

## A New Thanksgiving Tradition

I am America, that is to say that I represent the notion that America is a melting pot. Like many of us, I am a mutt. Half of my family is Irish and British while the other half is German and Blackfoot Sioux. Out of respect for my heritage, I do not celebrate Thanksgiving, which angers the Irish side of my family.

The argument always is, "*why can't you just celebrate and be thankful for family and friends.*" To which I reply that "*I am thankful everyday for my family and friends. But this day I cannot pretend that eating turkey and saying grace does not represent the slaughter of so many innocent men, women & children.*"

I read the book "*Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee*" each year around this time. This year I watched the HBO movie of the same name. But I don't think the holiday should be abolished. In fact, I understand why I experience hostility about my convictions. Accepting that one is part of a society that committed such a horrible atrocity is a hard pill to swallow. Consequently, I have been attacked verbally; my beliefs ridiculed.

Because America is a melting pot, we must consider the traditions of all Americans. This even includes the Anglo-Saxons who committed a holocaust against the indigenous people of this land. Thus, throwing money at the problem in the form of reparations is not enough. In fact, it is counterproductive.

My proposal is thus, we should make November a month of remembrance. We should teach our children about what really happened. We should restore dilapidated reservations. We must give land to descendants of Native Americans or low-cost mortgages. We must make sure that the areas which are sacred - such as the Black Hills, are never subject to mining, logging or any other blasphemy.

It is better to acknowledge a problem and then atone for it than to simply expect money to appease us like whores. This country has never done that. In fact, our lack of action points to a bigotry and sense of entitlement.

Anyone who truly believes that Native American Indians are better off now should go check out a reservation. They don't all own a casino, and the ones that do don't always spread that money around as they should.

I think Thanksgiving has become commercial. Moreover, I think that it has become a soar spot for people who deserve to regain lost dignity. Anyone who tries to justify the holiday and the American attitude of suppressing the holocaust of Native American Indians is spitting in our faces. This is not a matter of some savages getting shafted. This is a matter of men, women & children being brutally slaughtered, forced into poverty, and shunned for decades as rich investors raped the land that they held sacred.

We do not need to retreat into bygone days. But we do need atonement.