

War Memories NOT Heard on Mainstream Media: Lest We Forget

A Remembrance Week Special

By [Michael Welch](#), [Yves Engler](#), and [S. Brian Willson](#)

Global Research, November 12, 2021

Region: [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [Latin America & Caribbean](#), [South-East Asia](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Defence](#), [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR](#), [History](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Militarization and WMD](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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“Every year during the lead up to Remembrance Day on November 11, we honour those who have served Canada in times of war, military conflict and peace.” – statement from Veterans Affairs Canada website [1]

“Canadians of conscience should not help fund the reactionary Royal Canadian Legion. Nor should they promote the martial patriotism red poppies/Remembrance Day represents. To remember all victims of war support peace organizations’ white poppy campaign.”

– Yves Engler (November 6, 2021)[2]

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Over the course of all of our lifetimes, we are asked to pay respect to the soldiers in our country’s military, show gratitude for them fighting for our freedoms and thank them for putting all their brains, gut and muscle into making the world safer for those who have attained or someday seek to attain democracy.

At the very least, each of us can set aside whatever we are doing at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the year, bow our heads and devote a moment of silence “to mark the sacrifice of the many who have fallen in the service of their country, and to acknowledge the courage of those who still serve.” [3]

A few problems exist with these sentiments. First off, it seems as if there is little regard in these events for the plight of dead or injured civilians, whether you blame “our boys” or not. Also, given the realities that the vast majority of wars being fought are not clearly justified

as being for the higher moral ground, a point upheld by this website and series of radio podcasts. And of course war crimes are clear in every war, including the Second World War.

Most important of all, the origins of Remembrance/Veterans Day began as more of a peace event. In her recent essay for Common Dreams, H Patricia Hynes, a former Professor of Environmental Health from Boston University School of Public Health and current Chair of a peace and justice group explained that this day was a variation of Armistice Day. The Armistice Day Resolution of 1926, eight years after the end of the First World War called on Congress for:

“exercises designed to perpetuate peace through goodwill and mutual understanding...inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.” [4]

How did such a shift in emphasis take place? Well, it stands to reason that those institutions, such as the Canadian Forces, the U.S. Military, and various weapons and defense contractors would be better served by occasions that honour the military rather than people invoking peaceful ways. By taking charge of Remembrance/Veterans Day events, one can benefit from this long-standing tradition of “Saluting the Troops” as being not just positive, but symbols of reverence – and even a recruiting tool!

In this week’s chapter of the Global Research News Hour, we will do our best to get Canadians back on the original path of reversing the tide that has practically given up any pretense of ending deadly combat.

In our first half hour, we speak to veteran turned peace activist S. Brian Willson about his experiences in Vietnam that caused him to not only question the war, but see the U.S. effort as being driven by white supremacy and profit-making. And in our second half hour, Yves Engler returns elaborating on the theme of his latest book, [Stand on Guard for Whom? A People’s History to the Canadian Military](#). This volume cites numerous examples of its record of abuse of workers, Indigenous Peoples, and peoples in parts of the world it claims to serve and liberate.

S. Brian Willson is a Vietnam veteran, long-time peace activist, and writer. He has visited a number of countries studying the impacts of U.S. policy. His essays are posted on his website, brianwillson.com. He had been intentionally run over by a U.S. Government munitions train accelerating to over three times the 5 mph legal speed limit during a peaceful protest in California in 1987. He wrote a psychohistorical memoir, [Blood on the Tracks: The Life and Times of S. Brian Willson \(PM Press, 2011\)](#), and in 2018 wrote [Don’t Thank Me for my Service: My Viet Nam Awakening to the Long History of US Lies \(Clarity Press\)](#). Brian Willson possesses two honorary Ph.D.s and a Juris Doctor degree. he as a Research Associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG)

Yves Engler is an activist and author of several books dealing with Canadian foreign policy, including his most recent work, [Stand on Guard for Whom? A People’s History to the Canadian Military](#). As this podcast is being published he is on a book tour on Vancouver Island and Vancouver. A complete list is available now on the right hand side of his website: yvesengler.com/reviews/

(Global Research News Hour Episode 322)

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Campus and community radio [CFMH 107.3fm](#) in Saint John, N.B. airs the Global Research News Hour Fridays at 7pm.

CJMP 90.1 FM, Powell River Community Radio, airs the Global Research News Hour every Saturday at 8am.

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[Cowichan Valley Community Radio CVCV 98.7 FM](#) serving the [Cowichan Lake](#) area of Vancouver Island, BC airs the program Thursdays at 9am pacific time.

Notes:

1. <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/commemorative-events/veterans-week>
2. <https://yvesengler.com/2021/11/06/red-poppies-promote-militarism/>
3. <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2021/11/11/honor-armistice-day-november-11th-day-peace>
4. ibid

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