

Tuesday, Feb 4, 1975

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

The President and Mrs. Ford will host a black tie dinner honoring the Prime Minister and Begum Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan Wednesday, Feb/ 5 at 8 p.m. Jazz Musician Billy Taylor will entertain in the East Room following the dinner.

The decor selected by Mrs. Ford for the State Dining Room continues to stress American folk art, focusing on Indian basket weaving. The centerpiece on each table represents the handiwork of a different Indian tribe from a different part of the country. Among those represented: the Cherokee tribe of North Carolina; the Oneida (Iroquois) of New York; the Chitimacha of Louisiana; the Hopi of Arizona; the Makah of Washington; and the Penobscot of Maine.

The baskets are from 20 - 150 years old and are made of natural materials, such as straws, grasses, twigs, vines, roots, shells and feathers. They were originally made for utilitarian purposes and used as water jugs, for storage of grain and other materials, etc.

Each handmade Indian basket will be filled with arrangements consisting of either dried flowers, fresh wild flowers or a combination of vegetables, fruits and bread. One table's centerpiece will incorporate an arrangement of several of the smaller baskets. The President's table will be decorated with a large globular basket fashioned by Mission Indians in California. The basket incorporates eagles in the design.

The colors in the arrangements are based on earthen shades, with dried arrangements ranging from off-whites to beiges to browns, and wild flower designs incorporating yellows, golds, oranges and rusts. The dry arrangements will use grasses, seed pods, leaves, feathers and bleached ferns. The flower-filled baskets will incorporate freesia, mimosa, ranunculus and tiger lillies. Tomatoes, eggplants mushrooms, lemons and fresh baked loaves of bread will be used in other arrangements.

The baskets are on loan to the White House by the Museum of the American Indian in New York, which houses the largest Indian collection in the world. Surrounding the basket centerpieces will be candlesticks made from antique wooden spoons.

The table arrangements were created by Jack Bangs, chief designer for The Gazebo of New York, who donated his services to the White House. Also assisting with the dinner was Susan Hutchins of New York, who acted as museum liaison.

The Johnson china is being used on the bright pink taffeta and antique satin tablecloths. Grosgrain ribbon in a bright persimmon shade will be used to tie the white linen napkins.

The menu: consommé with brandy; supreme of pheasant veronique with wild rice; brussels sprouts amandine; endive and watercress salad; Port-Salut cheese; Grand Marnier soufflé; and demitasse. Wines to be served are Freemark Abbey Cabernet Sauvignon with dinner and Schramsberg Blanc de Blancs with dessert.

Dancing in the Grand Foyer to the Marine Dance Combo will follow Dr. Taylor's performance.

