aggression, nor about the many other documented cases of African-indigenous military alliances.

We have been told about indigenous nations

Websites on Justice Issues

(Note: for all sites, use the prefix <http://www.>):

hartford-hwp.com/archives/45a/index-d.html

justicefellowship.org/fill.htm

drcnet.org/juvjustice

facts1.com

restorativejustice.org

presenter.com/_davewest/prisons/prisons.htm

hrw.org/hrw/worldreport99/usa/index.html

directory.netscape.com/society/Issues/

[Human_Rights](#)

prisonactivist.org/pps+pows/

(tribes) and bands that enslaved Africans but not about those who gave sanctuary to Africans who escaped slavery. We have been sold a bill of goods in which "buffalo soldiers" and "Indian" scouts, both traitors to the cause of liberation, are portrayed as heroic and patriotic. This was and is not insignificant. This was and is a kind of mental seasoning or breaking by which we become inclined to fight on behalf of a U.S. government, run by Europeans, against people who look like us, more or less, and who struggle against fundamentally the same oppression that we have struggled against. Africans and indigenous people in this country have sacrificed and taken lives in Korea, in Vietnam, and in other wars of U.S. aggression against people who were of color and were not *our* enemies. What possible honor and/or heroism is there in killing and dying for the interests of those who systematically abuse you?

Africans and the people indigenous to this land — kindred peoples? Indigenous people who are cultural traditionalists have a holistic outlook on the natural world and their roles in it, have respect for Mother Earth and the creatures sustained by her, place the clan or village ahead of any individual. These are values that are part of the African legacy, lost values, values programmed out of African people in this country. But when my foreparents were brought to these shores in bondage, when they were still African in mind and spirit, they had these values. And it was the possession of them that facilitated the formation of friendships and alliances between my foreparents and Leonard Peltier's, between Ernie's and Frank Lamere's. Stripped of the alien clothing of European influence, African people and indigenous people in this land are both people who can live in tempo with the heartbeat of Mother Earth.

But too many of us have taken the paths of the "buffalo soldier," or "Indian" scout. Following these paths, we cannot speak for ourselves, cannot speak for our people, because we love George Washington and George Custer too much. We speak too loudly and say too much of nothing.

Leonard and I will meet, bring some of our partners along, pour libation and be smudged. Two drums will make a loud sound and say much.



Ronald Reagan: "Forgive"

(cont. from p. 1)

"At the time, a number of people pointed out that if this were indeed to be Reagan's policy, it would be at least as appropriate for him to pardon the numerous victims of COINTELPRO as to forgive its perpetrators in such fashion. It was noted that the Senate Intelligence Committee had concluded there was an appearance that a COINTELPRO technique had been use of the courts to "neutralize" those the FBI viewed as "key activists" by obtaining false convictions against them, that the FBI had typically solicited local police involvement in such endeavors, and that of all the groups targeted in this manner the Black Panther Party (BPP) had been hit hardest and most extensively.

"No action was forthcoming from the Reagan administration in this connection, however, and former Panthers continued to serve time, many of them on the basis of verdicts showing clear signs of having been reached by way of COINTELPRO manipulations...

"...You [members of the Nebraska Board of Pardons] have before you [a] case involving former Black Panthers which bears the indelible imprint of COINTELPRO. From its inception, the allegation that former Omaha BPP leaders Mondo we Langa (David Rice) and Edward Poindexter were involved in the 1970 murder of Police Officer Larry Minard has been strained at best...

"...To all appearances [the chief witness against Rice and Poindexter] Duane Peak changed his story to implicate the two Panthers — this was his *seventh* version of events — only after being offered a deal by police and prosecutors in which he might enter such testimony in exchange for avoiding prosecution as an adult. It should be noted that Peak also implicated six other men at various points in his ever-changing statements, that none of them were members of the BPP, and that none of them were ever charged.

"Rice and Poindexter were convicted in April 1971, primarily on the basis of testimony provided by Duane Peak. There is of course substantial indication that he perjured himself. With respect to physical evidence introduced to support Peak's testimony, a federal District Court found in 1974 that the search through which it was allegedly obtained was patently illegal (a matter admitting to the possibility that, as Rice has always maintained, the evidence was planted by police). A new trial was ordered at that time, but was prevented by a jurisdictional technicality applied *post hoc* by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1976.

"Further appeals were blocked by yet another technicality: the statutory time limit for filing in Nebraska courts had expired while Rice and Poindexter were awaiting the outcome of the federal process. One result of this situation has been that it has severely constrained their ability to reopen their case on the basis of FBI docu-

ments obtained in 1978 revealing that Omaha police detectives actively cooperated with Bureau personnel in suppressing potentially exculpatory evidence during their 1970 trial.

