

War is a crime against humanity

“War is a crime against humanity. I renounce war, and am therefore determined not to support any kind of war. I am also determined to work for the removal of all causes of war.”

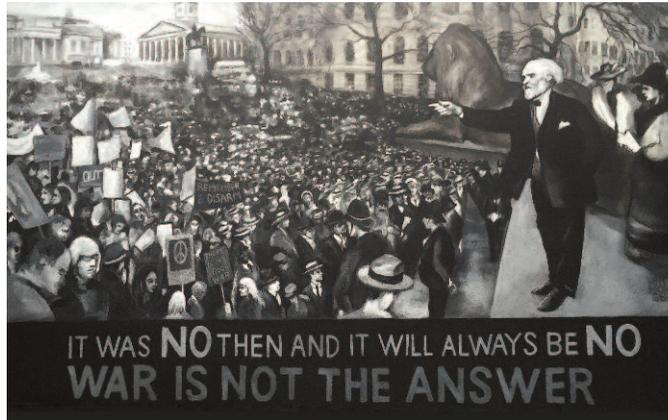
Current Peace Pledge Union projects

- ▶ our **white poppy** project challenges beliefs, values and institutions that make war inevitable, and presents alternative views of security without violence.
- ▶ our **education for peace** programme offers a wealth of resources to promote a better understanding of the causes of war and the many alternative strategies to resolve conflicts nonviolently. War can be prevented.
- ▶ we are campaigning against the growing **militarisation** of education and society.
- ▶ our **conscientious objectors** project questions the one dimensional portrayal of the First World War and remembers the war resisters of the time.

Since 1934 the Peace Pledge Union has been campaigning against war. Today our priority is to challenge aspects of our society that contribute to the view that war and armed force are effective agents of social change; such belief impedes the emergence of non violent approaches to conflicts.

Education

We believe there is no justification for the widespread promotion of the heroic status of military personnel nor the frequent insistence that children should be grateful to the war dead. We believe that



New mural outside PPU office unveiled on International Conscientious Objectors' Day 2015 as part of our Objecting to War project.

the distribution to every school of educationally questionable material which uncritically praises the armed forces by the government and at remembrance time by the British Legion should be challenged and severely restricted.

Wider society

Militarism is a cast of mind and a belief system that privileges age-old values of war fighting. War has become the dominant metaphor to describe much of the world around us. This is not just careless use of language but reflection of stealthy militarisation of a wide range of policy debates. From developing Armed Forces Day through expanding school cadet forces, to shaping our understanding of security and how to maintain it - through long distance drone assassination and intense surveillance of the public and private space - militarism is a dangerous pathology in our midst.

Despite society's skills, knowledge and resources, why are we still waging war?

- ▶ Lack of political will to implement internationally agreed disarmament initiatives.
- ▶ Arms sales fuel tensions, contribute to instability and impoverish recipient countries. On the other hand the multi-billion pound arms industry, its workers and shareholders profit handsomely from war and its consequences.

▶ Human rights abuses, often underpinned by British arms, create a climate of alienation. Frustration easily breeds violence which in turn leads to further abuse, which completes the circle of violence.

So what, in the 21st century, with all our society's skills, knowledge and resources, can be done to make war obsolete?

- ▶ Promote a respect for human rights by example, not by force.
- ▶ Dismantle nuclear weapons and reallocate resources to peace-building, conflict prevention and non-violent diplomacy.
- ▶ Plan for disarmament and relocate resources from military research (30% in the UK) to non-damaging and life enhancing technologies.
- ▶ Promote a non-military approach to security.
- ▶ Develop a coherent programme of education for peace, in which children and adults alike can discover that preparing to kill strangers or actually killing them is not the route to a better world.

Human security means individual freedom from basic insecurities. Human beings have a right to live with dignity and security, and an obligation to help each other when that security is threatened. All human life is of equal worth and it is not acceptable that human lives become cheap in desperate situations.

If this reflects your vision of the future, work with us to make it possible.



Students from primary schools planning the design of a peace mural at PPU offices. The planning of the design followed a series of workshops about peace and war and culminated in the painting of a large mural.

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and support our work for peace**

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Open Day at PPU's new exhibition on conscientious objection, part of our Objecting to War Project

The PPU's **Objecting to War** project seeks to foster a better understanding of the meaning of WW1 and challenge some popular assumptions. We give **talks to schools** and produce challenging **educational resources**; we work to reclaim and tell the stories from around the country of the men and women who worked against that war often at great cost.

The drift to war is made easy by lack of public knowledge of particular situations, but just as importantly by **lack of knowledge** that 'alternative' routes to solving problems exist.

There are sharply conflicting views on how WW1 should be remembered. Should we take pride in British victory and owe gratitude to those who fought and died or should we remember the wasted lives with regret and strive to prevent wars? Is the purpose of this remembrance to bind us and strengthen a commitment to **British martial values** or to inspire us to abhor war and insist on different ways to manage relationships between peoples?

The PPU choose the latter but it is clear that this WW1 anniversary has been seized by many to endorse and bolster the belief that war and preparations for war are an essential element of a national survival strategy. For example paying for every school in Britain to send some pupils and teachers to WW1 battlefields with a serving soldier is a **transparent device** for strengthening what the government calls the 'military ethos'. We call for this to end.

More at www.menwhosaidno.org

Join with us and support our work for peace

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Vigil at St Martin-in-the-Fields