



## VETERANS FOR PEACE

Chapter 51: 100 Janet Drive, Syracuse, NY 13224  
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October 25, 2018

Re.: **A Call for Peace on Armistice Day**

Dear

I am writing as a member of Chapter 51 of Veterans for Peace (VFP) and the Beyond War and Militarism Committee (BW&M), a joint committee of the Syracuse Peace Council and the CNY Solidarity Coalition, in hope that your congregation/religious community will join in our effort to restore Armistice Day to its original purpose.

One hundred years ago the world celebrated peace as a universal principle. The first World War had just ended, and nations mourned their dead and collectively called for an end to all wars. Armistice Day was born and was designated as "a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated." For more than thirty-five years each November 11<sup>th</sup> bells were rung around the world to commemorate that peaceful pledge, which took effect at eleven o'clock in the morning—the "eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month" of 1918.

However, after World War II the U.S. Congress renamed Nov. 11 as Veterans Day and the annual dedication to world peace morphed into honoring the military and glorifying war. Armistice Day changed from a day for peace into a day for displays of militarism. The primary beneficiaries of the continued reliance on militarism are the weapons manufacturers and the "defense" industry.

This Armistice Day, VFP and BW&M call upon all veterans and people who wish to commemorate the true meaning of Armistice Day to gather with us at Billings Park, at the corner of S Salina Street and E Adams Street in Syracuse, where there is a statue of a WW 1 soldier. All will be invited to join Peter Swords in sharing stories about the moment that their ancestors heard the news of the armistice, e.g., where they were and how they responded. We will hold a vigil from 10:30 to 11:00 am. and at 11:00 we will be reminded of the true purpose of Armistice Day as we listen to the bells of our city ring out for five minutes in remembrance of the joy and celebration of peace. We will gather in this solemn manner not to pay homage to the weapons of destruction but to renew our commitment to work for an end to all wars and to foster justice and peace, at home and abroad.

If your place of worship is so equipped, we ask that you join us by ringing your bells at 11:00 am for five minutes. If not, we ask that you join us at Billings Park or by holding a similar vigil at your place of worship.

Please respond to confirm your willingness and plans to join us. Thank you.

Very truly yours

Ronald L. VanNorstrand