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The Center on  
Conscience & War

# The Reporter for Conscience' Sake

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## Poverty Draft Tough to Prove

By Pat Elder CCW Lobbyist

Although the U.S. Army skillfully exploits societal factors that conspire to make life difficult for economically disadvantaged youth, the existence of a "poverty draft" is statistically impossible to prove using data recently provided by the military.

The massive file supplied by the Army to the National Priorities Project, (NPP) a Massachusetts research group, includes the entire number of active-duty recruits in 2005 per ZIP code across the country. The data was received through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.

The statistics lack the necessary individualized economic data to conclusively make the case for a poverty draft, but they help us paint the national recruiting pic-

neighborhoods than from wealthier areas.

### The poorest of the poor

The numbers of active-army recruits show a precipitous drop-off among extremely impoverished youth, leading conservative groups to reject the notion of a poverty draft. NPP sorted the raw Army data according to median household income and ZIP code. The percent of active Army recruits dramatically decreases below the \$30,000 median household income level. For instance, the Army signs up fewer than 0.3 soldiers per 1,000 from families with median household incomes between \$5,000 and \$15,000 and less than 0.6 per thousand from families with median house-

## From the Desk of the Executive Director

Last year the Center talked to approximately 3000 people on the phone. These people included 42% who talk to us about going AWOL, 8% asking us about CO issues, and 18% asking about medical issues. There were hundreds of calls from reporters and media. We traveled—less this year than usual—thousands of miles each.

The year ends. The New Year begins. There is at least some hope that the war in Iraq might be in its final days as far as U. S. involvement. But even if it stopped tomorrow, we at the Center cannot stop.

The war in Iraq may stop but other wars go on. The war in Afghanistan. Our involvement in Colombia. The posturing with Iran and North Korea.

The war may stop but the military recruiters go on. They lie to our kids in the schools, in the malls and in playing fields.

The war may stop but the militarization of our country goes on. We accept the military at our football games, baseball games and video games. We accept the military at our schools in the ROTC and JROTC programs. We accept the

military in the oath of allegiance for new citizens.

The war may stop but the calls for help go on. We hear from members of the military who have been lied to or who have had a change of heart, and those who are broken and receive little or no help from the government that sacrificed them.

The war may stop but harms remain. We will need to help the members of the military abandoned by the government. We need to be aware of the broken civilians the war will leave behind. We need to be aware of an unspent arsenal of bombs the war will leave behind. We need to be aware of the seeds of the next war the war will leave behind.

The war may stop but the Center will go on. But it can only go on with your help even if the war does stop.

Yours for Peace and Justice,

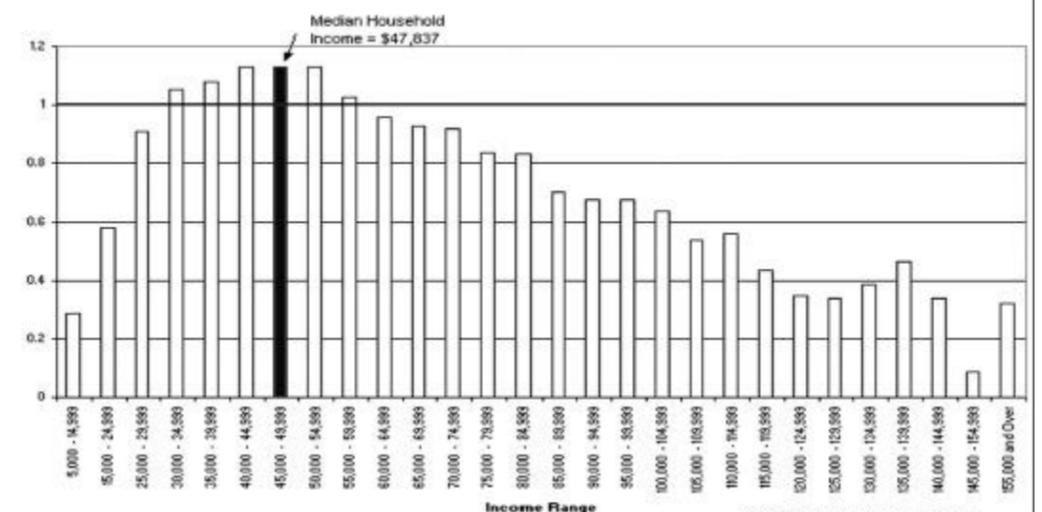
*S. S. McNeil*



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Higher Family Income Means Fewer Army Recruits



