

WARNING!

DO NOT SIGN A CONTRACT WITH A MILITARY RECRUITER UNTIL YOU HAVE RESEARCHED ALL OF THE FACTS!

Most people believe that the Bush administration misled the American people when he ordered the invasion of Iraq. The US Military toll in the war has risen to over 4000 dead; 40,000 wounded; and there have been over 8000 desertions. Because of this it is difficult to get young people in the military, so recruiters are working harder in mostly poor and minority areas to get students to join.

Joining the military can be a good way to serve your country, but it is not for everyone. Recruiters are rewarded for getting more students to join, so they work hard to make it seem great. And, the commercials on TV, radio and in magazines are made to get young people to think the military is great. If you are poor and don't have many choices the recruiters and commercials can get you to make a decision that will make you unhappy, or you may end up wounded or dead.

Make sure to check out everything about the military before you join because you are committing your life and thereby risking injury or death. One way that young Americans are expressing their distrust about the war in Iraq is to refuse to join the military. Here are some more things that you should check out:

1. **Check out these sites on the Internet:** http://www.aclunc.org/youth/asset_upload_file1000_6621.pdf , ACLU Youth Project; www.objector.org Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CCCO); www.projectyano.org Project on Youth and Nonmilitary Opportunities (YANO); or "Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), and Military Families Speak Out (MFSO).
2. Many of the military's advertisements are made to get poor and minority youth to join while **many wealthy people make money from the war and do not risk their lives.** (read, "Halliburton Makes Killing on War" (www.corpwatch.org))
3. Veterans are only 9% of the population but they are 35% of the homeless. One third of returning veterans from Iraq need treatment for mental health problems (www.medicalnewstoday.com). 20% of female veterans seeking help from the VA showed symptoms of military sexual trauma (USA Today 01/02/08 pg. A-1).
4. If you want to join the military for job training, college benefits, a sense of duty, or a desire to travel **make sure to investigate alternatives.** Credit for military training is not always accepted at four-year universities, and most military personnel never use their benefits or get jobs they were trained for. **If you need help to pass a GRE or to get financial aid for college visit a counselor and the financial aid office at your local community college.** Community colleges were made to help people just like you. Also, check out other options for patriotic duties or for traveling, such as the Peace Corp.
5. **It is patriotic to try to stop an unjust war:** Abraham Lincoln argued against the Mexican War, and Martin Luther King Jr. protested against the Vietnam War, and we honor both of them with a national holiday: you can't get more patriotic than that!

No matter what choice you make we wish you good luck in your future!