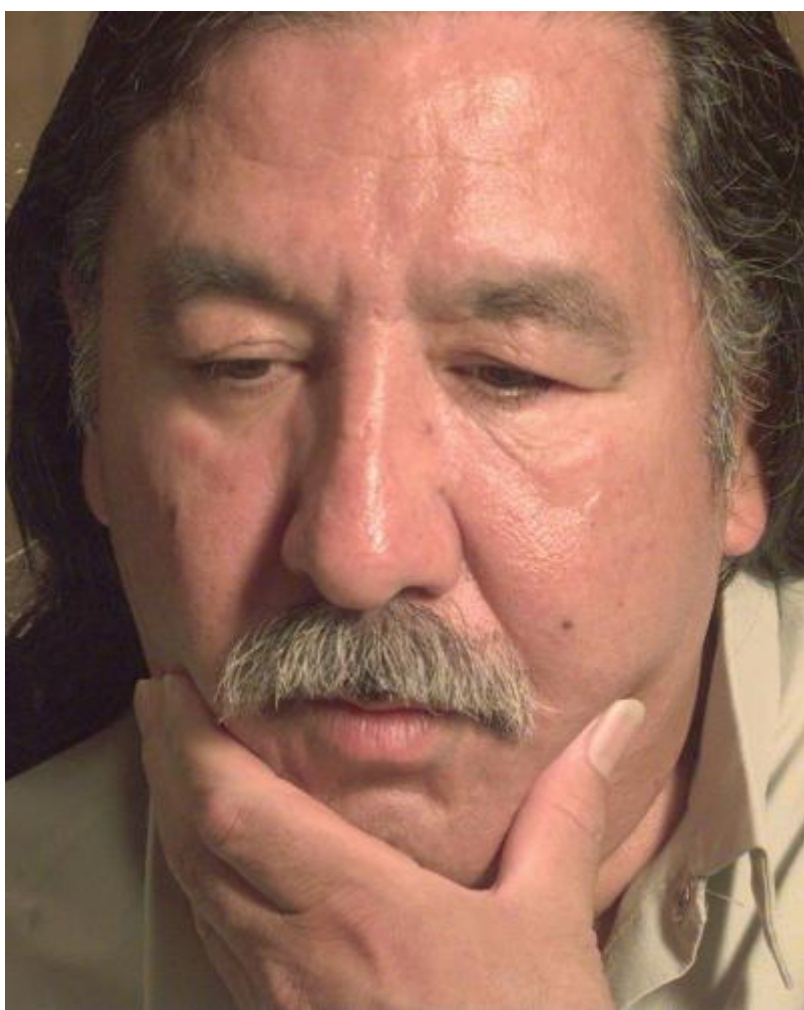


Native American Political Prisoner Leonard Peltier Says 'Indian Lives Matter'



New York, June 1 (RHC)-- Leonard Peltier, the Native American activist who has spent four decades in prison, says he is paying the price for having fought for the values of indigenous lives.

In a interview published by the New York Daily News, Peltier said: "That's what we were always fighting to change -- the idea that Indian lives weren't worth anything." Leonard Peltier was unjustly accused of killing two FBI agents in 1971 and has been locked up in U.S. prisons ever since.

A leading activist within the American Indian Movement or AIM, a militant group championing Native American autonomy and culture during its peak political activity in the 1970s, Leonard Peltier is one of the longest held political prisoners in the United States.

While Peltier could have gained parole or clemency for saying he had killed the agents, he told the New York Daily News that he could not because, " I won't betray my people like that, I won't betray my culture." He added that the shootout was a "terrible tragedy" that "should never have

happened."

Calls have multiplied recently for President Barack Obama to grant clemency, as he approaches the end of his term and Peltier passes his 40th year behind bars. Leonard Peltier, now 71 years old, did not sound optimistic about a potential early release, saying his case is easy to dismiss as just another 'liberal cause.' And since he is not eligible for another parole hearing until 2024, his freedom relies on the altruism of U.S. authorities.

Now with diabetes, prostate problems and a massive aneurysm, Peltier said he is not expecting to live much longer and has requested a traditional ceremonial burial. Until then, he paints -- the only thing that makes him feel free.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/noticias/internacionales/95388-native-american-political-prisoner-leonard-peltier-says-indian-lives-matter>



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