

“What Do We Remember?”

Essay by Gage Siegel, Branch #273 Mackenzie

What do we remember on this solemn day? I say there are multiple things that we should remember today. We should of course remember the individuals and the sacrifices that they made. We should remember the tortures inflicted upon those who were brave enough to leave what they love behind to risk their own life in the field of battle so that perhaps we can avoid that pain in the future. I fear however that with each Remembrance Day that passes we forget a little bit more that a soldier does not leave their home out of hatred, envy, or greed, but rather out of love and hope. I argue that love and hope is truly the torch that we carry forward, not just for ourselves but also them.

In dark times like these we often lose sight of the light at the end of the tunnel. Many of us may think the world is ending, and that fighting for a better world is a futile endeavor. I reject this, not only because it harms us, but also because it is insulting to those who made the greatest sacrifice. On the darkest nights, was it not hope which lit their way? Was it not hope for peace that brought them to fight on our behalf? We can never lose sight of the hope that they fought for and that pushed them forward. Remembrance Day is a day to mourn, but it is also a day to feel hope like no other day. Hope was what kept them alive, and now we must keep their hope for a better future alive.

It is also easy to forget that in the seemingly senseless violence of war that there was another flame that burned alongside hope: that being love for their friends, family, and home. Love is what kept them fighting and warmed them on the coldest of nights. Love was the burning sun in the sky which led to the melting of the frost in the morning. Truly even for all of us when the coldness of the world sets into our core it is love which still warms us. Love for our family, and for our friends which gives us the willpower not just to continue surviving but keep excelling and moving forward. We often forget that love is what drove many of them forward on the battlefield, especially now as a division seeps into our minds constantly from so many directions. I say we should never forget that love for their home is what drove them forward, and that we should continue that and keep loving on their behalf no matter what.

Love and hope are truly siblings in this world; and together they can drive us to do the most incredible things and make the greatest sacrifices. This Remembrance Day I ask that we all remember not just the sacrifice made, but the love and hope that drove them forward, for that truly is the torch we carry onward no matter what. I ask that we all go even just a little bit further and that each day of our lives that we never forget, even for a second, that it is both love and hope which plants the seeds of bravery within all of us.