"Such subversion of the judicial process by those charged with enforcing the law is entirely consistent with the COINTELPRO techniques employed in the bin Wahad and Pratt cases, as well as the fact that the Omaha chapter of the Black Panther Party — Rice and Poindexter in particular — were targeted by the FBI for COINTELPRO neutralization not later than 1968.

"The motives underlying police performance in the Rice/Poindexter case have actually been spelled out fairly clearly by Jack Swanson, the Omaha police detective who headed up the 1970 bombing investigation. As Swanson put it to a BBC interviewer, 'I think we did the right thing at the time, because the Black Panther Party ... completely disappeared from Omaha [after] we got the two main players.' Obviously, bringing about the destruction of a political organization has nothing to do with any sort of legitimate criminal investigation. It has *everything* to do with accomplishing COINTELPRO objectives.

"Former Nebraska Governor Frank Morrison has observed that David Rice and Edward Poindexter 'were convicted for their rhetoric, not for any crime they committed.' Amnesty International, the NAACP, Jericho '98 and the Congressional Black Caucus have all taken up the case. Since 1993, the Nebraska Parole Board has voted unanimously and repeatedly to commute both sentences to time served. Yet, to date, the Nebraska Board of Pardons has refused to so much as schedule a hearing on the matter. One Board member is even reputed to have asserted that there are 'no circumstances' under which he would be willing to consider commutation.

"Simple justice demands a reversal of this position. Surely, even if one is inclined to believe, contrary to much evidence, that Rice and Poindexter were actually involved in the death of Officer Minard, it must be conceded that 28 years of incarceration is sufficient punishment. This seems especially true, considering that the Nebraska Board of Pardons has seen fit to commute the life sentences of such notorious figures as Caril Ann Fugate — unquestionably a participant in a serial of eleven murders — after less than twenty years. Both men, even if guilty as charged, are long past the point of being eligible for commutation on the basis of rehabilitation.

"Moreover, as has been described herein, it is virtual certainty that Rice and Poindexter were denied the due process rights to which all citizens are and must be entitled. This fact alone leaves, and will always leave, a quite reasonable concern that they may well be innocent of the offense for which they were convicted and imprisoned for more than a quarter-century.

"As a rule, those who posture as being 'tough on crime' would do well to be among the very first to ensure

Ronald Reagan: Forgive (cont.)

that persons accused of crimes are actually guilty of them before overseeing the severity of their punishment. Still more is this true with varieties of crime — 'cop killing,' for example — in which the strongest possible deterrent examples are to be made of perpetrators. For such examples to be set erroneously, or where there is a strong degree of doubt, serves only to undermine public faith in the very institutions those who 'get tough' seek to affirm and reinforce. It follows that they no more than I... should embrace a process that appears on its face to be either arbitrary or capricious.

"Ultimately, and perhaps ironically, Ronald Reagan had it right. By 1981, it was indeed time to forgive and pardon those whose offenses, real or perceived, accrued from the sociopolitical vortex of the Vietnam Era. Can there be serious doubt that such a principle, if it is to be considered worthy of the name, is as applicable to former Black Panthers as to former FBI officials? Anything else would be a travesty of justice, and the country has already witnessed far too many of these.

"What is done cannot be undone, but the future can be changed. Mondo we Langa and Edward Poindexter deserve at this late date not merely to be heard but to be free men, reintegrated with and contributing their undeniable talents to their community, participating fully in the ongoing process of healing and reconciliation about which President Reagan spoke so glowingly eighteen years ago. It is truly time that we 'put all this behind us,' and, in this case, only the Nebraska Board of Pardons can accomplish that in an expedient manner."

Peltier (cont. from p. 4)

all kinds of adversity, and we're still here. A little ragged around the edges, maybe, but still here. And in spite of all, we still have our Original Instructions. Isn't it about time we started following them?

As things heat up and we face off in places like Whiteclay, we must not forget our pipes and our traditional manner. We must not exchange our spirituality for violence and destruction. We are now at a place in time where we have powerful allies throughout the world. If we keep our heads up and follow the spiritual path, we can mobilize these forces. Are we going to let history repeat itself? Will more people suffer pain and loss? Are more "Leonard Peltiers" going to be created? Or do we keep our heads together and let the spirit of the old ways guide us to change the outcome going into this new millennium? We can, if we remember who we are, if we quit ignoring the experiences of those who have come before us. It's time to take a long, hard look in the mirror. Are we living our spirituality, everyday, like those elders, or are we just talking about it?

