YELLOW THUNDER CAMP
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Greetings from Yellow Thunder,

As we approach one year at Yellow Thunder, we would like you to be aware of certain legal and legislative developments:

1. The case of Yellow Thunder is rapidly approaching a court date. As you will recall, the Special Use Application to build permanant structures was denied by James Mathers, Black Hills National Forest Supervisor, who also issued orders to evict Yellow Thunder Camp by September 8th, 1981. Since the camp chose not to leave, the Forest Service and the U.S. Attorney initiated a civil lawsuit to prevent Yellow Thunder from remaining at its present site or from establishing permanent residence elsewhere in the Black Hills. We countered with a suit against Mathers on the authority of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, the 1978 American Indian Religious Freedom Act and Article VI of the U.S. Constitution.

2. The Yellow Thunder legal case is presently in the stage of "discovery" - both sides asking written questions which must be answered. We have submitted over two hundred questions and have chosen to make public our reply to the government's questions. Yellow Thunder's replies are in the process of publication.

3. In late December, we completed construction of the temporary geodesic dome which we use for dining, classes, camp meetings and certain ceremonies. As you probably know, the U.S. Government tried to stop construction of the dome, arguing it was a permanent structure and that we lacked a Special Use Permit. A hearing was held in Federal district court and Judge O'Brian agreed with Yellow Thunder that the dome should be built.

4. As you may recall, 38 members of the U.S. House of Representatives wrote a letter to the U.S. Forest Service requesting that our Special Use Application to build permanent structures be approved. We are encouraged by the recent decision of Representative Shirley Chisholm to sponsor legislation for the protection and continuous of Yellow Thunder Camp.

5. Within the next two weeks, we plan to file a second law suit in Washington D.C. to expose the general lack of concern for, and continuing desecration of the Paha Sapa (Black Hills). The defendants will include Secretary of Interior Watt, Secretary of Agriculture Block, James Mathers, and S.D. Governor William Janklow. American Indians Against Desecration (A.I.D.), the International Indian Treaty Council, and the Lakota-Dakota Nation will be joining us in this lawsuit which goes to the heart of the environmental policies of the Reagan administration.