

Commemorating the “Day the Guns fell Silent”. “Let this Silence be a Scream for Peace.”

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Region: [Europe](#), [USA](#)

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“Did you really believe, when they told you the cause,

Did you really believe that this war would end wars?

Well the suffering, the sorrow, the glory, the shame,

The killing and dying it was all done in vain

Oh Willy McBride it all happened again -

And again, and again, and again, and again.”

(The Green Fields of France, William Bogle, 1944 -)*

Across the world the fanfare commemorating the “day the guns fell silent” has been trumpeted (literally, in many places) as having special resonance: 11.11.11: a once in a century event.

Hypocrisy does not come more astounding than this. There has not been a single bloodless year since.(i) More often than not, the US, Britain and European countries has been involved. But even where they were not, between the League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations, the pain of others should surely be and have been, of concern, distress and subject of mediation and conflict resolve.

Remembrance Sunday in London brings more pomp and triumphalism. As Iraq’s widows, created by UK and US forces wonder how to feed their children and resort in increasing numbers to prostitution (widows received a State pension un Saddam Hussein) and US and UK occupied Afghanistan, one of the poorest countries on earth, plunges into deeper poverty, a military band opened the ceremonies with: “Rule Britannia.” Nauseating.

The Queen was the first to lay a wreath at the Cenotaph memorial to the 1914-1918 war, in central London. The male members of the royal family were all in military uniform. Her grandson, Prince Harry could not be there. He is in Arizona, training to fly an Apache helicopter, playing with live rounds, for the first time, practicing killing Afghans. One of the most privileged on earth, preparing to slice and dice (that is what the Apache weapons do) the near poorest on earth.

In June last year, on an official visit to New York, Harry visited the Emergency Operation Center at UNICEF’s headquarters, which: “ ... works across the world to provide life-saving

support to children. In all emergencies, it is the children that are hardest hit (whether) in natural disasters or conflict, they are the most vulnerable”, he learned from the Emergency Center’s Director.

He was briefed on UNICEF’s emergency supplies, including, for schools which have been destroyed, the ‘school in a box’: supplies and materials for up to eighty students.”

A year later he is in training to potentially destroy the schools and kill the kids in them.

Did the fifty to seventy million of the second world war and the fifteen million of the first, that his grandmother leads the commemorations for, die for this? What a world-class, pitiful waste.

As three Muslim countries lie in ruins, their dead uncounted, with a growing list of others threatened with the same fate, George W. Bush’s “Crusade”, continuing unabated, a group called “Muslims Against Crusades” has been banned by the Home Secretary, Theresa May. They planned a protest to mark Remembrance Sunday. Last year they burned two poppies and are pretty well designated terrorists. They may be tasteless, they are certainly justifiably aggrieved. Meanwhile the “allies” burn people.

Betrayal, whether of the dead or the living, seemingly runs in the veins of the British establishment.

On 11th November, speaking at a service at a British base in Afghanistan, Defence Minister Philip Hammond said: “The ceremonies that we will have across Britain on Remembrance Sunday are not just about the war dead from the first and second world wars, or even conflicts we’ve had since, this is about the ongoing sacrifice that people here are making on a daily, weekly basis, that they all live with every day.

“They get up and go out with the possibility that they may be killed or injured in a combat situation, and that makes this ceremony here especially poignant.

“ (Afghanistan) is now the only place in the world where British troops are in active daily danger and lives are being lost and I think it is a way of showing the value that we at home place on the sacrifice and the dedication and the commitment that people there are showing.” (Guardian 11th November 2011.)

The same day, the Daily Telegraph revealed an internal Ministry of Defence memo, sent to senior commanders in Afghanistan showing an upcoming 16,500 army redundancies, of which: “2,500 wounded soldiers, including 350 who have lost limbs, will not be exempt” Six British soldiers have suffered double amputations in the last month and another, a triple amputation.”

At a ceremony in London’s Trafalgar Square on Thursday, the 11th., Prime Minister David Cameron, in a recorded message said: “We stand together to honour the incredible courage and sacrifice of generations of British servicemen and women who have given their lives to protect the freedom that we enjoy today.