ture, albeit with a broad brush. The data suggests that active-duty soldiers are coming from more low to middle-income

hold incomes between \$15,000 and \$25,000. Meanwhile, households with incomes between \$30,000 and \$60,000 contribute more than one soldier per 1,000. The ratios plummet as median family incomes pass \$60,000.

See Poverty, pg. 4



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## News Briefs

### Conscientious Objector Detained by Colombian Military

On 1 November, Andrés Daniel Giraldo, a declared conscientious objector from the Colombian military, was stopped by a squad of soldiers at Facatativa while travelling on the Bogota-Medellin road, and asked for his military papers. As a declared conscientious objector, Daniel Giraldo does not have any military papers. However, the soldiers did not understand his arguments and detained him. They brought him to the military base of Guaduas - Timate, where he was still being kept at the time of writing. However, he will be transferred to the 38th infantry battalion Miguel Antonio Caro in Facatativa, his "designated" unit, where he will be medically examined. It will then be decided if he will be ordered to serve in this battalion, or somewhere else. Giraldo was able to talk by phone to activists of his group, Red Juvenil de Medellin. According to information from Red Juvenil, he is calm and determined to disobey any orders from the military.

(War Resisters' International 11/02/06)

### Turkish CO Gets Prison Sentence

Turkey's Human Rights Association (IHD) has said a 25-month prison sentence passed by a military court on Oct. 10, 2006 against conscientious objector Mehmet Tarhan is "wrongful and unacceptable," calling for an end to repression of those objecting to war. "This verdict has once again violated human rights and freedoms" said the IHD Commissioner Halil Savda, also a conscientious objector, noting that Tarhan had been accused twice for the same offence and that his final sentence was a combination of both verdicts.

(Istanbul News Center 10/16/2006)

### Israeli COs Receive Second Prison Sentence

On November 5, 2006, Omri Evron and Yakir Peretz returned to the Israeli Army's National Induction Center near Tel Aviv and refused to be enlisted for a second time. Each had already spent 14 days in military prison #4. Both Omri Evron and Yakir Peretz were sentenced for another term of 14 days.

Peretz has said that he refuses to be part of an occupation army. "I have the right not to be in the Army and they are, at the moment, depriving me of that basic human right. Even if we were talking of an army of angels, I would not be obliged to support any armed struggle."

Evron, a pacifist too, refused to enlist and to wear a uniform and received, as during his previous imprisonment, additional punishment for this: He was put in solitary confinement. He commented: "I refused to wear a uniform because I am not prepared to consider myself a soldier."

Evron explains that he opposes the ongoing military occupation of the Palestinian people, an occupation that he feels further entrenches and aggravates the hatred and terror between the two peoples.

(Right to Refuse to Kill 11/06/06)

### New Vermont Law Lets Students and Parents Say No to Recruiters

A new state law now requires all Vermont public schools to notify parents of their right to opt out of military sales pitches to their children. Act 127, which was signed by Governor Jim Douglas in May, clarifies some of the mandates under the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

(Seven Days Vermont's Alternative 9/13/06)

