

They were too young to remember. When the Framingham Black Student Student's Union came to City Hall to request the City Council eliminate Columbus Day, they had not even been born. They obviously were unaware that Italian Americans stood beside Rev. Martin Luther King and the Rev Ralph Abernathy. They were never taught the truth. Instead they were influenced by teachers who should have known better. Instead, without realizing it, they were espousing the same agenda as the Klu Klux Klan.

With better guidance, they would have been told that the Klu Klux Klan despised Columbus and Italian Americans. African Americans, Jews, and Italians were people the Klan hated most. They enjoyed lynching helpless Italian American men and women, who could not even speak English, just as much as they got a kick out of murdering innocent African Americans. Up until the Second World War, Italians were listed as racially "brown". So much for "white privilege".

One wonders whether African Americans don't have enough real enemies that they feel the need to turn on their friends who marched along with them in the struggle for Civil Rights. However, the students did not know that. So they can be forgiven. The adults who led them on, however, should be held responsible !

When so many Italian Americans bled and died fighting for this country during the war, Columbus Day was decreed a national holiday by a grateful President Roosevelt.

Following in the steps of the Klu Klux Klan, former communist Howard Zinn's twisted history of the United States influenced a number of fellow travelers to revise the truth. While they reviled Columbus as a murderer and wicked man, they were really upset at him for introducing capitalism to the New World. So, for some 40 years, we have been victimized by an onslaught of fake revisionist history.

Well, say a thing enough times and people will believe it. In fact, Columbus never owned a slave. The charge of genocide is ridiculous since the unintended clash of microbes is not genocide. If it were, then the Pilgrims on the Mayflower committed genocide for the plague that nearly wiped out the entire Wampanoag tribe. Columbus never cut off the hands of children in a greedy search for gold. If any of that were true, Italians would not revere him as much as they do. In fact, the Catholic Knights of Columbus commissioned a comprehensive study of Columbus. Though he was a man of his time, the research acquitted him of the malicious charges against him.

Decent people know that there has been a sharp increase in racial animosity in Framingham during the past year. They see Columbus as a code word to promote bigotry against Italian Americans and their heritage in a roundabout way. Who's next? The Irish? The Poles? The Brazilians? Surely, good people who hadn't taken

local politics very seriously until now will become sufficiently motivated to remember this next election day.

Hopefully, reason will prevail. The Italian American Alliance is organizing a chapter in Framingham which will welcome people of all races and ethnic backgrounds. Columbus Day WILL be celebrated in Framingham no matter what public officials decide.

This is a moment when people should work for true racial harmony instead of provoking a climate of angry adversaries.