White Bull poked his right fist, as if holding a pistol, at the left side of Thunder Bull's head. " ' If that dead man was Long Hair, then I am the one who killed him.' He did not have long hair. Right after that I was hit in the ankle by a spent ball and couldn't fight any more. But it didn't last much longer. That is all I know."

"Why didn't you ever tell anyone about this?" I asked. "We think this is very important."

"Because I wanted to tell only the things I knew were true and I didn't want to make any trouble," White Bull informed us. "I do not think Bad Soup would lie to me, but I had never seen Long Hair before and this man's hair was short. So I cannot say for sure. But if that man was Long Hair, then I killed him. I am sure of that."

White Bull could have been exploited by all sorts of interests, had he been willing to go ahead, as most of us would, with as good assumptions as he had. He could have completely satisfied the curiosity of thousands of Americans and doubtless with considerable gain to himself, but instead he remained true to the high standards of his people.

Had Custer won his last gamble with fate and so made himself once more the popular hero, he might have been well on his way to the Presidency which, many believe, was his goal. The course of American history might have been considerably altered. Instead, he became a martyr and so brought public pressure to bear for a final campaign to end the Indian wars and bring about the settlement and development of the West.