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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

January 30 [1976]

Ted -

I don't mean to stick any fingers in your current business, but if it seems helpful to you might mention one point about this problem of Indian militancy:

Garment's and my experience with 5 years of that crap indicated that the "setting of a deadline" tends to play very much into Indian hands. Deadlines heighten tension and heightened tension means heightened press play and that is the name of the game for the militants.

Some of them are real paranoids and actually live off the idea of threat, tension, pitched battle and "dying at the last assault". Many times I have had them shout to me at one conference table or another "You know, Mr. Patterson, we are going to die tonight; you know that, don't you?" Martyrdom at the last assault, with the media looking on, is in a perverse way sort of the ultimate triumph.

Setting any "hours certain" of "time past which" tends to inflate all of these developments; the tears of the softie sympathizers grow hotter, the Brandos weep louder, the television crews accumulate, the national news nets anticipate, and the stage is set for apocalypse-- all of which is precisely what the militant leaders want and need in order to keep their flock together and hipped up. Neglect and boredom and lack of publicity are the antitheses of this.

I am not saying that law enforcement should be too long delayed -- but just that if it is to be used, one simply has to "move in" without making a lot of announcements ahead of time or getting "deadlines". And presumably after negotiations fail.

Courts set deadlines and that's why we at Wounded Knee avoided getting into the Court track; we should avoid setting our own for the reasons indicated.

Free advice from the armchair...

*Seal*

