

**THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF  
AMERICAN INDIANS**

**RESOLUTION #SPO-01-163**

**Title: Support the Action to Revoke the Congressional Medals of Honor to the Soldiers of the 7<sup>th</sup> Calvary at Wounded Knee**

**WHEREAS**, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe of South Dakota is an unincorporated Tribe of Indians having accepted the provisions of the Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984); and

**WHEREAS**, the Tribe in order to establish its tribal organization, to conserve its tribal property, to develop its common resources, and to promote the general welfare of its people has ordained and established a Constitution and By-laws; and

**WHEREAS**, the veterans and the elders of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, have presented information to the Veteran's Committee concerning Congressional Medals of Honor issued by the United States Congress to some 27 or so soldiers of the United States Army for their participation and direct involvement in the December 29, 1890 Massacre of Lakota (Sioux) men, women, children, and elderly on Tribal lands near Wounded Knee Creek; and

**WHEREAS**, the Congressional Medal of Honor is the United States highest award for valor, and a letter listing 27 of the names of the soldiers who were awarded a Medal of Honor for their participation and involvement is attached; and

**WHEREAS**, Chief Big Foot and his Band were intercepted on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation at Porcupine Butte by Major Whitside, surrendered unconditionally under a white flag of truce and were escorted to Wounded Knee Creek, where Colonel James W. Forsyth assumed command; and

**WHEREAS**, Colonel James W. Forsyth ordered his troops to surround these Lakota and to surrender their weapons, and the Seventh Cavalry searched and disarmed said Lakotas, and removed all items to the center of the camp, including small awls that were used for sewing and leatherwork; and

**WHEREAS**, after disarming the Lakotas and searching all of their belongings for weapons of any sort, a shot rang out and the Seventh Cavalry opened fire indiscriminately and fired Hotchkiss cannons, killing and wounding over 300 unarmed men, women, children, children, and elderly Lakotas; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe hereby requests that the United States Government take action to revoke the Congressional Medals of Honors from the soldiers of the United States Army, 7<sup>th</sup> Calvary, which were issued following the massacre of unarmed men, women, children, and elderly of the Great Sioux Nation on December 29, 1890 near on Tribal Lands near Wounded Knee Creek; and

**WHEREAS**, the purposes of issuing a Congressional Medal of honor are to award “a person who, while a member of the [armed forces], distinguished himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty...” according to official U.S. government documents - Medal of Honor Recipients 1863-1878, in the name of the Congress of the United Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, Senate Committee Print No. 3; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe requests the United States Government to review the history surrounding the December 29, 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre and either return those medals, renounce the issuance of said medals, and/or to proclaim that the medals are null and void, given the atrocities committed upon unarmed men, women, children and elderly of the Great Sioux Nation.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NCAI does hereby request the United States Congress to review the history surrounding the December 29, 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre, and either return those medals, renounce the issuance of said medals, and/or to proclaim that the medals are null and void, given the atrocities committed upon unarmed men, women, children and elderly of the Great Sioux Nation; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Spokane Convention Center, in Spokane, Washington on November 25-30, 2001 with a quorum present.

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Tex Hall, President

**ATTEST:**

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Colleen Cawston, Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Spokane Convention Center, in Spokane, Washington on November 25-30, 2001.