

**Loneman School, White Clay District
Pine Ridge, Lakota Nation, South Dakota
June 21, 1986**

COMMUNIQUE NO. 9

The Traditional Circle of Elders is composed of the respected leaders, medicine people, and elders of Native American communities throughout the great Turtle Island of North America and islands of the Western Hemisphere.

It is they who are entrusted with the health, well-being, and spiritual needs of the aboriginal peoples and nations of the Western Hemisphere. It is they who serve as guides and teachers for their nations and are concerned for the welfare of the coming generations. They are the Grandfathers and Grandmothers of nations who still carry the original instructions, ceremonies, and medicines of the Native peoples of these lands.

These people do not sell, trade, or barter the sacred ceremonies for profit. Phillip Deere has been the only Elders Circle representative to be delegated to represent us internationally at a conference in Rome, Italy, in 1982. Be advised that we have authorized no one to represent the Elders Circle internationally for spiritual purposes or for fundraising.

We, the Traditional Elders, again speak to the general public and announce that people of our respective nations are complaining that their ceremonies, pipes, and sweatlodges are being violated by non-Native individuals and Native American individuals who purport to be medicine people.

This is a violation of our human rights, group rights, and a violation of our religious freedoms. The exploitation of the sacred symbols of our ceremonies causes pain and distress among our people, and denigrates the fundamental instructions of our cultures and teachings.

We cannot prevent people from throwing their money away on so-called Indian ceremonies, but we can challenge those who misuse our sacred pipes, sweatlodges, and ceremonies. So now once again we demand that these violations cease.

*Ho lena hecetu kte lo;
Pila mayaye lo.*

The Traditional Circle of Elders