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Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, Chairman of the National Council on Indian Opportunity, announced at the Council's first meeting, July 16 that a commemorative stamp saluting the American Indian will be issued by the Post Office Department.

Humphrey said he was informed of the new issue by Postmaster General W. Marvin Watson who said first sales of the stamp are planned for October.

The 6-cent stamp will carry a portrait of Chief Joseph, the Nez Perce warrior who reluctantly fought U.S. troops in 1877 as the Indian wars entered the last tragic phase.

Basis for the stamp will be the portrait of Chief Joseph, painted by Cyrenius Hall in 1878 at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. The canvas will hang in the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C., which will be formally dedicated October 5.

Historians of the Old West regard Chief Joseph as one of the greatest Indian war strategists and tribal leaders. Although his tribe had agreed to settle on a reservation, increasing white land hunger brought heavy pressures on the Nez Perce. Chief Joseph elected to lead his tribe east to join the Crows, then changed his plans and swerved northeast, with Canada the destination.

In the 1,700 mile zig-zag route which twice crossed the Rocky Mountains, he eluded U.S. troops when possible, fought them when necessary. Ironically, his party of about 300 braves and 400 women and children was captured 30 miles short of the Canadian border by forces commanded by General Nelson Miles.

Chief Joseph was born about 1840 and died on a reservation in Washington State in 1904.

The National Council on Indian Opportunity was created by President Lyndon B. Johnson's executive order in March. Designed to coordinate a national Indian program, the Council is made up of seven Cabinet officers and Office heads and six Indian leaders from across the Nation.