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**Poppycock**

I would like to express my opinions concerning your October 9th editorial, "Poppycock."

"And who are we so blithely honoring with our penny poppies?" We are honoring humans who did go to areas outside of Canada at significant risk to their own lives to protect other humans from being deprived of freedom and of life by inhuman aggressors. They too were human, however. But their leaders did not act very human.

"Days as these are best forgotten," and "We should learn to solve our international problems by peace, not by war." If we forget these days, we may also forget that we cannot solve certain international problems by peace. If a human or group of humans seeks to unjustly cause harm to other humans, he or they must be stopped. Force is the only way to stop people when they will not stop voluntarily. We cannot take an armed bank-robber and prevent him from stealing by negotiating with him. He wants the money. He won't stop unless he has to.

The Nazis tried to deprive people of their rights, and to condemn persons of some races to death or slavery. It was absolutely necessary to prevent them from doing so. By force. Nothing else would stop them - except maybe bribes: large tribute in money - blackmail payoffs.

"Paradoxically, civilization must be suspended to 'ensure' its own survival." Some excesses were committed by the Allies during those times, it is true, for example the treatment of domestic Japanese. But, civilization was not suspended. There were elections during the war. The rights of man, for the most part, still existed.

"To 'ensure' its own survival." Perhaps, if the Nazis conquered the world, we would still be as civilized - or more so - than we are now? Is this what the editorial was claiming?

John Savard  
Sc. 2

The title of the editorial appearing in the *Gateway* on Tuesday, October 9 ("Poppycock") would appear to be quite appropriate in view of the opinions expressed therein, although I am sure that the editorial staff had no intention that the contents of the editorial be so labelled. This type of editorial reflects serious shortcomings in the editorial policy of the *Gateway*; responsible editorial comment is based on a well-reasoned judgement of the facts, not on hysterical half-truths and irrational prejudices.

Apart from this general criticism, the author makes a number of specific allegations and statements which are not only dangerously misleading but are also based on a substantial misapprehension on the part of the author on the nature of Poppy Day and the use of the Poppy Fund.

In particular:

- 1). The writer suggests in some places by sly innuendo ("these 'heros' are still reaping their profits") and in other places, bluntly ("The beneficial uses to which the poppy sale thousands are put each year can be counted on the fingers of one clenched fist.") that the money raised in the poppy campaign is not used for any recognizable beneficial purpose. This is patently untrue. The money is used (outside of necessary administrative costs which are kept low by the volunteer nature of the program, e.g. 5 ex-servicewomen donate 3 months of their time, 8 hours a day without any financial remuneration except bus fare and the occasional meal to "man" the Edmonton campaign office) solely for the benefit of veterans and their families who are in need of financial aid and other assistance. For example,

through the means of the Poppy Fund, a Welfare Office is maintained which aids these individuals in various ways, a Christmas Bureau distributes goods to needy families, and contributions were made to the Edmonton Veteran's Housing Project. The writer may not approve the particular beneficial use to which the money is put, but it is one thing to dislike a specific beneficial purpose, and quite another to state categorically that there is no beneficial purpose. (And in case the editorial staff doubts that what is done with the money could be classed as "beneficial", I would advise them to look up the meaning of "beneficial" in the dictionary).

- 2). The writer suggests that people exhibit questionable motives (need for social approval, desire to salve one's conscience) in buying a poppy. With this I would agree, but I would be very hesitant to impute the motives of a less "honourable" minority to the whole. Further, the writer exhibits a degree of naivete bordering on stupidity if he believes that any charitable campaign is free of such motives, including the Community Chest which he espouses as a worthwhile alternative.