## CCW Store

### Gifts for the Holidays



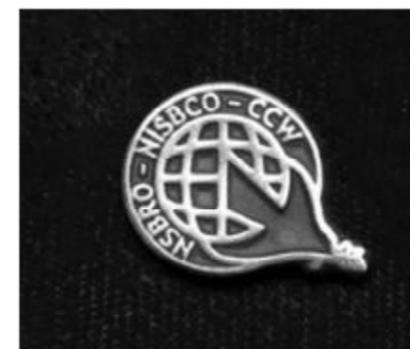
CCW Key Chain  
100% Pewter

\$15.00  
Complete with  
Gift Box



CCW Ornament  
100% Pewter

\$20.00  
Complete with  
Gift Box



CCW Lapel Pin  
100% Pewter

\$6.50  
Complete with  
Gift Box

[www.CenterOnConscience.org/store](http://www.CenterOnConscience.org/store)

### New In The Store

#### New on DVD



#### Soldiers Speak Out --\$17.50

Running Time: 28 min. plus 2.5 hours of bonus material.

"Soldiers Speak Out" is a powerful, first-hand testament to the reality of the military experience, told entirely in the words of American veterans who have been to war and are now opposing it.

(Reviewed in previous issue of The Reporter)

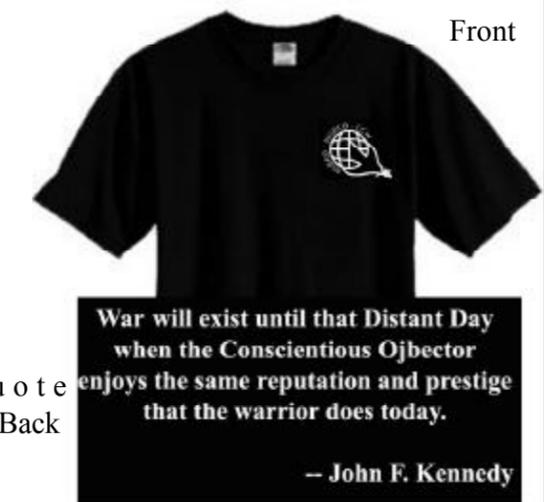
#### New In Print

#### Mission Rejected: U.S. Soldiers Who Say No To Iraq by Peter Laufer \$14.00



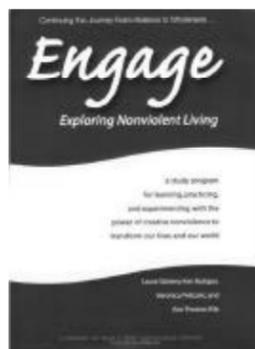
A shattering journey of revelation, pain, and betrayal, Mission Rejected takes the reader deep into the turmoil of U.S. troops confronting the Iraq War.

#### CCW T-Shirt \$15.00 100% Cotton Burgundy Color



Quote on Back

— John F. Kennedy



**Engage: Exploring Nonviolent Living**

By Laura Slattery, Ken Butigan, Veronica Pelicario, and Ken Preston-Pile (Pace e Bene Press)

**A Book Review**

By Bill Galvin  
CCW Counseling Coordinator

Often, when I'm speaking publicly about conscientious objection, I get the 'what if' questions. What if someone was attacking (insert loved one here)? How could we defend ourselves without a military? And I often respond with a plug for nonviolent action.

When counseling conscientious objectors, I often urge them to study nonviolence, or go through a nonviolence training so they can be better prepared to deal with these kinds of questions that they will probably encounter from their military investigating officers or draft boards. I usually point out that one who has been trained in nonviolence relates to his or her surroundings in a way that often reduces the threat of violence.

**Engage; Exploring Nonviolent Living** is actually a training manual, organized for 12 sessions. It has lesson plans, breaking exercises up into segments (usually between 1 and 20 minutes duration) with practical information such as supplies that will be needed for each session. It is best utilized with a trainer, in an organized nonviolence training session. And it is a very good resource for that purpose.

The sessions explore violence, and help the participants to fully understand the pervasiveness of violence in our culture and our lives. Through various exercises, the sessions empower and equip participants to step out of our usual ways of responding to violence or conflict- in a way that is more wholesome and at peace with the world. The sessions also cover organized nonviolent action for social and political change.

The book has a variety of readings from various sources about nonviolent response to conflict. While many of these can be found elsewhere, pulling these divergent accounts together in one source is quite powerful.