We must become of one mind, united in thought and action. Not just during Sundance or when we're in the sweat lodge, but every single day of our lives. Then and only then will change begin and doors be opened. Who knows, one of those doors may even be the door to MY CELL. To those planning to march to Whiteclay tomorrow, I urge you to follow your own spiritual knowledge, not the path of violence. In everything we do, we must think of the seventh generation to come. Mitakuye Oyasin.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse -- Leonard Peltier

Some Facts About the Justice System

In the U.S.

The U.S. and the Death Penalty

- ✿ Countries which currently impose the death penalty -- USA, Iran, China, Saudi Arabia.
- ✿ Countries which don't -- Russia, European Union.
- ✿ Number of states which allow the death penalty: 38
- ✿ Number of persons executed since 1978: 350
- ✿ Number of persons proven innocent and released from death row: 50.
- ✿ Number of persons currently on death row: 3,300.
- ✿ Number of persons who could be proven innocent, if current ratio holds: 491.
- ✿ Number of states which ban the execution of retarded people: 12.
- ✿ Number of juvenile offenders who have been executed in the U.S. since 1990: 8.
- ✿ Number of persons now on death row in Texas for crimes committed when under the age of 19: 25

The Cost of "Corrections"

- ✿ Rising faster than all expenditures for education, health, welfare and natural resources combined. Amounts spent:
 - ✿ On prisons in 1978: \$5 billion; in 1998: \$35 billion.
 - ✿ On welfare for 8.5 million people: \$16.6 billion.
 - ✿ On child care for 1.25 million children: \$4 billion.
 - ✿ In 1998, on new prisons: \$2.6 billion.
 - ✿ In 1998, on universities: \$2.5 billion.
- ✿ **Our Tradeoff: Prisons for Schools**
 - ✿ 1987-95: State expenditures for prisons increased by 30%; university spending declined by 19%.
 - ✿ New York State, 1990s: Prison budget grew by \$761 million; higher education decreased by \$615 million.
 - ✿ Washington, D.C.: Has more prison inmates than students in its university system.



WHITECLAY/PINE RIDGE

(cont. from p. 2) Amidst this controversy, President Clinton visited Pine Ridge on July 7 — the first president to set foot on an Indian reservation. Clinton did not address the question of a Presidential pardon for A.I.M.'s Leonard Peltier, imprisoned since the 1970s; nor the issue of unsolved Indian deaths, for the controversy surrounding lands which the courts have found belong to the Lakota.

Besides the deaths and the alcohol sales, the Lakota refuse to acknowledge Nebraska's claim to the Whiteclay area, and say Nebraska is trespassing on Indian land. The Lakota case against Nebraska and the U.S. government is a complicated web dating to the 1851 and 1868 Fort Laramie Treaties, which describe Lakota title to lands ranging from the Yellowstone River in the North, the Missouri River to the east, and the North Platte River to the south — an area nearly 100 times larger than the current reservation.

In 1946, the Indian Claims Commission was formed, permitting American Indian Nations to sue the U.S. government for land "takings." In the early 1970s, the Lakota sued, a "taking" was demonstrated, and he Claims Commission awarded \$17.5 million — the 1877 dollar value of the stolen property. The Lakotas refused, and insisted on the land being returned. In 1979 the U.S. government admitted error in its earlier calculations, and offered \$105 million. The Lakota still refused, and that sum sits untouched in a federal bank. It has grown to \$500 million with accrued interest, but the Lakota have averred that accepting the money would seal a shady deal.

In the late 1800s, Whiteclay was known as the Red Cloud Agency, where Chief Red Cloud and his band resided during the winter months. His ponies were undoubtedly tied to the same trees where the marchers

found shade: fir and willow and cottonwood.

"I'm a great believer," said Means, "in what Felix Cohen said in the 1920s. 'The American Indian is the miner's canary of freedom in this country' ... with these marches to White Clay, maybe the miner's canary is being revived. And we're saying 'America, wake up.' This is a rebirth of a nation whose sole reason for existence is to be free. And that's what we're gonna be again."



Between 1992-1997 when the New York state prison population only increased by about 8,300 inmates, its violent crime rate fell by 38.6%, and its murder rate by 54.5%. In the same period, California added nine times as many inmates (i.e., a 30% increase in its prison population) but its crime rate fell by only 23% and its murder rate by 28%.

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"conspiring to injure and oppress citizens of the United States;" saying it was time "to forgive those who engaged in excesses" during the political conflicts of the era.

The Nebraska Board of Pardons — Governor Mike Johanns, Secretary of State Scott Moore, and Attorney General Don Stenberg — will soon decide whether or not to commute Mondo's sentence to time served. We believe that if the Board reviews the evidence on which Amnesty International and the NAACP has based its conclusions, they will act on the recommendations of those two organizations, and release both Ed and Mondo immediately.



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