Your Name

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Indigenous Day

Christopher Columbus is attributed with the discovery of the Americas in 1492 and is greatly honored in the pages of history (Brickford). However, avid readers of history well know that Columbus simply strived to find a passage towards Asia and ironically discovered a place that was already home to a significant chunk of the human race. He failed in his pursuit of reaching and finding treasures in Asia, but his quest led him to the exploration of the Southern and Central parts of America which were at that time, the dwellings of the Native Americans. Even though Columbus did not ‘discover’ America in its true sense, but the coming together of one of the greatest nations in the world, led people to commemorate the very first European sail to America. To signify this unique mix of Italian-American heritage, Columbus Day is observed as a public holiday on the second Mondays of October annually. This continued to happen until recently when more than eight states of America voted to pass a legislation which decreed the replacement of Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples’ Day. The basic premise of this replacement by the activists is based on the consequential severity of Columbus’s voyage which led to enslavement, colonization, mutilation, and massacre of a huge number of indigenous people in America (Bigelow).

There is no single legislation present in a standard document as different states have passed this legislation with varying degrees of response to the victimization of the Native Americans. For several centuries in the history of the United States of America, Columbus has been positioned on a mantle and chiefly viewed as a hero. The academics also preached him to be the real discoverer of America. Historians and teachers of history have a huge responsibility on their shoulders. Children all across America were not being imparted the important bits of the information that even before Columbus discovered America, there was a huge diversity of people living in America. With time, as the picture began to unfold, it turned out that Columbus was to be blamed for the widespread slavery and genocide of the Natives. The grave consequences of Columbus’s actions predominate any benefits that can be reaped from his voyages and love for exploration.

For Native Americans and their descendants, Columbus Day proves to be mordacious and distressing, as it importunes their suffering and the memory of it. This legislation is extremely note-worthy as it avoids celebrating a man who triggered a situation resembling a holocaust of the Native Americans. Some accounts of history also delineate that a lot of people were separated from their families and were taken as slaves in the wake of European colonization which was started by Columbus.

During 1977, the idea of replacement of the already controversial public holiday, Columbus Day with the Peoples’ Indigenous Day, was propounded by (Karlsson). This conference was a milestone and paved way for a formal process of breaking the barriers of structural discrimination against the Indigenous People and also posed a challenge to the idea of Columbus discovering America. The celebration of the Italian sailor and observation of a public holiday is quite opposing to the very ideals and values, which the American nation clings to. These values include inclusivity, honesty, fairness and concurrence with universal human rights.

This legislation is a preeminent achievement in the course of American history. It recognizes and appreciates all the tribes and indigenous people, signifying their sacrifices, resilience and the never-ending contributions they make towards the nation and American economy.

# **Works Cited**

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