“From the trenches of the first world war to the deserts of Afghanistan, our armed forces have proved time and again that they are the bravest of the brave and the very best of what

it means to be British. We can never fully repay the debt we owe them.”

In a wreath laying ceremony, Defence Minister Hammond’s attached message read: “In grateful memory of those who have given their lives in the service of their nation”.

The previous day he committed to: “stand up for the military.” (Guardian, 11th November 2011.)

In this tenth year in Afghanistan, in the month of the 2004 assault and near destruction of Iraq’s Falluja, with its resultant terrifying cancers and birth deformities, linked to the weapons used (British soldiers moved north to “free up” the Americans for this annihilation) to the destruction of Libya and lynching of its Leader, his son and Minister, from mountains, deserts, to “sea to shining sea”, at home and abroad, perfidy and betrayal rule.

In the US, it was revealed in the last week, that body parts of soldiers who had served in Iraq and Afghanistan, far from being treated with reverence, had been chucked in to land fill. In Britain one coffin from Iraq was reported to contain stones.

Last year CND Cymru (Wales) had a simple plea for the traditional two minutes silence on 11th November and on Remembrance Sunday:

“Let this silence, be a scream for peace.”

This year, their National Secretary Jill Gough, joined with “Occupy Cardiff”, their address was:

“On Remembrance Day we remember the wars where the lives of the 99% were sacrificed by the 1% in pursuit of money and power: There is everything right about remembering the dead who die in futile wars. There is everything wrong about using the past dead to justify current wars.

“We stand with the World War Two generation who built the Welfare State now under threat, who had bitter memories of the previous war where soldiers were promised they would return to ‘homes fit for heroes’ but instead returned to hunger, the dole queue and the ‘means test’.

“We recall the ‘winter soldiers’ who crossed a river of fire from unthinkingly obeying orders to becoming active agents of social change – soldiers of conscience such as Siegfried Sassoon who hurled his medals into the River Mersey to protest World War One and Joe Glenton, the first serving British soldier to go to jail rather than return to Afghanistan.

“In America, war veterans have been on the frontline of our movement, our thoughts today are with Scott Olsen, an American Iraq War Veteran now in a critical condition in hospital after police brutality at an Occupy Oakland protest.

On Remembrance Day we remember that one day of war in Afghanistan could fund 100,000 nurses.”

Either side of the Atlantic, are any politicians out there listening?

Notes

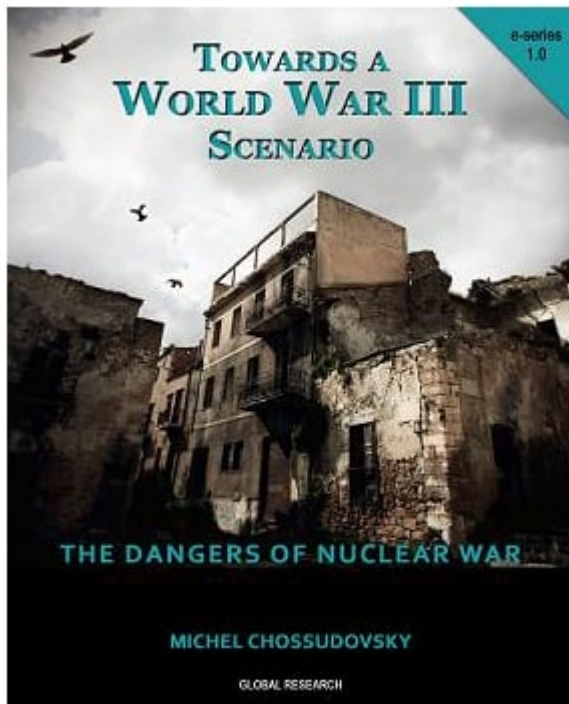
* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2YvcB9IW18>

(i) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wars_1900-1944 (subsequent dates, to 2011 at end.)

(ii)

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2059169/Air-Force-morgue-Delaware-dumped-body-parts-dead-soldiers-landfill.html>

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