

## **BEFORE YOU ENLIST**

If you were investing \$20,000+ in a new car, wouldn't you find out all you could about it, and not just take the salesman's word that it is great? So why commit eight years of your life (4 active duty and four in the reserve) on the basis of a slick sales campaign? **If military life is so great, how come they have to spend almost two billion dollars a year to get people to join?** If you don't like your new car, you can take it back or sell it. If you find the military is a bad choice for you, you're stuck! When you join the military, you become government property. If you don't believe that, try and commit suicide, and be court martialed for "... attempted destruction of government property." Find out the whole story BEFORE making your decision! **Don't fall for the slick sell!**

### **Some facts to consider:**

1. **"The military is not a jobs program"** - said former Secretary of Defense Cheney. Most military jobs do not carry over into civilian jobs. According to recent studies, the average veteran earns about \$1,700 less per year than non-veterans earn. The study found that only 12% of male veterans and 6% of female veterans made any use of the skills they learned in the military! **AND, Your civilian friends will have a four-year head start in the job market!** Do you believe rocket launcher mechanics are in great demand in the real world?

2. According to the VA, **1/3 of all homeless people are veterans.**

3. To get the **Montgomery G.I. Bill money for education**, you have to pay \$1,200 to just enroll in the program. **Only 35% of the recruits get any money at all!** To get the full amount promised, you have to jump through a lot of hoops. You may have to agree to take a job in the military that they can't fill because nobody wants to do it! **Only 15% of those eligible complete a four-year college program and collect the entire amount!** Most get a lot less! If you go to a 2-yr. Program, you only get half of the money you earned! **The 15% who DO make it through, probably could have qualified for scholarships, internships, Pell Grants, etc. without sacrificing years of their life in the military.**

4. **90% of the women in the military have reported sexual harassment**, and 30% of these have been raped. (VA statistics)

5. **You are going to get bossed around a lot**, sometimes by people that aren't as smart as you are, or who you feel are wrong. You can't complain. This happens in prisons as well. You are not going to learn self-discipline, but **"obey or else."**

6. **You can learn courage and have adventure by becoming a fireman, law enforcement officer, or middle school teacher.** It does not take much courage to drop bombs or shoot missiles on people in their own country from a great distance. Saving lives requires courage. Bringing another person's life to a sudden end, for whatever reason, is deeply disturbing for the person who does it and can cause lifelong psychological damage? Many people become conscientious objectors after experiencing combat.

7. You are not going to learn tolerance, but hatred. One lesson of the military is that you are better than everyone else on the planet! **You will not learn to understand other people, but will be taught to think of them as subhuman ("gooks") so your conscience will allow you to kill them.**

8. Your travel and adventure will often consist of months at sea being bored out of your mind. Your mission is to use violence on people in other countries to assert U.S. foreign policy objectives, often related to corporate profits, not freedom or justice. **There are many other outfits that offer travel and adventure involving building instead of destroying, like the Peace Corps, Citizen Action, Red Cross, Peace Brigades International, missionary work, American Friends Service Committee...etc.**

9. **You will give up most of your civil rights** when you pass through the gate to boot camp. Try exercising your freedom of speech by arguing with a chief petty officer and see what happens. Try refusing to let them search your locker. Try refusing to answer a question about your sexual preferences, or objecting to "hazing" (harassment) as "cruel and unusual punishment." Try communicating home about your feelings. Your e-mail can and will be censored.

10. Most people who join the military to "get away" from home find that they get more than they bargained for. One just trades getting ordered around by parents for getting ordered around by the military. And **you can't run away** from your ship like you can from home.

11. **Hispanics in the military comprise only 3% of the officers.** (81% for whites) Not much chance for advancement. Why is that?

**Before you sign anything, do the homework! You may still want to join up, but at least you'll know that you did it from a position of knowledge, not of ignorance! First, get the rest of the story the recruiter didn't mention!**

If you have already signed up under the **Delayed Entry Program (DEP)** and have changed your mind... **call 1(800) 665-7682** (toll free) for advice. **You CAN get out of it...and easily.** A sample letter is available on the CCCO web site: **www.objector.org**.

If you are a **Conscientious Objector** the application process is tricky. **You need good advice on how to document your claim NOW.** **Don't wait until you are drafted!** Call **1(800) 665-7862**.

If you are **already in the military** and have a problem, call the G.I. Rights hotline: **1(800) 394-9544**. They get 10,000 calls a year! Must be a reason...

**Before you enlist, CALL 1(800) 665-7682 (toll free)**

**Check the CCCO website: www.objector.org**

# QUESTIONS YOUR RECRUITER DOESN'T WANT YOU TO ASK!

Like the tobacco companies, MILITARY RECRUITERS ARE HERE TO SELL YOU A DEADLY PRODUCT. Recruiters will sometimes say, or not say, anything to get you hooked.

\*\*\* Why do veterans earn less, on average, than similar non-veterans?

\*\*\* Why are 1/3 of all homeless people veterans?

\*\*\*Why do only 12% of male veterans and only 6% of female veterans make any use of the "job skills" they learned in the military?

\*\*\*Why do 65% of the recruits who pay the required \$1,200 into the Montgomery G.I. Bill never get a cent in return?

\*\*\*Why did former Secretary of Defense Cheney find it necessary to say, "The military is not a jobs program?"

\*\*\* Why do so many who have experienced combat later commit suicide (sometimes more suicides than combat deaths)?

\*\*\*The U.S. policy of "overwhelming force" causes tremendous numbers of civilian casualties. Is it right to consider American lives more precious than innocent civilian lives in other countries?

\*\*\*Can the strongest military in the world protect us from attacks like the 9/11 disaster or the Oklahoma City bombing?

\*\*\* Can I get out if I find I hate life in the military?

\*\*\*Why do the Veterans Administration's own figures show that 90% of recent women vets reported sexual harassment, 30% of those involving rape?

\*\*\*Is it true that recruiters have a quota of a certain number of recruits per month they have to sign up?

\*\*\*Is it O.K. that homosexuals are allowed to join the military, but will get kicked out if they tell anyone? ("Don't ask, don't tell?")

\*\*\*Can sailors refuse to obey orders that are stupid or dangerous? What if my commanding officer is incompetent or sadistic?

\*\*\*Are there better ways for a person to get job skills or money for college besides joining the military?

\*\*\*(Here's the big one): ... **WILL YOU PUT IT IN WRITING?**

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For more information about the sources for the statistics used in preparing this brochure, contact The Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CCCO) at **1(800)665-7682**. They have an excellent web site all young people thinking of enlisting should check out before signing anything! [www.objector.org](http://www.objector.org)

For information about Tulare County's own newly-formed chapter of **WILPF** (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, founded in 1915) write WILPF, P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755. Your voice is needed! WILPF sponsors include Delores Huerta (UFW), Coretta Scott King, Dennis Banks, Dr. Helen Caldicott, Rep. John Conyers, Ramsey Clark, and many others. **Yes, men are welcome too.**

*The military is spending billions to convince you that they are your future. We do not have billions of dollars of tax money to buy fancy 18-wheelers to propagandize you. All we can do is to help provide the information you need to make a more informed decision.*

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Save this brochure for future reference or give it to a friend.

**Get any promises** of job training, duty station, etc. **IN WRITING** if you do decide to join up. Have someone with you when talking to a recruiter. Demand copies of anything you sign and remember **oral promises mean nothing.**