



on remembrance day

REMEMBER THOSE WHO CHOOSE ANOTHER WAY

Remembering conscientious objectors worldwide at the Conscientious Objectors Commemoration Stone, London. www.coproject.org.uk

It is said that most people dislike war, that it is awful but sometimes regrettably necessary and in any case it is inevitable. Is this true?

What makes us think that war is either necessary or inevitable? On what basis - what information - do we decide that a war is 'necessary'; necessary for whom?

For example, why are thousands of British troops fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan? The Iraqis and Afghans have done us in Britain no harm. The countless women and children killed by planes directed there by Prince Harry and others were the victims not only of the pilot but also the British military; the political establishment, and the scientists and technologists who devised the weapons also played their part as did the rest of us who paid for it all. We have all been compulsorily conscripted into the war. We all had a finger on the button.

The British government has invested enormous resources in these wars and insists they are necessary for our 'security'; it is now widely acknowledged even by former supporters of the wars that the opposite is true. Neither of these wars were necessary or inevitable. They resulted from decisions that suited a lot of people - from the Prime Minister to the infantry soldier.

On **Remembrance Day** the wider establishment, its ingratiating supporters and a few on the streets will sport the blood red poppy and dead British soldiers will be honoured as heroes; why it is heroic to get killed in a futile war is never made clear. The adulation and the name on a memorial may offer comfort to the soldier's relatives but what of those they killed?



Rally against war in Iraq, London.

It is scientifically **incorrect** when people say that war cannot be ended because it is part of human nature. Arguments about human nature cannot prove anything because our human culture gives us the ability to shape and change our nature from one generation to another. It is **true** that the genes that are transmitted influence the way we act. But it is also **true** that we are influenced by the culture in which we grow up and that we can take **responsibility** for our own actions.

The Seville Statement on Violence.
www.learnpeace.org.uk



Through text audio and video **Voices for Peace** interactive explores the little known history of objection to war, the centuries old struggle for peace and an exploration of the deeper causes of war.

I KNOW WHAT IT IS TO KILL A PIG. I WILL NOT KILL A MAN.

Stephen Winsten, World War One conscientious objector

Peace Pledge Union working for peace without violence since 1934
www.ppu.org.uk



In 1916 when compulsory military conscription was introduced to replace the vast number of men being killed and injured, Walter was 21. Like most people he could not quite understand why England was fighting the Germans who posed no threat but unlike many young men he did not want to kill anyone, least of all total strangers who were doing him no harm. Like tens of thousands of others he refused to be conscripted and became a conscientious objector. Sentenced to hard labour he died three months later of exposure in a cold leaking tent in a bleak quarry in Aberdeenshire.

Information and study guides at www.coproject.org.uk



WHITE POPPIES ARE FOR PEACE WITHOUT WAR
www.whitepoppy.org.uk



Exporting freedom and democracy is a great deal cheaper than having to bomb people into submission and then after the war say that we want to help them come back into civilisation. I would say export your prosperity, export your compassion, your generosity, rather than the opposites.

Desmond Tutu



Memorial plaque to conscientious objectors who died as a result of their imprisonment in World War One. www.ppu.org.uk/memorials