

Book: Columbus Did Not Discover

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"Let us begin with this fact: Columbus did NOT discover America." Yet, for the native American people who inhabited the continent that Columbus claimed credit for, 1492 marked the beginning of their flight for survival.

"Native Americans: The New Indian Resistance (Little New World Paperbacks, \$1.25) is a short account of the Indian side of American history which tries to document centuries of Indian resistance against white civilization.

According to a publisher's blurb on the back of the book "Meyer explodes the myth of the beneficent and humane white man." If, in this day of movies like *LITTLE BIG MAN* and a score of books indicting American conduct towards American Indians, there is a white reader who continues to believe in the myth of human white domination, this book is direc-

ted to him.

However, 90 pages isn't a great deal of room to document the course of white oppression and Indian resistance.

Meyer begins his account with evidences of Indian contacts with other nations many centuries before Columbus and his three little ships.

In 485 A.D., according to documents from Imperial China, a group of Buddhist priests traveled to what is now the Western U.S. and Mexico and met with the Indian tribes there.

Accidental visits by Japanese sailors and Viking adventurers came long before Columbus, without any threat to the Indian peoples they met.

It was the emergence of the ages of exploration and colonialism in Western Europe that first posed a threat to the Indian's culture and life style. Western Christianity was a missionary religion, convinced of its own self-righteousness.

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Tales of domination by war and deceit, of broken treaties, unsurpassed massacres, provide gory reading for anyone who is not already aware of the course of U.S. policy towards the Indian during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Systematically, the Indian was stripped of his lands, 'reset-

tled' in a manner almost suggestive of later World War II atrocities towards other people.

After the Indian had been defeated by war, massacre and broken promises, he was resettled on reservations, barren lands where the newly formed Bureau of Indian Affairs pursued its policies of social genocide.