

SPEAKER 1: Members of the press and members of the government have charged that the property damage there in Wounded Knee was caused by the residents during the occupation. A team of lawyers has gone down to Wounded Knee today to investigate that, members of the Wounded Knee Legal Defense Committee. They're also going to investigate the reports of harassment of Wounded Knee citizens by the BIA police and by the Wilson administration in Pine Ridge.

I talked to a 75-year-old Oglala Sioux woman this morning who's here in Rapid City. She was in Wounded Knee for the two-month occupation. And she said that a tremendous amount of damage has been done to her property following the occupation by the BIA police and by the vigilantes of the Wilson administration. Exactly who caused the damage is certainly at this point not certain.

SPEAKER 2: What did you see personally of any property damage?

SPEAKER 1: Very little. Now, I have seen on the network television many pictures of garbage heaps and refuse outside and so forth. I think some of that has to be viewed within the context of the difficulty in burying it since there was no water, there was no fuel, there was no heating or cooking gas.

And with no running water, water was taken out of wells and garbage really couldn't be buried. There were attempts to clean up some very minor refuse, and I think these were successful. But I can certainly ascertain that the amount of damage which has been shown on television and indicated in the wire service reports in newspapers is simply not true.

SPEAKER 2: What's happening in Rapid City as the people from Wounded Knee are being brought into town? Are the residents there at all interested in this, or are they just going about their business as usual?

SPEAKER 1: Well the Indian people, of course, are very interested. But the thinking otherwise is quite polarized. When the federal bus full of prisoners arrived at the Pennington County Jail, there were several hundred Indians and other sympathizers who surrounded the bus with a drum and vocalized their support.

However, the media has been extremely critical, and many people in town have too. I could only compare the situation to my experiences 8 or 10 years ago in Mississippi or Alabama. I had a very difficult time, for example, renting a car. I was asked if I was, one, an AIM sympathizer, and then two, a person from the news media out of town. People have difficulty cashing checks or doing the kinds of normal things that out-of-towners could do.

SPEAKER 2: Are some people still being held in the Pine Ridge area?

SPEAKER 1: Yes, they are. And this is something that it's rather difficult for the defense lawyers to find out because when you are in the Pine Ridge jail, you're not allowed a telephone call. And oftentimes, you're not told what you're charged with. Last night, I interviewed a woman whose name is Stephanie Autumn. She's a Silversmith from Arizona.

She was arrested May 7, the day before the occupation ended. The community relations people from the Justice Department who acted as mediators throughout the occupation called out to the FBI, and after 24 hours, the FBI indicated that no charges existed against Ms. Autumn and that she could come out of Wounded Knee and she would be safe and clear to go.

She went out to the roadblock. The FBI turned her over to the BIA police. They brought her to the Pine Ridge jail along with the seven women who accompanied her. In all, eight were arrested. They were thrown into a small single jail cell with 27 other women. She was not charged. She did not know what she was in there for. She was not allowed a telephone call.

When the lawyers did find that she was in there, it was only an accident she was able to yell across from one cell to another and tell someone whom they did know was in there to tell them. They came and asked what the charge was. They were told that she was charged with riot, conspiracy, and aiding and abetting in a civil disorder. Her full bond was \$75, and she was released then 36 hours after her initial arrest.