

# BOUNDARY PEACE INITIATIVE

## Why White Poppies?

Peace Pledge Union website

(<http://www.ppu.org.uk/whitepoppy/index.html>)

### Remember all the victims of war

White poppies recall all victims of all wars, including victims of wars that are still being fought. This includes people of all nationalities. It includes both civilians and members of armed forces. Today, over 90% of people killed in warfare are civilians.

In wearing white poppies, we remember all those killed in war, all those wounded in body or mind, the millions who have been made sick or homeless by war and the families and communities torn apart. We also remember those killed or imprisoned for refusing to fight and for resisting war.

We differ from the Royal British Legion (Ed. Note—same for the Canadian Legion), who produce red poppies. The Legion says that red poppies are to remember only British armed forces (Ed. Note--Canadian armed forces) and those who fought alongside them.

We want to remember British (Ed. Note—and Canadian) military dead, but they are not the only victims of war. We also remember, for example, civilians killed in the bombings of London, Coventry and Belfast, and in the bombings of Dresden, Hiroshima, Baghdad and Kabul.

### Stand up for peace

White poppies symbolise the conviction that there are better ways to resolve conflict than through the use of violence. They embody values that reject killing fellow human beings for whatever reason. Nearly 100 years after the end of the “war to end all wars” we still have a long way to go to put an end to a social institution that even in the last decade has contributed to the killing of millions.

From economic reliance on arms sales to renewing and updating all types of weapons, the UK (Ed. Note—and the Canadian) government contributes significantly to international instability.

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## Why White Poppies?

The outcome of recent military adventures highlights their ineffectiveness and grim consequences.

The best way to respect the victims of war is to work to prevent war in the present and future. Violence only begets more violence. We need to tackle the underlying causes of warfare, such as poverty, inequality and competition over resources. A temporary absence of violence is not enough. Peace is much deeper and broader than that, requiring major social changes to allow us to live more co-operatively.

### Challenge militarism

A message originally associated with Remembrance Day, after the First World War, was “never again”. This message slipped away. In response, white poppies were developed in 1933 by the Co-operative Women's Guild to affirm the message of “no more war”.

Many of the activities around Remembrance Day are detached from any meaningful attempt to learn the lessons of war. Arms companies instruct their staff to pause work for the two minutes' of silence. Politicians who plough billions into weapons lay wreaths at the cenotaph. Arms dealers sponsor Remembrance events even while their work makes war more likely.

In 2014 for example, the British Legion Young Professionals' ball was sponsored by Lockheed Martin, one of the world's largest arms companies. Lockheed Martin plays a major role in manufacturing the Trident nuclear weapons system. Each Trident missile is capable of killing far more people than the 888,000 people represented by the red poppies that were displayed at the Tower of London at the time.

Working for peace is the natural consequence of remembering the victims of war. If, for example, we were remembering the victims of road accidents, we might well do so by working to prevent further road accidents. This logic, which would apply in other areas of life, is rejected by those who seek to misuse Remembrance Day to promote militarist values that only make war more likely.



(From Oct. issue) **BCSIPC Minutes April 2017**  
**The next item on the agenda was a discussion entitled ‘Connect the Dots’**

*Discussion:* on how all levels of government affect each other and what influence people have on policy and spending. The idea of municipal government not having any influence over the other levels of governance does not stand because in 1982 the Supreme Court ruled that the protection, security and safety of citizens is the responsibility of *all* levels of government; Municipal, Regional, Provincial and Federal governments cannot pass the buck. It is important to find a ‘champion’ and pick the subject that pertains to who you are speaking with...know who your allies are and be creative in your approaches and offers of solutions. Ensure that you connect the dots with all levels of government and encourage all to be effective. Christine explained the process that although takes time does include all levels—an organization or an individual can bring a motion to council and if and when they endorse then it will go to the Regional organization and if passed there it goes to the provincial level and if it passes there it is sent to the Provincial Government. Working through this process the resolution carries more weight; step by step, start at city council, go to regional, the provincial and then federal. It is important to know the process and guide it through each step so it doesn’t get buried. To ensure your motion is addressed it must be submitted in January. It is also important that the motion addresses only one issue--do not bring more than one issue up in the motion. We agreed that we must educate all levels of Government and citizens that we do have influence and can affect the change we want to see in our world and that working together is what will bring that change forward. This led into a further discussion regarding educating ourselves and others. Donna said we should pray for the masses to explore non-violent communication so as to build peace and invest in teaching communication skills rather than war. We agreed it is time to say no to the bully no matter where it comes from. Madelyn stated we do need a school to teach peaceful approaches. We also need to find youth that can get the peace movement info into the schools because that is the only way to get into the schools. It is strange that the war machine has no problem selling their wares of death and destruction but the peace movement cannot. It was suggested that making better use of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, would get youth involved.

