

Italians in N.Y. Stage A Protest

Examiner News Services

NEW YORK — Tens of thousands of Italian-Americans sang and danced in a sea of flags and bunting in Columbus Circle today at a mass rally protesting alleged harassment by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Justice Department.

The waterfront was practically shut down.

In Little Italy, in downtown Manhattan, most businesses were shut and Italian and American flags fluttered from fire escapes and windows.

Even many Chinese shops, which spill over into Little Italy from Chinatown, were closed and displayed Italian and American flags.

Investigation

The Columbus Circle rally, called to demand a congressional investigation into their charges, began with the playing of the Star Spangled Banner and the Italian national anthem. It was to conclude with a march on FBI head-

quarters here and the singing of God Bless America.

A huge crowd of old women, middle-aged businessmen, recent immigrants and modly dressed teen-agers filled the circle.

Rep. Mario Biaggi (D-N.Y.), told them the nation was "infected with a Mafia psychology" which made Americans believe anyone of Italian descent was connected with crime.

"Capo" Alleged

Sitting with numerous political and community leaders on the speakers platform was Anthony Columbo, son of an alleged Mafia "Capo." It was the arrest of another Columbo brother, Joseph Jr., that touched off the original protests against FBI harassment.

He was accused of conspiring to melt down \$500,000 in U.S. coins and sell the silver for more money.

The Italian-American Civil Rights League, said 520 buses from as far away as Florida were chartered to bring people to the rally.



CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS LOOKS DOWN AT MASSED ITALIANS
Statue in Columbus Circle was rallying point for Italian Unity Day

—UPI Photo