

Protesters demand freedom for Leonard Peltier after 47 years in prison

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Santa Fe, February 8 (RHC)-- Supporters of Leonard Peltier rallied in cities and towns across the U.S. and around the world Monday, calling for the release of the 78-year-old Indigenous rights activist. The protests came as Peltier entered into his 48th year behind bars for a crime he says he did not commit.

His 1977 conviction for alleged involvement in killing two FBI agents in a shootout on the Pine Ridge Reservation was riddled with irregularities and prosecutorial misconduct. Last month, former senior FBI agent Coleen Rowley told The Guardian that in the 1990s she helped ghostwrite an op-ed arguing against Peltier's release. She said that for years new FBI agents were "indoctrinated" against Peltier.

Christina Castro, an Indigenous activist from New Mexico, speaking at a rally for Leonard Peltier in Santa Fe, New Mexico, said: "Now the government is actually admitting they don't know who shot these FBI agents, but they will not give him a new trial or grant him clemency or a compassionate release, based on a pure revenge and systemic racist agenda."

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