**The next topic was Canada 150: Should the peace movement celebrate or not and why?** *Discussion:* Canada as a peaceful nation is to a large degree a myth given the treatment of minorities such as the genocide of the First Nations, Doukhobors, Japanese, involvement in war making and empire building, etc. Canada has still not ratified the UNDRIP. Canada voted against Banning Nuclear Weapons and has not taken part in the UN sponsored conference to make them illegal. (Continued next column)

(From last column) **BCSIPC Minutes April 2017**  
The focus of the Government and so many other Canadians is on the military accomplishments that in their minds make Canada a nation. To the peace and social justice movement this is not the Canada we envision. Simon suggested we celebrate the Canada we want—all agreed this was a good idea. But, it is also important not to overlook, dismiss or diminish the true story of racism, poverty, misogyny, etc. When asked what the City of Grand Forks is doing to celebrate Chris said they are sponsoring the Snow Birds performance—it is felt that although the performance is awesome they are military jets with a large carbon footprint. The proposal to divest from fossil fuels we discussed earlier is a way to help educate and celebrate. There are many ways to mark the Confederation of white man’s Canada with many positive accomplishments and advancements but we cannot ignore the war mentality and white man’s superiority complex that continues to prevail. It was suggested to coordinate events for Sept 21<sup>st</sup> the International Day of Peace within our three regions on the theme ‘Celebrate the Canada We Envision’ as a peaceful nation. Rosemary spoke about a Peace Music Concert in Grand Forks based on the successful concert the BPI did in 2003. Donna suggested adding a potluck multicultural dinner as a way to further bring the community together. Another suggestion was to include drumming. Laura said this is a wonderful idea but the details of the BPI effort need to be discussed by the BPI and not at this conference. Some other suggestions were: publish press releases or booklets highlighting the aspects of Canada that we value and those which we envision for our country and the world. The vision includes an end to poverty, a Universal Guaranteed Income, no more Food Banks, Homeless shelters, no more trafficking of people especially women and girls, no more abuse and violence, etc. Hold major events in communities within our region that are inclusive of as many cultures, ethnicities, activists, religious and secular groups as possible. The diversity of communities coming together can be portrayed through art, song, dance, food, etc. Another suggestion was to ask other ethnic, cultural and religious groups, such as the Syrian refugees, what they want to see Canada become and maybe publish the responses either on social media or book form. Getting local media involved through Letters to the Editor or submitted articles was discussed as well as using all Social media as a means to not only advertize our events but to put forward our vision of Canada. Most of us around the table are connected with national and international groups and should approach them for endorsements and support of our events of Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> and make announcements of that support publically. Simply having discussions with family and friends about this topic helps spread the word that there is much need for improvement in Canada and that we must not forget that Canada’s hands are not clean of blood and tears but we can atone for this aggression and war mentality today.

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(From page 3) **BCSIPC Minutes April 2017**

**Adjournment:** Because many of those around the table needed to get to Castlegar for the Amy Goodman presentation we needed to adjourn. But, all were satisfied that they had enough ideas to go forward with plans for September 21<sup>st</sup>. As well all were satisfied that the agenda topics were addressed even though more time would be nice. Laura thanked all for coming. Being that the rotation means the next conference is to be hosted by one of the Kootenay groups, Laura asked if they had a target date. They responded that given the plans for Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> the conference would not happen earlier than the beginning of October.

**Meeting adjourned.**

*Editor's note: the fall conference was held at the Mir Center for Peace at Selkirk College Castlegar on October 28<sup>th</sup>. As the information becomes available we will publish it.*

**Atomic bomb survivor to jointly accept Nobel Peace Prize on ICAN's behalf**

By: International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons October 26, 2017 (Website: <http://www.icanw.org>)

An 85-year-old survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima will jointly accept this year's Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

Setsuko Thurlow, who was 13 years old when the United States attacked her city, will receive the award together with ICAN's executive director, Beatrice Fihn, at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Oslo on 10 December.

Thurlow has been a leading figure in ICAN since its launch in 2007. She played a pivotal role in the United Nations negotiations that led to the adoption of the landmark treaty outlawing nuclear weapons in July.