- 3). The writer characterizes the veterans who carry out the campaign and for whom it is designed as a) a group of "war mongering, face-less blobs" or b) a group of stupid "chumps" lacking the normal elements of moral courage who failed to exercise a reasonable freedom of babies

**Letters**

- 4). The writer says that "days as these are best forgotten." I disagree violently. The lessons of history are too easily forgotten. It is only through remembering the enormous suffering and sacrifice of war that people and nations are deterred from belligerent solutions to international problems. It is not with "smug reverence" we should remember but with determination that it will not happen again.

- 5). Finally, the author suggests that we spend our money on the living or on the dying with a chance of survival. Well, despite the fact that the Poppy Fund is, by analogy, a "memorial" fund, the beneficial use of the money is directed at the living. Are they any less deserving because they, or their fathers, or husbands, or brothers were veterans, who supported their country when she demanded their support, who neither demanded nor expected adulation. I would suggest not.

I would add by way of conclusion, that if your conscience, for a rational reason does not permit you to buy a poppy, then do not. But do not refuse to buy a poppy for the reasons outlined in the Oct. 9th editorial for they have little merit.

Phyllis Smith  
Law III

I've just read the editorial in *Gateway* (Tues., Oct 9/73) which advises me that I should not buy a poppy for Remembrance Day. To the

writer, the back of my hand; to the *Gateway*, for printing this scurrilous piece of crap, my condolences for their ignorance and lack of professionalism.

In any journal attempting to provide news and opinions, it is customary to get the facts straight, then base opinion upon such facts. This editorial bases its "facts" upon the opinions of the writer.

Three minutes of investigation by phone provided me with the information that all money collected (by unpaid volunteers) by the Poppy Fund office (manned by unpaid volunteers) goes to campaign expenses (bus fare, advertising) and needy veterans. Recipients need not be members of the Royal Canadian Legion, only veterans of active military service who served in a war zone. (The writer calls it the Canadian Legion, not even knowing the correct title of the organization he's maligning; and I notice he lacks the guts to sign his name!)

If he thinks that men serve in war for hope of glory afterwards, he is a fool. The men and women who served in WWII had the veterans of WWI to look at; and each generation of soldiers could look at the "honors" heaped on veterans they knew. There was no glory to be won; there was only the call of the society they lived in. When a democratically elected government calls men to serve in war, there is usually a good reason. We fought Hitler because he believed that all men should become slaves of the German master race; we fought Japan because she attacked us; we fought in Korea because the United Nations asked us to repel the aggression of North Korea. The writer believes that we shall have learned to do away with war by "100 years from now," but I doubt that. Even with his august sagacity to guide us, it is hard to believe that we shall all be brothers so soon. We have been trying for this great goal for thousands of years, and yet we have failed.

The refusal to fight is not the answer; the Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Gypsies tried it in Hitler's Germany. More than six million of them died, but Hitler was stopped by men in arms, fighting for what they believed in, not by passive resistance.

I honor the men who fought and died for what they believed in. If you do too, buy two poppies this November. Call 424-8017 and help sell poppies, to bring a little help to men and women still suffering from wounds taken keeping Hitler's ideas far from your carefree childhood. They hated war, too. They hated it, and went to it, because they didn't want to pass the problem on to their children. They rejected "Peace in our time" in favor of peace in their children's time. Most of them knew that peace wouldn't last forever, but they hoped that our generation would have a bit of it, if they fought before the democracies went under one by one.

Dave Tomlinson

**Abortion**

As Anne Ream stated in Oct. 9th *Gateway* "LETTERS", everyone is entitled to his own opinion. By this, I trust you will print my letter, though it offers no answers.

After several letters by girls pro-abortionist, who attacked a male anti-abortionist, the time is ripe for a female anti-abortionist to speak up.

It seems few can agree whether the fetus is a human being or not. I believe it is a human being from conception to death as a child, adult or old man. I am sorry to have to disagree with Anne Ream about "the fetus as being completely without the power to respond to, or have personal relationships with people". The mother is a "people", and when the baby kicks at 4 months and earlier, he's having a "personal relationship" with his mother. He's letting her know he's alive