Examples include the struggles against apartheid in South Africa, a conscientious objector in Colombia, Nigerian women who successfully confronted a multinational oil corporation that was destroying their community, the Earth First movement saving ancient redwood trees in the northwest of the US, and nonviolent engagement between the pro-and anti-Chavez groups in Venezuela. The account of women in Los Angeles nonviolently confronting the gangs in their neighborhood and bringing about real change is quite powerful. For me the most moving reading was the account of Vedran Smailovic, a cellist in the Sarajevo Symphony who when confronted with the violence of that brutal war, did what he could. He went to the town square in Sarajevo where dozens of people had been killed, and played beautiful music on his cello- day after day after day.

Words of inspiration are also included from people such as Gandhi, King, and Tich Nacht Hanh. Additional readings include analysis of power systems and social change movements. One of the readings is about experimentation in social psychology- a study done in the early 1960's of a person's willingness to obey authority even if instructed to violate one's own conscience. Most people did, but at least one became a conscientious objector because of the experience. Describing his participation in the experiment, he said, "I believed I was hurting someone, I was totally unaware of why I was doing so..." Six years later he said, "To permit myself to be drafted with the understanding that I am submitting to authority's demand to do something very wrong would make me frightened of myself...I am fully prepared to go to jail if I am not granted CO status. Indeed, it is the only course I could take to be faithful to what I believe." (P.144)

**Engage: Exploring Nonviolent Living** is a reworking of Pace e Bene's earlier nonviolence training manual, **From Violence to Wholeness**. The reworking is based on their experience in having led hundreds of nonviolence training seminars. The original manual was largely rooted in Christian tradition, and Pace e Bene wanted to bring to the manual an "inclusive general-audience spirituality." Overall, **Engage** is an excellent resource for getting a handle on our violent world and our role in it. It also provides some useful tools for us to break the cycle of violence, and in fact begin to move from violence to wholeness. 

**CCW Welcomes A New Member of the Board**



Tom Hoopes is the Director of Education for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Quakers). In that capacity, he serves as the primary liaison from the Quakers to the 32 Friends schools in the region, as well as a central resource person for programs and issues affecting the many Quakers who teach and send their children to public schools in our region. Tom also supervises the staff in children's religious education and teen programs. His background includes serving as a high school assistant principal, a children's summer camp director and a high school teacher. He makes his home near Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, with his wife and 2 sons.

**Mark Your Calendar**



May 15th 2007 is International Conscientious Objectors' Day. CCW will be holding its Lobby Day event on **May 14th, 2007** and the Advisory Council will meet on **May 15th, 2007**. We hope to see many of you there.



**Change the Telephone War Tax into a Peace "Tax"**

The Telephone Excise Tax was established in 1968 to pay for the war in Vietnam. After the U.S. withdrew from Vietnam, the tax stayed but went into the general coffers of the U.S. Treasury.

Now the IRS is no longer charging the Telephone Excise Tax AND the change is retroactive to February 28, 2003. An easy system will be provided for a refund on your 2006 tax return for a maximum of \$60. People who still have their telephone bills may receive more.

Consider donating your War Tax refund to the Center on Conscience & War and turning the War Tax into a Peace Tax.

**Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests**

In an effort to provide the most accurate G.I. Rights counseling possible, CCW is working to acquire the National Guard regulations for all 50 states and territories. In order to request such documents through the FOIA most states require that the person requesting the documents be a resident of that state. The following is a list of states for which we still need regulations. If you or anyone you know would be willing to submit a FOIA request on our behalf please call or E-mail the Center with your name, mailing address and E-mail address and we will send you the information necessary to submit a request.

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Virgin Islands

**Volunteer Hannah Kliever Says Goodbye to CCW**



It seems weird to be saying goodbye to the Center over two months after I left, but I should have learned by now that this is how CCW functions - things are ever changing and the newsletter is just trying to keep up.

