

## Video: Marlon Brando Speaks Truth on the Treatment of American Indians, 1973

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Theme: [History](#), [Law and Justice](#), [Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

*Legendary Marlon Brando was interviewed on The Dick Cavett Show 6/12/1973 after he refused to accept the Oscar at 45th Academy Awards®, 1973 to protest the treatment of American Indians. Our kind of hero – should be a celebrity rule! Where are the actors like him in present day Hollywood?*

“I think awards in this country at this time are inappropriate to be received or given until the condition of the American Indian is drastically altered. If we are not our brother’s keeper, at least let us not be his executioner.” — Marlon Brando (1924 – 2004)

Marlon Brando was an extraordinary human being and one of the first actor-activists to march for Black American and American Indian rights. He spoke out against racism often and forcefully. He marched in demonstrations. And he gave money to civil rights groups.

For the 45th Annual Academy Awards® in 1973, Liv Ullmann and Roger Moore presented the award and inspiring Marlon Brando (April 3, 1924 – July 1, 2004) did not attend and refused to accept the Oscar for his performance in The Godfather. American Indian Apache Sacheen Littlefeather represented him at the ceremony.

She appeared in full Apache clothing and stated that owing to the “poor treatment of American Indians in the film industry”, Brando would not accept the award. –THAT IS HOW CELIBRITIES SHOULD SUPPORT!–

At this time, the 1973 standoff at Wounded Knee occurred, causing rising tensions between the government and American Indian activists. The event grabbed the attention of the US and the world media. This was considered a major event and victory for the movement by its supporters and participants.

Brando’s speech was written during the siege at Wounded Knee led by the American Indian Movement (which started in late February 1973), for delivery at the Oscar ceremonies. As mentioned above, Brando himself did not attend the event, and refused the Oscar. Sacheen Littlefeather, who attempted to deliver the speech, was able to read only a part of it (hence, the “unfinished” in the title below) before being booed from the stage.

We need more celebrities following Marlon Brando’s stand for social justice. An inspiring man who stood tall against injustice. Who is following that example today?

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