

AIM Panel Explains Wounded Knee

by Jean Orlow

On campus, when people speak of A.I.M., they are usually referring to the Administration Information Management program at William James College. However, to South Dakota lawyer Ramone Rabebeux, "A.I.M. is a vehicle to put balls back on the Indian man."

Friday, October 19, A.I.M. (American Indian Movement) came to campus in the persons of Dennis Banks, A.I.M. executive director, and Ramone Rabebeux, an attorney who says he's "finishing a 23-year vacation of representing white people, by joining A.I.M." Luke McKisack, another A.I.M. attorney, was unable to participate on the Wounded Knee Panel as he was called to represent a client on the West coast.

At one time, all of America belonged to the Indians, but as colonists pushed west, Indians were forced off their own land. In South Dakota, in the 1800's, Indians were "given" the entire western half of that state. The responsibility for keeping white men off Indian territory was delegated to the army. As it became apparent that gold was plentiful in the Bad Lands, this "protecting" worked to move the Indians off their precious land.

the federal government for administrative expenses. It would appear that the B.I.A. is more concerned with its own survival than with Indian affairs.

What led up to the Indian stand at Wounded Knee on March 8, 1973, was not only a reaction to white racist America, but also a total rejection of the dictatorial authority of the B.I.A. Prior to the siege that eventually took place at Wounded Knee, A.I.M. leaders met with Ogala Sioux and were told of the tyrannical tribal government. It seemed the "Indianness" had been beaten out of Indians; the women desperately wanted to know if there were any real Indian men left. It was at this point that Dennis Banks remarked, "We realized that our time had come, that all of the Indians that died for this country had died in vain, unless we became more than week-end warriors."

As 1500 Indians gathered around a mass grave site at Wounded Knee, it became clear to A.I.M. members that they could never leave Wounded Knee until some kind of justice came to Indian country.

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dians off their precious land.

A.I.M. points out that the effectiveness of the (B.I.A.) Bureau of Indian Affairs, whose stated goals are the protection of Indian resources and establishment of means of self-support, can be judged best on the basis of statistics. Before the B.I.A. was organized, the American Indian owned 150 million acres of land compared to its present 53 million acres. In South Dakota alone, Indians comprise 2% of the total population. Among Indians, unemployment level is somewhere between 70-75% and even the working Indian can only look forward to an average annual income of \$1000-\$1200.

Indians are also said to be responsible for 80% of the crimes committed in that state, and the state prisons reflect this attitude by maintaining an Indian population of 36-40%. The rate of infant mortality is four times the national average and the average life expectancy of an Indian male is 44 years. Dennis Banks, age 41, finds this statistic especially amusing only because he faces criminal charges that include maximum sentences which all totaled come to 205 years plus one life sentence. This is just in South Dakota. The federal government can add 150 years to that already lengthy sentence.

The B.I.A., set up a trustee for 64 Indian tribes, uses 90% of the money allotted by

The siege began. It seemed to be an idea whose time had come. Indians were no longer trying to become white men. Two hundred and fifty warriors—Black, White, Yellow, and Red—began to wage a war which still continues against the B.I.A. influence in courts, schools, and in Washington. The government has signed 371 treaties with 214 tribes, yet violations by the B.I.A. occur daily. White racism has not been eradicated in America, but is an ever present threat to the Indians survival. Given these facts and the evidence that A.I.M. has proven itself to be much more than an isolated band of hoodlums, the potential for many more Wounded Knees exists.

Deadline N

by Patty Mitus

Are you in a financial bind because of tuition, books, and housing? Well, students there is help available if you show a definite need, are a full time student, and if you take the time to apply.

Forms for the Basic Education Opportunity Grants were mailed to all freshmen last week in hopes that they will apply.

Within the next few years, most funding for higher education will come