The last two months are a blur. Moving to Illinois to work for Brethren Volunteer Service, coming back to Maryland to help run an orientation, sleeping in a hallway until finally getting a room just a week ago...at this point Washington D.C. seems kind of far away. But CCW isn't.

Today at lunch there was a conversation about activating reservists; the other day on "The Simpsons" the Army was recruiting in a middle school; a couple of weeks ago I talked to a volunteer who joined Brethren Volunteer Service the same day he was supposed to go to boot camp. These issues are everywhere, and I know they always have been. I just didn't realize the extent of the problem until my time with CCW. My year there will always be special to me, as will the people I met along the way. While I was excited for a new challenge, it was difficult to leave such a passionate and truly caring organization behind. However, I am confident that my connection to CCW and the issue of conscience will continue.

**Poverty** *From Pg. 1*

The low recruiting statistics from the poorest of the poor don't dispel the notion of a poverty draft. Youth living in "extreme poverty" have never been highly recruited because they are more likely to fail physicals and aptitude tests. The military seems to be recruiting from the relatively unaffluent category, not the least affluent.

In 2005 the Heritage Foundation picked up on the phenomena that fewer recruits tend to come from extremely impoverished areas. The heavily publicized Heritage study argued that the military actually signed up more recruits from wealthier neighborhoods.

From the Heritage Foundation, 11/7/05:

***"According to the 2000 Census, the national median income per household in 1999 was \$41,994 in 1999 dollars. By assigning each recruit the median 1999 household income for his hometown ZIP code, we calculated that the mean 1999 income for 1999 recruits before entering the military was \$41,141 (in 1999 dollars). The mean 1999 income for 2003 recruits was \$42,822 (in 1999 dollars). In other words, on average, recruits in 2003 were from wealthier neighborhoods than were recruits in 1999."***

Heritage admitted that its study lacked individualized household income data, and that its approach did not indicate whether recruits came from the poorer households in their neighborhoods.

**The question of granularity**

Thus, we come to the question of "granularity" as Sam Diener of AFSC's "Peacework Magazine" describes it. "A ZIP code is a huge area." "There may be wide variances within individual ZIP codes." For instance, a ZIP code that has an AVERAGE median family income of \$80,000 may have a half-dozen army recruits who come from the section of town with subsidized housing and relatively low family incomes.

The ZIP code data may give the impression that the majority of enlistees are coming from wealthier families, rather than the poorer ones. There may be an insidious poverty draft lurking within those ZIP codes.

Examine ZIP code 20784 in Maryland. The area takes in parts of three towns in suburban Washington, D.C.: Landover Hills, New Carrollton, and Hyattsville. There were eleven active Army recruits from that zip code in 2005. Although the Census Bureau shows this zip code has an average median family income of \$49,834, (\$2,000 over the national average of \$47,837), we don't have the individualized household income data. Where did the recruits come from? Did they come from Section 8 housing in Landover Hills, modest single family homes in New Carrollton, or half million-dollar homes in Hyattsville? We don't know, but it is preposterous for Heritage to claim that active Army recruits come from wealthier neighborhoods, and it is equally unreasonable for us to claim there's a poverty draft, based solely on these statistics.

We're forced to use substitute data from a variety of sources like the Census Bureau, Department of Education, the Annie E. Casey Foundation's "Kids Count Fact Book" and other data. Either way, we're still left with Diener's granularity problem.

**Active-Army recruits by state**

Granules aside, there are fascinating observations to make from studying the data. The nation's three wealthiest states, in terms of per capita income: Connecticut, New Jersey, and Massachusetts, rank 50th, 48th, and 45th in total Army recruits per 1,000 youth in 2005. Connecticut had just 0.81 Army recruits per 1000 youth last year, compared to an average of 1.57 per 1,000 nationally. Montana had the highest rate with 5.7 per 1,000. The poorest states generally contribute the highest ratios of recruits, with youth from states like West Virginia, Arkansas and South Carolina more than twice as likely to enlist in the Army as youth in Connecticut.

