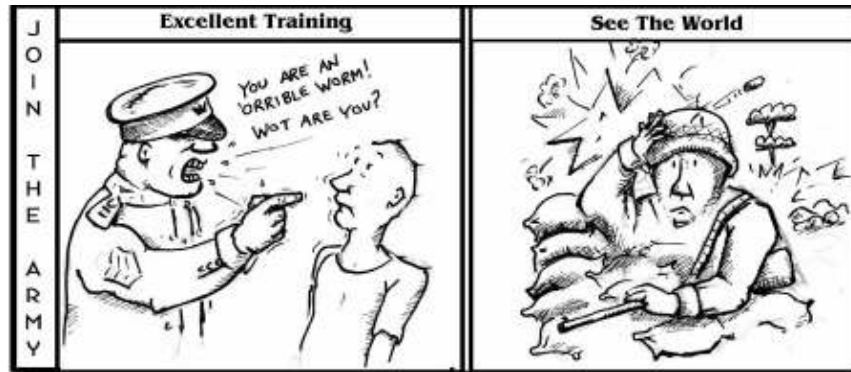


# WHAT THE ARMY DOESN'T TELL YOU - WPJF INITIATIVE TO INFORM POTENTIAL RECRUITS



## Did you know...?

"It is common practice around the world for army recruits to be treated brutally in the early stages of their training. The individual is broken down through physical and mental pressure before being rebuilt in the form required by the military. The recruits are verbally abused, made to perform pointless menial tasks, forced onto long marches carrying heavy equipment..." *'Design for a Life'* by Patrick Bateson and Paul Martin, Vintage, 2000.

"When young people under 18 join the Army, they only have the chance to leave between the 2nd and 6th month of service. After that they must serve until they are 22. They cannot buy themselves out. They cannot obtain a discharge... Absence without leave is punishable by detention." *AT EASE Advisory Service for servicemen and their families.*

"From 1995 to September 2001 there have been 19 'non-combat' deaths at the Infantry Training Camp at Catterick... These young people were fit and healthy when they joined the army and were willing to give up their lives for their country. Yet the way they have been treated both physically and mentally whilst serving in the 'modern' army in this day and age is both brutal and shocking and should never happen." *Parent of a soldier who died while stationed at Catterick ITC.*

"The Army admitted for the first time yesterday that four soldiers found with fatal gunshot wounds at a Surrey barracks may have died as a result of a regime of bullying and inadequate supervision and care." *Telegraph, March 5th 2004.*

"A devastating report by the National Audit Office... showed that British troops invading Iraq were deprived of vital equipment, including body armour and protection against chemical or biological attack, as well as such basic items as desert boots and clothing." *Guardian, Jan 13th 2004.*

"A quarter of homeless people are ex-servicemen and 5,000 former servicemen and women are in prison." *Guardian, April 23rd 2003.*

"Three British soldiers in Iraq have been ordered home after objecting to the conduct of the war. It is understood they have been sent home for protesting that the war is killing innocent civilians... The three soldiers, based in Colchester, Essex, face court martial..." *Guardian, March 31st 2003.*

WPJF has long been concerned that young people are joining the Army without being fully aware of these worrying facts, especially since Army recruitment adverts emphasise adventure, travel, qualifications and money, and neglect the more negative aspects of Army existence like the risk to life and limb. We decided to design a leaflet full of facts and information to distribute at Army Recruitment events to help would-be recruits and their families make informed choices about their future. We also hope to find other ways to distribute the leaflets locally, and will make the leaflet available to other Peace and Justice groups around the country. The leaflet includes the quotes above, and others, along with ten hard-hitting facts about Army life.

Anyone wanting a free copy of the leaflet can send a s.a.e. marked "Army Leaflet" to WPJF (contact address on page 12). A pdf version of the leaflet will soon be available to download from our website.

- 1 *The Army's main job is FIGHTING. Expect to KILL PEOPLE and maybe BE KILLED.*
- 2 *Being a soldier is very RISKY. Apart from being killed, you could end up ILL, DISABLED or TRAUMATISED.*
- 3 *Once you're in the Army, it's really really HARD TO GET OUT.*
- 4 *But sometimes the Army SACKS SOLDIERS EARLY to save paying them a full pension.*
- 5 *And when you are out, it's HARD TO FIT IN to civilian life again. Many ex-soldiers end up HOMELESS.*
- 6 *Being in the Army is all about OBEYING ORDERS. You can disagree but you must obey.*
- 7 *You could be sent to fight wars which are ILLEGAL, like the Iraq war. If you refuse, you could be COURT-MARTIALLED.*
- 8 *And DON'T EXPECT to have all THE KIT you need when you get there. Army FAILURES like this could put your LIFE AT RISK.*
- 9 *Are you prepared for the Army Experience? – living like sardines in Army barracks in depressing places; loads of RULES; PUNISHMENT for disobedience; institutional food; you may be BULLIED.*
- 10 *If you really want adventure, fun, qualifications, money and to see the world, there are other ways to achieve these things. YOU DON'T NEED TO JOIN THE ARMY! (or the Navy or the RAF).*

