

American Indians Strut In Inaugural Parade

The "First Americans" played a leading role in the Inaugural Parade and related events, the Presidential Inaugural Committee announced.

The American Indian float followed the New York, Maryland and District of Columbia floats, which honor the home states of the new President and Vice President as well as the Inaugural host, the Nation's Capital.

The theme, "Together In Tradition," matched the Presidential theme and symbolized the Indians' cultural contributions, hand-in-hand building the American Nation along with the European, African, Asian and other cultural heritages which make up its peoples.

At the head of the float, proudly astride a grey horse, rode Miss Indian America XV, Thomasine Ruth Hill, escorted on either side by distinguished Indian men, also on horseback.

Miss Hill, a 21-year-old Crow-Pawnee maiden, is a pre-law student at Mackinac College, Michigan.

Her Indian name is Ah-sowa-she-delish—translated as "She walks to her Lodge" and meaning "Everything I do, I do for the good of my people."

Acting as her escorts were Earl Old Person, Chairman of the Blackfoot Tribe and President of the Affiliated Tribes of

Northwest Indians, and Donald Deernose of Montana, a Crow Indian, Chairman, All-American Days.

Close behind were 20 dancers of different tribes, clad in the finest traditional costumes and performing on a specially designed float. An automobile bearing three Indian youths, who represented Indian America's future and symbolize different paths of opportunity, drew the dancers' float.

And, finally 40 marchers completed the Indian salute to President Richard M. Nixon, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew and their Administration.

After the Parade, an official reception and buffet was given by the Presidential Inaugural committee for the Indian participants and other invited guests.

The receiving line included Robert L. Bennett, U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs; Miss Indian America XV; and other dignitaries. Mitchell Bush President of the American Indian Society of Washington, D.C. started the pow-wow.

The event took place between 6:30 - 11:30 p.m. at the Lawyers Club, 18th and H Streets, N. W.

More than 300 Indians came to the Inaugural festivities, representing the hundreds of tribes, bands and groups across America.

Many attended one or more of the public and "invitation only" receptions, galas and other functions of the Inauguration.

For those unable to watch the Inaugural Parade along the Parade route, a hospitality room with television was provided in the Ebbitt Hotel, 10th and H Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C.

On the preceding evening a "Forward Together" Command Performance was given, under the direction of band-leader Lionel Hampton. This variety show included Indian musicians Russell "Big Chief" Moore, the famed trombonist with the big name bands, and "The Chieftones," an All-American variety band from Wisconsin.

The time was 3:00 - 7:00 p.m. at the Washington-Hilton Hotel, 1919 Connecticut Ave, N.W.; it was free for Indian participants.