Eight of the top-ten states most reluctant to have youth enlist are in the northeast. The other two are Minnesota and Utah. Utah? Utah has traditionally had large numbers of young men who volunteer for a two-year stint performing missionary work for the Mormon Church.

History seems to play a role in determining the likelihood that youth between the ages of 18 and 24 will enlist.

*Continues Next Page*

**Poverty** *Continued*

Aside from Maine and Indiana, none of the states that fought with the Union during the U.S. Civil War are in the top half of states in terms of Army recruits per 1,000 youth. Youth from ole' Dixie, however, are much more likely to sign up. Nine of the top thirteen states, are from the Confederacy.

**Controversy over Minority Recruitment**

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of NPP's report is their claim that the Navy was most popular with minority recruits. According to NPP's data, the Navy has the highest percentages of Black (19%), Asian or Pacific Islander (6%), American Indian or Alaska Native (7%), and Hispanic recruits (16%) compared to the other branches. NPP also reports that just 5.5% of all Marine recruits are Hispanic, a percentage that is firmly contradicted by the numbers from the Defense Department's 2004 Population Report. The DoD tables on Enlisted Accessions by Race/Ethnicity show that 16.1% of all Marines are of Hispanic ethnicity.

The most popular choice for Latinos has historically been the Marine Corps. NPP notes that 27% of all Marine active-duty recruits declined to respond to the ethnicity question. Yet, NPP is using the deficient data provided by the Marine Corps to make its claim that the Navy is substantially more popular than the Marines among Hispanics.

NPP defends its claim that the Navy is the most popular branch among minorities. According to Anita Dancs, Research Director of NPP, the population representation statistics are not the same as the recruiting data NPP received. "We are quite comfortable with our statement about the Navy," Dancs said.

Rick Jahnkow with San Diego-based Project YANO argues that the DoD's Population Representation Report is the official data on enlistment applications and actual accessions. Jahnkow questions why NPP would claim that the Navy is most favored by people of color, "When the statistics NPP is using for the Marine Corps are way off, at least for the "Hispanic" portion of the population." Jahnkow continued, "This statistical defect must affect NPP's comparisons to the other branches, and without correcting it, it raises questions about how the NPP statement can be substantiated."

Contrary to published reports and popular misperceptions that Latinos are overrepresented in the military and in new enlistments, DoD statistics indicate precisely the opposite. The only branch where the Latino percentage has come close to civilian has been the Marine Corps.

**The Big Picture**

The Army announced in late September that it had reached its annual recruiting goal of 80,000 soldiers. The recruiting year extends from Oct 1st through September 30th.

The Army's apparent "success" is based on several factors. The Department of Defense is now spending close to \$4 billion a year on military recruiting. In 2004, the active component enlisted accessions for all the branches of the military totaled 175,972. That amounts to nearly \$23,000 per recruit, although that number does not take into consideration Guard and Reserve units. There are 6,600 recruiters for the active-duty Army, up by 22% in the last two years. The Army National Guard and Army Reserve also have beefed up their recruiting corps. The Pentagon has increased the maximum bonus paid to recruits for enlisting from \$20,000 to \$40,000 and it is now paying soldiers a \$1,000 bonus for referring every enlistee who completes boot camp.

But that's only part of the equation. The Army is also dramatically lowering the bar for enlisting. The percent of all Army recruits without a high school diploma has risen to 18.8%, the highest level since 1981. The Army has also relaxed the minimum scores necessary on the standardized Armed Forces Qualification Test, (AFQT). The percent of soldiers who have been granted waivers for alcohol or drug abuse, criminal misdemeanors, and various medical conditions has increased from 10% to 15% in the last five years. The Southern Policy Law Center claims the Army is looking the other way while it admits large numbers of neo-Nazis and white supremacists. The Army has also increased its maximum age for enlistment from 35 to 42.

By the end of the recruiting year on Sept. 30, the active-duty Army expects to have a total of nearly 504,000 soldiers, an increase of 12,000 from 2004. ABC News recently reported that senior Army officials are privately calling for an additional 60,000 troops. 