Schools encouraged to embrace white poppies by pro-Palestine activists

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Schools encouraged to embrace white poppies by pro-Palestine activists

Activists linked to listed terrorist groups are encouraging teachers to promote white poppies and political activism while challenging traditional lessons about service and sacrifice.

Melanie Bennet

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Source: World BEYOND War white poppy in K12 campaign

Canadian teachers are being encouraged to replace traditional Remembrance Day lessons with a white poppy campaign developed by a pro-Palestinian anti-war group with documented ties to terrorist-designated organizations.

Ahead of Remembrance Day, the Palestine activist group World BEYOND War Canada released a handbook for students in Grades 1-12. The group says that conventional commemorations glorify war and violence.

For Canadians, Remembrance Day honours the men and women who fought and died defending the country and its freedoms. It is a solemn day of gratitude and national remembrance, symbolized by the red poppy and a promise that their sacrifice will never be forgotten.

"The white poppy is not in competition with the red poppy," the campaign says. Instead, they say they're offering a symbol for "all war victims" to represent "nonviolent solutions to various disputes."

The 13-page handbook contains teaching guides, book and poetry recommendations, songs, classroom activities, and political calls to action.

Children in Grades 4-6 are encouraged to consider signing World BEYOND War's "Declaration of Peace," which says war and militarism make people less safe.

Students are also asked to interrogate toys, films and air shows and critique words commonly associated with remembrance, including "victory," "hero," "sacrifice" and "security", for signs of militarism.

For older students, the lessons become much more political.

They are encouraged to lobby MPs against military spending and protest at their constituency offices. Other activities include campaigning against military aircraft at air shows and joining campaigns against the

proposed Defence, Security and Resilience Bank.

While the campaign advocates for non-violent alternatives, it fails to address World BEYOND War's history of supporting violent "antiwar" campaigns as well as the group's connection to terrorist organizations.

A 2022 campaign statement organized by World BEYOND War and Just Peace Advocates was endorsed by Samidoun, also known as the Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network.

Canada listed Samidoun as a terrorist entity in 2024. The federal government said it has close links to the Islamo-Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and advances the interests of the listed terrorist organization.

The U.S. Treasury described Samidoun as an international fundraiser and front organization for the PFLP.

World BEYOND War also gave Palestine Action UK its "Organizational War Abolisher of 2026" award, one year after Britain proscribed the group under terrorism legislation following an incident in Bristol where one of the members of a cell struck a police officer in the spine with a sledgehammer.

The United States designated Palestine Action as a specially designated global terrorist in August.

World BEYOND War acknowledged that Palestine Action had damaged property and targeted businesses, executives' homes, universities and a Royal Air Force base, but said the British designation was "Orwellian."