

INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Washington, D.C.: A commemorative month honoring American Indians may soon be a reality. On May 1, 1990, a joint resolution was introduced by Senators Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) and John McCain (R-Arizona) designating Nov. 1990 as "National American Indian Heritage Month".

When the resolution is passed by the House and Senate and signed by the President, this will be the first time a month has been set aside to honor American society. "Too long Indians have lived in the shadows of American society. Indian heritage is the true heritage of our Nation", states Princess Pale Moon, president of the American Indian Heritage Foundation (AIHF).

Although sponsors feel confident that the time is right for this bill, everyone is urged to write or call their Congressman and Senators to encourage support. To pass, the resolution must have at least a 51 percent majority vote of both the House and Senate.

For more than four years, AIHF has worked to have a special time designated in which all Americans can join the Indian in celebrating their diverse heritage. Much of American life reflects Indian culture. Many names of our states, cities, towns and rivers are Indian--even our constitution was influenced by the political system of various Indian Nations.

Among the more than 125 current co-sponsors of this Bill are Congressman Ben Nighthorse Cambell (D-Colorado) and Congressman Del. Eni F.H. Faleomavaega (D-American Samoa). The draft resolution states: "Whereas American Indians were the original inhabitants of the territories that now constitute the United States of America; Whereas American Indians and the descendants of such American Indians have made essential contributions to this Nation; whereas the citizens of the United States should be reminded of the assistance given to our Founding Fathers by the Native Americans... Now, therefore, be it resolved... that the month of Nov., 1990 is designated "National American Indian Heritage Month".

In a letter of support, Barbara Murphy, Tribal Chairmen of the Redding Rancheria Tribe wrote, "We are so aware in our country that inaccuracies, stereotypes, and attitudes are, for the most part, very negative against our people. We, therefore, fully support a national focus which will give us the opportunity to enlighten our city fathers and neighbors."

Letters of support and copies of your congressional request letters can be mailed to the American Indian Heritage Foundation, 6051 Arlington Boulevard, Falls Church, VA 22044, or Call 202/INDIANS, FAX # 703/532-1921.

THE QUEST FOR A SPIRIT KEEPER

Visualize approaching the United States from the west, flying over San Francisco Bay. As you look out of your tiny window for the famous bridge you see another, more powerful sight. A giant tipi, over 300 feet tall, rises majestically from Alcatraz Island. A visible reminder of the heritage of the American Indian welcomes you to America. From your vantage

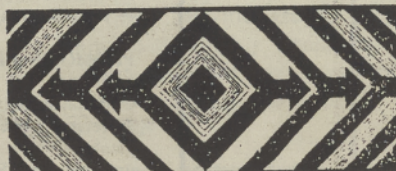
point in the air, the structure is silent and dignified, a monument to a lifestyle of the past. A lifestyle which has vanished.

If you could step onto the island itself you would see a much different picture. The huge tipi is actually a thriving museum of Indian culture and artifacts which is teeming with activity. Inside the museum each floor is filled with exhibits; all tribes of North America are represented. Tribal elders are seen teaching the languages, traditions and heritage of their youth to the youth of today. They pour out the contents of their hearts so that an accurate history of their time and way of life will exist after they are gone. They stress the ancient reverence for the land to their young pupils. Craftsmen demonstrate their skills for the enjoyment and education of museum visitors. Outside of the tipi are several Indian dwellings complete with Indian families living everyday life as their ancestors did, in pueblos, hogans and wiki-ups. the smell of pine and frybread fills the air, transporting you back to a simpler time. You have found the keeper of the spirit of the Indian people. It is a central meeting place for those who strive to keep the spirit alive, those who know that time is of the essence, that once the spirit is gone it cannot be retrieved or resurrected. Welcome to the home of the spirit keeper.

A rapidly growing group of individuals, both Indian and non-Indian, can already see this beacon on the west coast. The vision is clear to them, even though the construction of the tipi is years in the future and the location is hundreds of miles from their base of operations in the midwest. When these individuals meet to discuss their plans, the emotions behind this project often interfere with practical considerations. But it is the emotion which keeps the quest alive, the emotions and the urgency. The plan has changed many times since its inception, but the goal remains the same: to build a museum of Alcatraz Island to act as a focal point for the preservation of the Indian culture, and to accomplish this task while there are still elders to pass on the teachings of their youth.

In their battle against time, progress has seemed painfully slow, but in reality much has been accomplished. Status as a non-profit organization is pending approval. Architects have a design for the structure and are working on the particular needs of the facility to deal with the salt air. Letters of support are coming in from all over the country as well as much needed donations. All Indian tribes have been contacted in order to solicit their support for the project. Politicians have responded favorably to the ideas presented by the delegation. An active campaign to raise funds for the project waits only for non-profit status.

As support for this project builds, it is hoped that other delegations will be formed around the country. If you would like further information about this project please write to: Great Plains Delegation of the North American Indians for Alcatraz Project, Truman Ware, President, 750 W. 46th North, Wichita, KS 67204.



WILDLIFE SERVICE CRACKING DOWN ON "POT HUNTERS"

Aware that critics have long voiced concern that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has not been aggressive in prosecuting people illegally excavating ancient Indian ruins, the Wildlife Service has served notice that it may begin confiscating the vehicles of convicted poachers.

The Fish and Wildlife Service's announcement came about as a result of the heavy proliferation of pot hunting in the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon's Harney County. Officials at the refuge there told *Indian News* that 11 people have been charged this year for taking the ruins from Indian burial sites. And it has become so bad that confiscation of vehicles of those convicted of taking the ruins may begin.

This would mark the first time that such strong action has been taken by the Wildlife Service. But officials said they feel strongly that such actions would be upheld in court since appeals courts have ruled that the U.S. Forest Service was justified in confiscating vehicles of persons convicted of pot hunting on federal lands. Under the U.S. Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, a convicted pot hunter can face felony charges plus fines of as much as \$100,000 and two years in prison if more than \$500 in damage is done. The Fish and Wildlife Service said it is hard to obtain charges under the Act because violators must actually be caught in the act of digging and recovering artifacts. Otherwise, persons charged with being in possession of such objects can easily say they were found on top of the ground. Conviction on the latter type offenses has resulted in as little as \$500 fines.

Pot hunting is more prevalent at Malheur because of receding waters from 200 miles of mud flats around Harney, Malheur and Mud lakes that expose ancient Indian living and burial sites that date back 10,000 to 14,000 years. Officials at Malheur have just recently hired an archaeologist to begin making inventories of the Indian artifacts and work with the Paiute Indian Tribes for disposal. Wildlife officials expressed hope that a future museum may exist where the ancient artifacts could be maintained.

Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan last March directed Interior officials to develop "better and stronger" policies to govern the protection and treatment of sacred objects and human remains on Federal lands. He also directed the National Park Service to develop a new policy statement and revise an existing Department guidelines to ensure a more sensitive treatment of archaeological human remains and associated objects.

Taken From *Indian News*, Vol. 14, No.8.

*****WANTED*****

NATIVE AMERICAN CRAFTS for resale, including: baskets, blankets, beadwork, jewelry, clothing/accessories, artwork, pottery, dolls, etc. For more information contact Margo Norton at (206) 297-3663 or (503) 563-3681. Leave name, number and message. Please no calls after 9:00 p.m.