For more than seven decades, she has campaigned against the bomb. Her powerful speeches at diplomatic conferences and in classrooms have inspired countless individuals around the world to take action for disarmament.

Two other survivors of the atomic bombings, to be selected by the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, will also attend the prize ceremony, as will survivors of nuclear testing.

Fihn, who is based in Geneva, has worked in the area of disarmament for the past decade, including with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. She has a law degree from the University of London.

"In our advocacy, we have always emphasized the inhumanity of nuclear weapons. Devices that are incapable of distinguishing between a combatant and a child are simply unacceptable," said Fihn.

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(From law column) **Atomic bomb survivor**

"Survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are living witnesses to the horror of nuclear war. They have played a central role in ICAN. World leaders must heed their call for a nuclear-weapon-free future."

Thurlow and Fihn will jointly deliver the Nobel lecture and receive the medallion and diploma from the Norwegian Nobel committee. They will do so as representatives of ICAN, this year's Nobel peace laureate.

ICAN was awarded the prize "for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons".

ICAN is a diverse coalition of 468 non-governmental organizations in 101 countries promoting adherence to and implementation of the United Nations nuclear weapon ban treaty.

ICAN campaigners around the world will take part in celebrations on 10 December and renew their appeal for governments to sign and ratify this crucial new international accord without delay.

Thurlow said that she was overjoyed by the news that ICAN had won the Nobel Peace Prize, describing it as a wonderful and well-deserved honour. "I am so deeply humbled to have been invited to jointly accept the prize on behalf of the campaign," she said.

"It has been such a privilege to work with so many passionate and inspirational ICAN campaigners around the world over the past decade. The Nobel Peace Prize is a powerful tool that we can now use to advance our cause."

The tragedy of life doesn't lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach.

Benjamin Mays

**Our Mission**

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honor, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

**BPI web site: [www.boundarypeace.20m.com](http://www.boundarypeace.20m.com)**

*BPI meetings are suspended until at least 3 people commit to meet regularly monthly. For information call (250) 442-0434 or email [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net).*

## What's Up?

*White Poppies* are available for \$2 each at the following locations:

*Christina Lake Welcome Center*  
*USCC Office*  
*Joggas*  
*The Wooden Spoon*  
*The Women's Resource Center*  
*New West Trading Company*

Or contact Laura at 250-442-0434 or email Laura at [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net)

We don't have to engage in grand, heroic actions to participate in the process of change.

Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world."

*Howard Zinn*



Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

Go to the Government of Canada website for MP contact information at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>



## Book Recommendations

### **Requiem for the American Dream: The 10 Principles of Concentration of Wealth & Power**

By: Noam Chomsky

**Publisher:** Seven Stories Press--2017

A primer in Chomsky's analysis of the faults of the American political and economic system; Taking as its backbone the idea that "a significant part of the American Dream is class mobility: You're born poor, you work hard, you get rich," Chomsky systematically documents the many ways the system is rigged from top to bottom to ensure that corporations always win." --Billmoyers.com

Chomsky and his collaborators have created a perceptive and revelatory examination of the forces driving America inequality." —*Publishers Weekly*

Noam Chomsky in *Requiem for the American Dream* directs the fierce light of his intellect on the utopian ideology of neoliberalism, the absurd idea that markets should dictate all aspects of human society. Every promise made by the proponents of neoliberalism is a lie. Its power to write its own laws and regulations, Chomsky points out, has ultimately created a mafia economic system and a mafia political system that is exemplified in the rise to power of the demagogue Donald Trump." —Chris Hedges, winner of the Pulitzer Prize.

While many books attempt to explain how we got to this political moment (some successfully), Noam Chomsky's latest, *Requiem for the American Dream*, provides necessary historical context.

Zooming in on ten ways that government and corporate interests have kept the American people down, Chomsky offers a compelling history that explains today's economic and political landscape. At 157 pages, it's a short, beautifully put together book." --Huffington Post

Peace is the beauty of life. It is sunshine. It is the smile of a child, the love of a mother, the joy of a father, the togetherness of a family. It is the advancement of man, the victory of a just cause, the triumph of truth. *Menachem Begin*

Peace begins with a smile. *Mother Teresa*

"A man who stands for nothing will fall for anything!"

*Malcolm X*

The BPI welcomes your input. Articles are the author's responsibility and may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-442-0434** or [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net).

The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Congress, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. We work with a wide range of local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.