

Great Sioux Nation

Oceti Sakowin Dakota, Nakota, Lakota Oyate

November 30, 2016

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC

Re: Stop the Coming Attack on our Native People!

Dear President Obama:

We write to demand that you take action to avoid a humanitarian crisis: ***Protect our Native people!*** As Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces, you are about to preside over a human rights disaster on the scale of *Selma*.

We are the original people of this land, now called America. There is a reason that these states are called North and South Dakota—we are the Dakota, Nakota, and Lakota people. From the dawn of time, these lands have been our home.

Through treaties, our *Itancan* of the *Lakota, Nakota, Dakota Oyate* or, in English, our Chiefs of the Great Sioux Nation reserved our lands as our “*permanent home*.” When the United States invaded our lands, our people fought wars to save our lands, yet America repeatedly attacked the Great Sioux Nation to steal our lands and destroy our way of life. Now it is happening again!

Two years ago, President Obama, you came to Standing Rock, spoke to our Dakota, Nakota, and Lakota people and quoted Sitting Bull, “Let us put our minds together and see what lives we can make for our children.” Then this year, the Army Corps of Engineers purported to authorize an oil pipeline to violate Sitting Bull’s lands and to poison our waters in the Missouri River—without even talking to our Native Nations about water quality. Under your Administration, the Army Corps says the pipeline will never spill, even as it presides over BP Louisiana/Gulf of Mexico clean-up, EPA’s poisoning of the San Juan River at Navajo, the oil pipeline burst in the Yellowstone River, the lead in Flint, Michigan, the gas pipeline burst in Alabama, and the list goes on.

Mr. President, in Washington State, the Army Corps stopped the International Coal Terminal in May 2016 because it would interfere with Treaty fishing. Under our Treaties, we own the land along the River, the bed of the River, and the water in the River. Our children drink the water in the River. We cannot wait for the oil to spill and poison our water. Stop the oil pipeline now!

Colonel Henderson, your Army Corps Commander on the ground, says that he is going to protect our Native people by closing the protest area on the ground where they stand. He says, he wants to protect our people's safety, but he speaks with a forked tongue. We say Čheží okhížata waŋ yuhá wóglake. His Orwellian double talk is a disgrace to America.

Our people have reacted to this plan with righteous outrage and Colonel Henderson provided a troubling response. He claims that he consulted with tribal leaders about his plan. We the undersigned are the tribal leaders. He did not consult with us. And his response does not deny that law enforcement will use force to cite and arrest persons in the restricted area, which is the most dire threat to our people. As soon as Colonel Henderson purported to withdraw the permission for the Water Protectors to be at their camp, Governor Dalrymple declared that our people were there on our 1851 Treaty lands trespassing in violation of state law. The Governor withdrew emergency services for our people, yet the Army Corps claims that its action is for our people's safety.

On December 5, 2016, Henderson plans to pull the rug out from under our people, and he plans to stand back like a matador while North Dakota state officials attack our people with water cannons, mace, concussion grenades, rubber bullets, and perhaps, real bullets. That will not absolve the Army Corps of guilt. We say, *Mni Wiconi*—it means, *Water is Life*.

It is not right for the Army Corps to give its blessing for North Dakota to attack our Native people for wanting to live. The last time that the Army had a plan to pacify the Great Sioux Nation, our men, women and children were slaughtered at Wounded Knee; the time before that, Custer died and Sitting Bull was chased to Canada by five armies so the General Sherman could steal our gold. As President, what do you expect of the Army's leadership this time?

Crazy Horse said, "One does not sell the Earth the people walk on," and he fought alongside Red Cloud to protect our homeland. At the close of Red Cloud's War, in the 1868 Sioux Nation Treaty, the United States promised: ***"From this day forward all war between the parties to this agreement shall forever cease. The government of the United States desires peace, and its honor is hereby pledged to keep it."***

Mr. President, under the Constitution, those words are law, and it is time for you as Commander-in-Chief to enforce the law. Get the Army out of Indian country. Stop the oil pipeline. Protect our drinking water. Preserve our Native homeland.

Stand up for human rights in North Dakota!

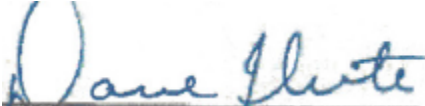
In Peace and Friendship
Your Treaty Partners,



Harold Frazier, Chairman
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe



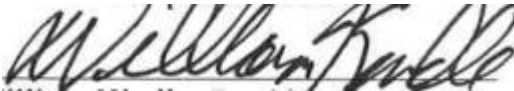
Dave Archambault, II, Chairman
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe



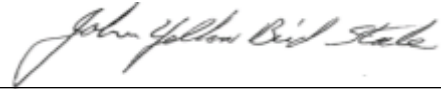
Dave Flute, Chairman
Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe



Anthony Reider, President
Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe



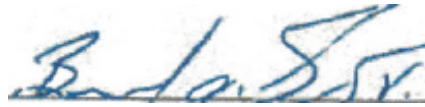
William Kindle, President
Rosebud Sioux Tribe



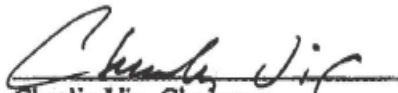
John Yellow Bird Steele, President
Oglala Sioux Tribe




Robert Flying Hawk, Chairman
Yankton Sioux Tribe



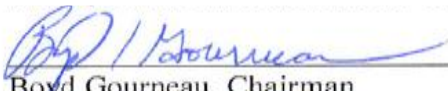
Brandon Sazue, Chairman
Crow Creek Sioux Tribe



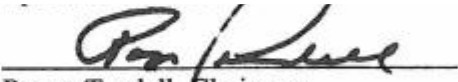
Charlie Vig, Chairman
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Tribe



Myra Pearson, Chairwoman
Spirit Lake Tribe



Boyd Gourneau, Chairman
Lower Brule Sioux Tribe



Roger Trudell, Chairman
Santee Sioux Nation



Tony Reider,
Chairman, Great Plains Chairman's Association, Inc.
Secretary, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe