

An application for discharge  
on the grounds of conscientious objection  
to continued military service

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Application for discharge submitted 16 Feb 2026

Published May 21, 2026

## Overview

### Key Points

- British Army Reservist applied for discharge in protest of **UK** role in Gaza genocide, increasing domestic authoritarianism and ongoing complicity in **US**–Israeli crimes against humanity.
- Previous high-profile **conscientious objector (CO)** cases include: Ben Griffin in 2005; Joe Glenton in 2010; Michael Lyons in 2011; and Ahmed al-Batati in 2020 (though not all used the formal **CO** process). Many have experienced jail time for refusing orders to serve contrary to their consciences.
- Conscientious objection remains very rare in the Armed Forces, particularly outside periods of conscription (one source estimates there have been ‘fewer than a hundred or so cases’ since **WWI**<sup>1</sup>). The previous triennial report (2013) of the **Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objectors (ACCO)**, which hears **CO** appeals, reported only 37 appeals considered between 1970–2010.<sup>2</sup> However, official figures are likely an undercount as evidence exists of objectors being removed through other administrative procedures.
- The Reservist was granted a discharge (recorded as a standard voluntary discharge) with no negative repercussions. **Volunteer Reservists** are able to leave at will (unless actively mobilised), and so figures for how many leave due to reasons of conscience are not available.
- It is hoped that this step will encourage other serving members of the Armed Forces to follow suit, or at least raise awareness of the option should they one day require it.

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen Deakin, ‘Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Britain: Selective Conscientious Objection in the Modern Military’ in Andrea Ellner, Paul Robinson, and David Whetham (eds), *When Soldiers Say No*, 4 (Routledge 2016).

<sup>2</sup>Ministry of Defence and **Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objectors**, *Cabinet Office: Triennial Review Report - Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objectors* (2013) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/triennial-review-of-the-advisory-committee-on-conscientious-objectors-acco-2013>) para 11.

On 16 February 2026, I marked a decade of service in the British Army Reserves. I also submitted an application for discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection to continued military service. I was finally discharged on 1 May.

This decision marked the culmination of several threads. Some of these stretch back for years, such as my early decision to serve as a clinician rather than my original (and more obvious) plan of intelligence, principally due to my discomfort at the presence of Turkey in **NATO** and the revelations (and subsequent mistreatments of) Julian Assange, Edward Snowden and other such whistleblowers. Over the years, I also became familiar with the Quakers and other anti-war and leftist groups, and was influenced by each into a position increasingly critical of militarism and the **UK's** role in the world.

These are long-standing issues, and I have always found ways to accommodate and work around them. However, this is no longer possible in light of the **UK** government and military's profound complicity in the Gaza genocide, and continued support for the present regimes of both Israel and the **USA** (my second nation). The **UK** is guilty of supporting both the former's system of apartheid in Palestine, and the illegal terror campaigns of both across the region: from Gaza to Iran to Lebanon. The murder of Hind Rajab and her family in January 2024 marked the breaking point for me. I became much more active outside of the Army, and vocally critical inside it (and learnt I am not the only one disgusted by all this).

For a while, I still felt that remaining inside offered me the best chance of making some meaningful contribution. But as daily horrors have followed daily horrors, military spending has spiked across Europe and proposals to (re)introduce conscription have propagated across the **UK** and elsewhere, I have come to believe that we are in fact in the midst of a Third World War. I believe that there can be no hope of reforming the systems that have allowed these atrocities to take place; only their dismantling and complete replacement. I believe that this corrupt system, which demonstrably places no value on human life, has throughout my lifetime acted to dismantle the hard-won social gains of past generations' struggles, in both our nation and others'. I see that it now seeks to condemn entire populations to fight and die on its behalf; to fight for the architects and beneficiaries of the present system in its death throes, and in service of the harbingers of a far worse one. It must be resisted; they must be defeated.

I have concluded, then, that the last and most important act of military service that I can offer—my means of 'throwing a handful of sand in the gears of genocide', to paraphrase Rasha Abdulhadi—is to use this little-known, somewhat-archaic and infrequently-invoked process now to 'grease the wheels', and then to advocate for others in the military (both current serving personnel and potential future conscripts) to be prepared to do the same.

I have given a lot to the Army over the past decade, and learnt a lot from it in turn. As I light a ten-year career on fire, then, my hope is that the flames can cast some light in these dark times; I fear darker ones are coming.



## Version History

Version	Date	Note
1	May 21, 2026	Initial release

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The canonical [URL](#) for this document is:

<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/an-application-for-discharge>

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# 1. Application for Discharge

## Request for discharge on compassionate grounds

Lt Col ██████, Commanding Officer 335 Medical Evacuation Regiment  
Sir,

Today marks, to the day, ten years since I first joined the Army Reserves. The choice to submit this request on this anniversary, was, if you can believe it, a coincidence that I only realised after having already made my decision.

The formal purpose of this letter is to request a discharge, free on compassionate grounds, on the basis of conscientious objection to continued military service. I appreciate that this is an unusual request; for the purposes of administration the process to now follow can be found in [AGAI 55](#), paras 55.009–55.014,<sup>3</sup> and additional guidance is available from the [Peace Pledge Union \(PPU\)](#) and [At Ease](#).<sup>4</sup>

This letter is structured as follows:

1. **firstly**, I will provide an account of both my military career and the threads running throughout it that have brought me to this point;
2. **secondly**, I will make a clear statement about my current beliefs and why I have chosen to take this path now;
3. **thirdly**, I will attempt to predict possible counter-arguments and respond to them in advance; and
4. **fourthly**, I will explain why I have chosen to use this particular process, rather than simply requesting a voluntary discharge as a simpler means of achieving the same end.

The actual letter comprises only the first twenty or so pages of this document.<sup>5</sup> After that I include my two third-party references (as required by the procedure) as [appendix C](#). In [appendix E](#), which comprises the bulk of the document, I have constructed a highly detailed timeline of the events that have led me to this point, divided into five thematic tracks; I produced it primarily for my own purposes, and as a resource to help me write this letter, and I do not expect you to read it in full, but throughout this letter I have included references

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<sup>3</sup>Ministry of Defence, 'Retirement or Discharge on the Grounds of Conscience' in *Army General and Administrative Instruction (AGAI)*, vol 2, ch 55 (October 2020) ([AGAI 55](#)).

<sup>4</sup>Peace Pledge Union, 'Conscientious objection in the UK today' (*The Men Who Said No: Conscientious Objectors 1915–1919*) (<https://menwhosaidno.org/costoday/costodayUK.html#:~:text=IN%20THE%20RESERVE%20ARMED%20FORCES>); At Ease, 'Conscientious Objection' (*At Ease*) ([https://www.atease.org.uk/info\\_05\\_01\\_30.htm](https://www.atease.org.uk/info_05_01_30.htm)).

<sup>5</sup>There are more like twelve pages of actual content, if you ignore the footnotes.

to it should you wish to dig deeper into any areas. In [appendix D](#) I include my three previous annual reports to serve as my *bona fides*. For anyone interested in my actual post-submission experience with the discharge process, I have detailed it in [appendix B](#). One goal of this document is serve as a synthesis of over ten years of lessons and study, and thus potentially as an educational resource for others who find themselves in a similar position; to this end I have included a comprehensive set of bibliographies in [appendix F](#). And, lastly, in [appendix A](#) I include a post-script along with some urgent calls to action.<sup>6</sup>

Before I start, however, I wish to stress that none of this should be taken as a reflection of [335 Medical Evacuation Regiment \(335 MER\)](#), nor of the [Specialist Medical Support Group \(SMSG\)](#), [2<sup>nd</sup> Medical Group \(2 Med Gp\)](#) or the [Royal Army Medical Services \(RAMS\)](#). As much of a misfit as I have long felt within the Armed Forces, I have come to feel very at home in what I have described as ‘my little leftie enclave’ within the Army: over almost five years I have found a community of colleagues of uniformly excellent clinical ability, welcoming collegiality and a commendable willingness to grapple with profound ethical and moral issues. I am proud to have been part of the unit, and I wish everyone in it only the best. And, if it is not overstepping the mark, whilst you do not fit the stereotype I may have once had for a [CO](#), I have come to respect the gentler and more contemplative approach you have brought to the unit during your command.

But as clinicians, and Reservists besides, I know that we are not at all representative of the wider Armed Forces. However, even as I continue to believe that the stated Values & Standards of the Army<sup>7</sup> are virtues worth supporting, repeated experience shows that are not upheld by the most senior leadership.<sup>8</sup> Nor do I believe that ethical individual conduct can justify acting in service of unjust and immoral masters; a category in which I now unreservedly include the [UK](#) government.

Please note: all internal references within this report are hyperlinked; click on them to jump to the part being referenced (e.g., see [part 2](#)). Throughout this report I have used § and ¶ symbols for internal references and ‘s’ and ‘para’ for external references.

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<sup>6</sup>This document has a few changes from the one that I originally submitted on 16 Feb, e.g. typo fixes, expansion of acronyms, etc. These changes are not indicated. More substantial changes are indicated as this line is: slightly lighter in colour.

<sup>7</sup>[Ministry of Defence, Values and Standards of the British Army \(AC 64649\)](#) (<https://www.army.mod.uk/learn-and-explore/about-the-army/values-and-standards/>).

<sup>8</sup>See footnotes [38](#) and [39](#) and [appendix E](#), ¶¶ [243](#) and [249](#).

## 2. How Did I Get Here?

He who hath been a stranger among unkind people, or under the government of those who were hardhearted has experienced this feeling; but a person who has never felt the weight of misapplied power comes not to this knowledge but by an inward tenderness, in which the heart is prepared to sympathise with others.

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John Woolman<sup>9</sup>

Over the past ten years, I have served for the equivalent of roughly 500 **Reserve Service Days (RSDs)**.<sup>10</sup> See (for my full military **CV**) certificate-of-service military-cv This amounts to almost two years of full-time service in raw quantity, but in terms of duration that that would be roughly the amount of time expected for a competent individual to promote to **OR-5/6** (i.e., sergeant/**SNCO** rank) or **OF-3** (i.e., **major**/field officer).

I started in the **University Officers' Training Corps (UOTC)**. For two years, I went through officer training. I was studying computer science at university, followed by a summer school with **GCHQ** and a Master's in Cyber Security. My university faculty had many links to the intelligence services, and I fully expected to go on to work for them after graduation. Our Regimental **2IC** was a **major** in the **Intelligence Corps** and took on something of a mentoring role for me, and so I planned to pair that civilian career with a commission into the **Intelligence Corps** or **Royal Signals**.

However, it was not to be. I have made, I think, three or four really consequential decisions in my life. Though not always apparent at the time, on reflection these are the key points that have completely redefined its subsequent trajectory. The decision I am making today is deeply indebted to each of these previous ones and will, I hope, prove just as valuable in hindsight, despite any immediate discomfort.

I made the first of these decisions at this point. Faced with the choice between honesty (knowing that it could derail my career plans) and dishonesty (knowing that there would be no way of the lie being found out), I chose honesty. I resolved to be completely truthful about my student lifestyle in my security vetting, which resulted in it being denied.<sup>11</sup> The delay could have been only temporary—I was confident even at the time that another application after a short delay would have been successful and I have since passed other (albeit less-invasive) vetting<sup>12</sup>—but the damage was already done: I had unexpectedly disrupted the conveyor belt I had been riding since as far back as my school years and was, for the

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<sup>9</sup> John Woolman, *A Word of Remembrance and Caution to the Rich* (1793)

<sup>10</sup>(.

<sup>11</sup> See **appendix E**, ¶¶ 28 and 51.

<sup>12</sup> See **appendix E**, ¶¶ 142 and 143.

first time, forced to really think about what I wanted to do with my life and, just as importantly, what not to do.

On reflection, I decided that I could not square my intended career in the intelligence services with my ethical objections to government surveillance and my deep respect and appreciation for whistleblowers like Edward Snowden. In my civilian career, I subsequently sought out non-governmental civilian employment in IT security. In my military career, I first considered leaving, but was convinced to stay on the proviso that I would serve only in a medical or humanitarian capacity. My shorthand rule became the 'Wehrmacht test'<sup>13</sup>—I committed to only serve in a role I felt I could justify doing even on behalf of the worst possible regime.<sup>14</sup> I ultimately threw away two years of training to effect this change when I decided to abandon the commissioning process,<sup>15</sup> and ultimately my commitment to this decision served to delay my career by five years; I have no regrets.<sup>16</sup>

Around this same time, I made the second of my big decisions: choosing to walk home from work, and taking a different route to usual, I saw a poster for an upcoming talk from someone who had been volunteering in **Rojava (North & East Syria)**. I decided to go on a whim; I was introduced to the **Kurdish Freedom Movement (KFM)** and **Rojava** revolution, which have served as a constant backdrop to my continuing politicisation since then.<sup>17</sup>

In 2019 I first encountered the writings of Hannah Arendt, which left a lasting impression on me.<sup>18</sup> In particular, her (and others') accounts<sup>19</sup> of the sort of epistemic collapse within Nazi Germany wherein people following normal moral imperatives of loyalty, duty, obedience are led to perform great evil (perhaps without even realising it), were incredibly striking to me. I return to this quote from her essay 'Personal Responsibility Under Dictatorship' routinely, even today:

In this respect, the total moral collapse of respectable society during the Hitler regime may teach us that under such circumstances those who cherish values and hold fast to moral norms and standards are not reliable: we now know that moral norms and standards can be changed overnight, and that all that then will be left is the mere habit of holding fast to something. Much more reliable will be the doubters and skeptics, not because skepticism is good or doubting wholesome, but because they are used to examine things and to make up their own minds. Best of all will be those who know only one thing for certain: that whatever else happens, as long as we live we shall have to live together with ourselves.<sup>20</sup>

So, whilst I ultimately decided to continue with the Army, I also committed to never stop questioning my decision.

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<sup>13</sup>This is meant as a thought experiment, not an attempt to draw a moral equivalence between the UK government and Nazi Germany. In its initial form, it was the 'Turkish Army' test.

<sup>14</sup>See appendix E, ¶ 75.

<sup>15</sup>See appendix E, ¶ 87. Even beyond choosing not to commission, as an **OPMI/OPTI** I would have started as a **lance corporal** so by choosing a medical career I also took a cut in rank.

<sup>16</sup>See appendix E, ¶ 156.

<sup>17</sup>See appendix E, ¶¶ 56, 58 to 61 and 76

<sup>18</sup>See appendix E, ¶ 93.

<sup>19</sup>See appendix E, ¶¶ 45, 93, 107, 120, 121, 126 and 138.

<sup>20</sup>Hannah Arendt, 'Personal Responsibility Under Dictatorship' in *Responsibility and Judgement* (first published 1964, 2003).

I continued in the Army as a medic—except for a brief spell as a telecoms provider *for* medics—<sup>21</sup> across several years and a handful of units, primarily 335 MER. I became increasingly politicised during this time through my engagement with the *Kurdish movement*, through following the Israel–Palestine conflict,<sup>22</sup> through volunteering with asylum seekers and refugees in the UK<sup>23</sup> and through my experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>24</sup> In 2022, fed up with my job and recognising that I was burnt out, I made my third big decision: I quit everything and set off backpacking in Central America for a year. I came back profoundly changed from my experiences.<sup>25</sup> I struggled to readjust to life in the UK:<sup>26</sup> the bureaucracy; the alienation; the poverty and repression. I was desperate to return to travelling. I found an ad for a job in the south of France and, after initially writing it off as a possibility yet finding myself repeatedly drawn back, I eventually applied on 5 Oct 2023. Israel was attacked two days later.<sup>27</sup>

In January 2024 I left the UK again, this time with no end in sight, to start my new job. By this point, Israel had already killed over 25,000 people in Gaza. South Africa had just taken Israel to the *International Court of Justice (ICJ)*, accusing it of committing genocide.<sup>28</sup>

I think I know the exact moment that truly broke me: the murder of Hind Rajab on 29 Jan 2024. I remember following the events live that day.<sup>29</sup> A five year old girl, terrified and trapped at night in a destroyed vehicle surrounded by the bodies of her family members, making a desperate call for help. A Red Crescent ambulance crew dispatched. And Israeli soldiers, laying in wait, who slaughtered them all. It is the most powerless I've ever felt.

On that day, I saw what evil looks like. It looks like us. We use the same kit.<sup>30</sup> We help it to kill.<sup>31</sup> It trains with us.<sup>32</sup> We train with it.<sup>33</sup> We change our own laws to protect its crimi-

<sup>21</sup> See appendix E, ¶¶ 164, 165, 169 and 190. Because weird specialist units tend to get grouped together without much logic, this meant my unit fell within the *NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC)*, along with two other units composed of senior officers who we would train with, attend social events with, etc. It was at this point that I realised I have pretty unique opportunity to act within a world otherwise off-limits to (and neglected by) leftists, and that I am pretty good talking to high-up military people and at challenging them effectively from within their in-group, bypassing their normal defences

<sup>22</sup> See appendix F.4.1.1 and appendix E, ¶¶ 8, 13, 31, 33, 42, 74, 118, 175, 186, 201, 203, 206, 210, 226 and 242.

<sup>23</sup> See appendix E, ¶ 134.

<sup>24</sup> See appendix E, ¶¶ 118 and 119.

<sup>25</sup> See appendix E, ¶¶ 169, 171, 172, 175, 176 and 180. I also plan to detail how my political views have changed over the years in a future work, see Ben Goldsworthy, 'A Political Trajectory' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/political-trajectory>).

<sup>26</sup> See appendix E, ¶ 181.

<sup>27</sup> See appendix E, ¶¶ 186 and 188.

<sup>28</sup> *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v Israel)* (2023) (<https://www.icj-cij.org/case/192>).

<sup>29</sup> Alastair McCready, Maziar Motamedi, and Mersiha Gadzo, 'Israel's war on Gaza updates: 215 Palestinians killed in last 24 hours' (*Al Jazeera*, 29 January 2024) (<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2024/1/29/israels-war-on-gaza-live-us-vows-to-respond-to-killing-of-troops#:~:text=Red%20Crescent%20says%20lost%20contact%20with%20crew%20trying%20to%20rescue%20girl%20in%20Gaza>).

<sup>30</sup> Mark Curtis, 'British troops using Israeli arms technology tested in Gaza' (*Declassified UK*, 5 November 2024) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/british-troops-using-israeli-arms-technology-tested-in-gaza/>).

<sup>31</sup> Iain Overton, 'Britain[s] Gaza Spy Flights Scandal' (*Declassified UK [YouTube]*, 11 December 2025) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0fk3t28TiAc>).

<sup>32</sup> John McEvoy, Alex Morris, and Phil Miller, 'Revealed: The British military college teaching Israeli soldiers' (*Declassified UK*, 29 July 2025) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/revealed-the-british-military-college-teaching-israeli-soldiers/>).

<sup>33</sup> John McEvoy, 'British military trained in Israel amid Gaza genocide' (*Declassified UK*, 26 November 2025) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/british-military-trained-in-israel-amid-gaza-genocide/>).

nals,<sup>34</sup> and we criminalise the thousands who dare to oppose it.<sup>35</sup> We allow our people to serve it as foreign mercenaries,<sup>36</sup> and then to reintegrate into our society.<sup>37</sup> Our most senior military officers go on to work for it<sup>38</sup> and talk about how ‘we all benefit’ from its crimes.<sup>39</sup> Western leaders commend it for ‘doing the dirty work for all of us’.<sup>40</sup>

An endless list of atrocities followed:

- 29 Feb 2024: Flour massacre;
- Mar 2024: al-Shifa Hospital massacre;
- 1 Apr 2024: World Central Kitchen aid convoy massacre;
- 8 Jun 2024: Nuseirat massacre;
- July 2024: riots and Knesset speeches *in favour* of the right to rape Palestinian detainees,<sup>41,42</sup>
- 14 Oct 2024: al-Aqsa Hospital massacre;
- 12 Dec 2024: Nuseirat refugee camp massacre;

<sup>34</sup> Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, ‘U.K. Changes Universal Jurisdiction Law to Provide Safe-Haven to Suspected Israeli War Criminals’ (*PCHR*, 19 September 2011) (<https://pchgaza.org/u-k-changes-universal-jurisdiction-law-to-provide-safe-haven-to-suspected-israeli-war-criminals-2/>); John McEvoy, ‘Israel lobbied Britain to change law on war crimes arrests’ (*Declassified UK*, 19 September 2024) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/israel-lobbied-britain-to-change-law-on-war-crimes-arrests/>).

<sup>35</sup> Wikipedia, ‘Palestine Action’ (*Wikipedia*) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palestine\\_Action](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palestine_Action)), particularly the section titles ‘Arrests’.

<sup>36</sup> John McEvoy and Alex Morris, ‘Over 2,000 Britons served for Israel amid Gaza genocide’ (*Declassified UK*, 11 February 2026) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/over-2000-britons-served-for-israel-amid-gaza-genocide/>).

<sup>37</sup> Public Interest Law Centre, ‘Met Police Decline to Investigate UK Nationals Over Gaza War Crimes Claims’ (*PILC*, 1 May 2026) (<https://www.pilc.org.uk/blog/met-police-decline-to-investigate-uk-nationals-over-gaza-war-crimes-claims/>).

<sup>38</sup> Phil Miller and Alex Morris, “‘Deeply concerning’”: British General’s Israeli weapons job criticised’ (*Declassified UK*, 20 March 2025) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/deeply-concerning-british-generals-israeli-weapons-job-criticised/>).

<sup>39</sup> “‘We all benefited from the difficulties Israel faced,’” says former UK defence chief’ (*Middle East Monitor*, 2 February 2025) (<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20250102-we-all-benefited-from-the-difficulties-israel-faced-says-former-uk-defence-chief/>).

<sup>40</sup> Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention and Human Security, ‘Statement on German Chancellor Merz’s Framing of Israeli Actions in Iran as “Dirty Work for All of Us”’ (*Lemkin Institute*, 2 July 2025) (<https://www.lemkininstitute.com/statements-new-page/statement-on-german-chancellor-merz%E2%80%99s-framing-of-israeli-actions-in-iran-as-%E2%80%9Cdirty-work-for-all-of-us%E2%80%9D>).

<sup>41</sup> Lubna Masarwa and Rayhan Uddin, ‘Sde Teiman riots reveal the “disintegration of Israeli state”’ (*Middle East Eye*, 30 July 2024) (<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/sde-teiman-riots-reveal-israel-descent-towards-failed-state>).

<sup>42</sup> Further accounts of Israel’s widespread use of gendered and sexual violence have come out since I submitted my application. For sexual torture of Palestinian prisoners (including allegations of the use of dogs to rape), see Nicholas Kristof, ‘The Silence That Meets the Rape of Palestinians’ *New York Times* (11 May 2026) (<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/11/opinion/israel-palestinians-sexual-violence.html>). For sexual violence in the West Bank, see West Bank Protection Consortium, *Sexual violence and forcible transfer in the West Bank: How the Exploitation of Gender Dynamics Drives Displacement* (2026) (<https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/sexual-violence-and-forcible-transfer-in-the-west-bank>). For disparities in the media coverage of allegations from Palestinians and Israel, see Prem Thakker and Minnah Arshad, ‘The Media’s Double Standards on Rape in the Middle East’ *Zeteo* (14 May 2026) (<https://zeteo.com/p/the-medias-double-standards-on-rape>).

- 25 Aug 2025: Nasser Hospital massacre;
- civilians protesting to block aid trucks,<sup>43</sup> and gathering to watch women and children be massacred as entertainment<sup>44</sup>—signs of a society so profoundly sick that I struggle to see how it could possibly be redeemed;
- multiple neonatal ICUs filled with tiny bodies<sup>45</sup> and the targeted destruction of embryos<sup>46</sup>—a war on Palestinian wombs designed to ‘[suppress] the arrival of new life’.<sup>47</sup>

Near 3,000 people disintegrated with no trace remaining.<sup>48</sup> Entire branches of family trees obliterated.<sup>49</sup> Searching for family members with flour sifters.<sup>50</sup> An engineered famine.<sup>51</sup> WCNSF.<sup>52</sup> The use of aid as a death trap; a wholly novel form of perfidy for which we have no name.<sup>53,54</sup> The use of AI-washing to provide a veneer of legality over indiscriminate slaughter.<sup>55</sup> The alleged use of babies’ cries to lure victims out to be shot.<sup>56</sup> A bloodlust so

<sup>43</sup>Wikipedia, ‘Israeli direct action against aid delivery to Gaza’ (*Wikipedia*) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli\\_direct\\_action\\_against\\_aid\\_delivery\\_to\\_Gaza](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_direct_action_against_aid_delivery_to_Gaza)).

<sup>44</sup>Lucas Minisini, “‘The best show in town’: From a hilltop in Israel, observers have a sinister view of Gaza bombings’ (*Le Monde*, 23 July 2025) ([https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2025/07/23/the-best-show-in-town-from-a-hilltop-in-israel-observers-have-a-sinister-view-of-gaza-bombings\\_6743627\\_4.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2025/07/23/the-best-show-in-town-from-a-hilltop-in-israel-observers-have-a-sinister-view-of-gaza-bombings_6743627_4.html)).

<sup>45</sup>Jomana Karadsheh and others, ‘Infants found dead and decomposing in evacuated hospital ICU in Gaza. Here’s what we know’ (*CNN World*, 8 December 2023) (<https://edition.cnn.com/2023/12/08/middleeast/babies-al-nasr-gaza-hospital-what-we-know-intl/index.html>).

<sup>46</sup>Nadine Shubailat and Camilla Alcini, ‘Over 4,000 IVF embryos destroyed in 1 shelling at Gaza’s largest fertility center, director says’ (*ABC News*, 24 April 2024) (<https://abcnews.com/International/4000-ivf-embryos-destroyed-1-shelling-gazas-largest/story?id=109350404>).

<sup>47</sup>Bilal Irfan and others, ‘Is Gaza still a place for newborn life?’ (2025) 406(10505) *The Lancet* 803.

<sup>48</sup>Brad Reed, ‘Investigation Reveals Israel “Evaporated” Nearly 3,000 Palestinians With Thermal Weapons in Gaza’ (*Common Dreams*, 10 February 2026) (<https://www.commondreams.org/news/israel-thermobaric-weapons-gaza>).

<sup>49</sup>Sarah El Deeb, ‘The war in Gaza has wiped out entire Palestinian families. AP documents 60 who lost dozens or more’ (*AP*, 17 June 2024) (<https://www.ap.org/news-highlights/spotlights/2024/the-war-in-gaza-has-wiped-out-entire-palestinian-families-ap-documents-60-who-lost-dozens-or-more/>).

<sup>50</sup>Abdel Qader Sabbah and Sharif Abdel Kouddous, ‘In Gaza, One Man Is Searching for the Remains of His Family With a Flour Sifter’ (*Drop Site News*, 10 February 2026) (<https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/gaza-palestinians-dead-buried-rubble-searching-bodies-returned-israel/>).

<sup>51</sup>Emir Nader, ‘How Israel’s policies created famine in Gaza’ (*BBC News*, 22 August 2025) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ckg4p90z1kxo>).

<sup>52</sup>Dalia Haidar, “‘wounded child, no surviving family’: The pain of Gaza’s orphans’ (*BBC News Arabic*, 4 December 2023) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67614139>).

<sup>53</sup>Ahmed Ahmed and Ibtisam Mahdi, “‘The Hunger Games’: Inside Israel’s aid death traps for starving Gazans’ (*+972 Magazine*, 20 June 2025) (<https://www.972mag.com/hunger-games-israel-gaza-food-aid/>).

<sup>54</sup>Further evidence of this has been provided by an ex-Royal Marine whistleblower since I submitted my application, see Dave McIntosh and Alex Morris, ‘Ex-Marine exposes Israeli killings at Gaza aid sites’ (*De-classified UK [YouTube]*, 22 April 2026) ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80Qrcgu\\_Kq8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80Qrcgu_Kq8)).

<sup>55</sup>Yuval Abraham, “‘Lavender’: The AI machine directing Israel’s bombing spree in Gaza’ (*+972 Magazine*, 3 April 2024) (<https://www.972mag.com/lavender-ai-israeli-army-gaza/>).

<sup>56</sup>Alex Kasprak, ‘IDF Killing Palestinians with Sniper Drones Playing Recordings of Crying Infants?’ (*Snopes*, 30 April 2024) (<https://www.snopes.com/news/2024/04/30/idf-sniper-drones-crying/>).

indiscriminate it leads them to repeatedly<sup>57</sup> kill<sup>58</sup> their own<sup>59</sup> hostages.<sup>60</sup> The targeted assassination of healthcare workers (1,722 by last October, or an average of two per day<sup>61</sup>), UN personnel (more than 1 in 50 UNRWA staff<sup>62</sup>) and journalists (over 255,<sup>63</sup> mostly Gazans tirelessly documenting the destruction of their own people, making it the deadliest ‘conflict’ for journalists in recorded history<sup>64</sup>).

My list is not exhaustive; how could it be, when a fresh atrocity has taken place near daily over the past two years? We all know what we have witnessed: scholasticide,<sup>65</sup> kinder-cide,<sup>66</sup> genocide.

In which the UK government and Armed Forces are deeply, willingly, gleefully, shamelessly complicit.

<sup>57</sup>Hugo Bachega, ‘Israel Gaza: Hostages were carrying white cloth when shot, IDF says’ (*BBC News*, 30 April 2024) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67738111>).

<sup>58</sup>Yaniv Kubovich, ‘IDF Ordered Hannibal Directive on October 7 to Prevent Hamas Taking Soldiers Captive’ (*Haaretz*, 7 July 2024) (<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-07-07/ty-article-magazine/.premium/idf-ordered-hannibal-directive-on-october-7-to-prevent-hamas-taking-soldiers-captive/00000190-89a2-d776-a3b1-fdbe45520000>).

<sup>59</sup>Natalie Melzer and Ohad Zwigenberg, ‘Israel says “high probability” its own airstrike killed 3 hostages in Gaza last November’ (*PBS News*, 15 September 2024) (<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/israel-says-high-probability-its-own-airstrike-killed-3-hostages-in-gaza-last-november>).

<sup>60</sup>Bar Peleg and Noa Shpigel, ‘Actions by Israel’s Army Endangered the Lives of at Least 54 Gaza Hostages’ (*Haaretz*, 30 May 2025) (<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2025-05-30/ty-article-magazine/.premium/actions-by-israels-army-endangered-the-lives-of-at-least-54-gaza-hostages/00000197-1c4c-d0e9-abd7-3decaf5e0000>).

<sup>61</sup>Medical Aid for Palestinians, ‘Two healthcare workers killed every day on average during Israel’s genocide in Gaza’ (*MAP*, 7 October 2025) (<https://www.map.org.uk/latest/news/1772-two-healthcare-workers-killed-every-day-on-average-during-israelas-genocide-in-gaza/>).

<sup>62</sup>United Nations, ‘Number of aid workers killed in Gaza conflict, highest in UN history: Guterres’ (*UN*, 5 June 2025) (<https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/06/1164086>).

<sup>63</sup>United Nations, ‘In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, journalism is “both a battleground and a lifeline”’ (*UN*, 1 December 2025) (<https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/12/1166481>).

<sup>64</sup>Nick Turse, *News Graveyards: How Dangers to War Reporters Endanger the World* (, Watson School for International and Public Affairs) (<https://costsofwar.watson.brown.edu/paper/news-graveyards-how-dangers-war-reporters-endanger-world>).

<sup>65</sup>United Nations, ‘UN experts deeply concerned over “scholasticide” in Gaza’ (*UN*, 18 April 2024) (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/04/un-experts-deeply-concerned-over-scholasticide-gaza>).

<sup>66</sup>UNICEF, ‘“Unimaginable horrors”: more than 50,000 children reportedly killed or injured in the Gaza Strip’ (*UNICEF*, 27 May 2025) (<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unimaginable-horrors-more-50000-children-reportedly-killed-or-injured-gaza-strip>); UNICEF, ‘During Gaza’s Ceasefire, Children Keep Being Killed’ (*UNICEF*, 13 January 2026) (<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/during-gazas-ceasefire-children-keep-being-killed>).

### 3. What I Believe

I believe we deceive ourselves when we talk about the **Second World War** as a single discrete event, or even that it was a single war. In reality it was a least 3–4 core wars (beginning in Asia at least two years earlier than we commonly think, in 1937<sup>67</sup>) and innumerable smaller periphery conflicts that overlap one or both of the lower and upper bounds of the commonly-cited 1939–1945 date range. It is inextricably bound up in the imperialistic wars that preceded it and the decolonial wars that followed it.<sup>68</sup>

I disagree with the former Defence Secretary: I do not believe we are in a ‘pre-war era’ at all.<sup>69</sup> I believe that we are in the midst of a Third World War.<sup>70</sup> I do not know what future historians will choose as the start date; I would guess Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, or Israel’s of Gaza, but who knows what will appear most important in hindsight. What I do know is that we must act with the severity the moment demands.<sup>71</sup>

I believe that pacifism is a principle worthy of respect, and I am awed by those who have endured great hardships in stubborn adherence to it and the right not to kill. I do not, however, count myself amongst their number. I believe that self-defence is legitimate,<sup>72</sup> that the use of armed force can be justified,<sup>73</sup> and that one should be prepared to support and defend one’s community and polity. However, I have long considered myself a ‘military pacifist’, a term I take from an article entitled *A Quaker in the Military*,<sup>74</sup> which has had a significant impact on my own self-conceptualisation.

At the same time, I believe that conscription is always a greater evil than the threat it is imposed to counter. A soldier is a citizen who accepts the possibility of being ordered to give their life if necessary; conscription grants the state the ability to impose a death sentence

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<sup>67</sup>Other proposed start points include the Spanish Civil War in 1936, or the Italian invasion of Abyssinia in 1935—the first instance of international fascist violence. Hobsbawm, however, argues that the world wars and Cold War of the twentieth century in fact represent a single continuous period of war with periods of intermission; see footnote 68.

<sup>68</sup>Rahim Bidkani and others, ‘World war II is technically how many wars?’ (*Quora*, 2021) (<https://www.quora.com/World-war-II-is-technically-how-many-wars>); Roger Lee, ‘Wars Within Wars: World War Two’ (*Wars & Conflicts of the World*, 11 April 2025) (<https://warsandconflictsoftheworld.substack.com/p/wars-within-wars-world-war-two>); Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes* (1994)

<sup>69</sup>Grant Shapps, ‘Defending Britain from a more dangerous world’ (*GOV.UK*, 15 January 2024) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/defending-britain-from-a-more-dangerous-world#:~:text=Moving%20from%20a%20post-war%20to%20a%20pre-war%20world.>).

<sup>70</sup>I plan write about this in more detail in a future work, see Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Ave, Bellum’ (*bengoldsworthy.net*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/ave-bellum>).

<sup>71</sup>See appendix E, ¶¶ 226 and 228.

<sup>72</sup>Abdullah Öcalan, ‘Abdullah Öcalan on self-defence, honour and love: ‘Rose theory’ (*Medya News*, 5 November 2021) (<https://medyanews.net/abdullah-ocalan-on-self-defence-honour-and-love-rose-theory/>).

<sup>73</sup>Peter van Uhm, ‘Peter van Uhm: Why I chose a gun’ (*TED [YouTube]*, 30 January 2012) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjAsM1vAhW0>).

<sup>74</sup>Loren Cobb, ‘A Quaker in the Military’ (*Ætheling*, March 2003) (<http://www.aetheling.com/essays/pacifism.htm>).

on its entire population, and must be opposed just as capital punishment must.

I believe that the **United States**—the most powerful economic and military power the world has ever seen, and my second nation—has been taken over by an overtly fascist<sup>75</sup> movement.<sup>76</sup> It can happen here; it *is* happening there. I believe the regime’s outward aggression will only increase in parallel with their inward repression. If there is any hope of resisting it, it lies in acting quickly, before they have been able to fully consolidate their control. We cannot hope to resist it militarily at this point, but we can isolate it economically, politically and socially. I see some promising signs that some governments are recognising this, from Colombia<sup>77</sup> to France;<sup>78,79</sup> I see nothing but denial from the **UK**, but neither the Atlantic ocean nor appeals to a fictitious ‘Special Relationship’ will save us.<sup>80</sup>

I believe that **NATO** was originally created to recuperate and reintegrate fascism following the end of **WWII**, to counter what was considered the greater threat of the **Soviet Union** (which, for its many, many shortcomings, represented a genuine socialist alternative to the dominant capitalist economic system, of which imperialism and colonialism were inevitable consequences).<sup>81</sup> Now: a lot of time has passed since then, and **NATO** has reinvented itself several times, but to be born in sin is to be marked by it. I believe that **NATO** will have little problem finding a way to accommodate a fascist **USA**, just as it does Turkey.

I believe that the biggest threat to the British people is in Westminster. I have lived through fourteen governments, comprising three different political parties. I have seen successive

<sup>75</sup>‘Fascism’ is an infamously tricky term to define. I am here using it in the sense described by Paxton, which he summarises as ‘a form of political behavior marked by obsessive preoccupation with community decline, humiliation, or victimhood and by compensatory cults of unity, energy, and purity, in which a mass-based party of committed nationalist militants, working in uneasy but effective collaboration with traditional elites, abandons democratic liberties and pursues with redemptive violence and without ethical or legal restraints goals of internal cleansing and external expansion’ (Robert O Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (2004)). I also take some cues from Eco’s ‘Ur-Fascism’, which describes it more philosophically in terms of common, ever-present features and grievances around which, if left unchecked, fascist movements can accrete. See also Rutger Bregman, ‘10 Signs of Fascism. **America** has all of them.’ (*Rutger Bregman*, 17 May 2026) (<https://rutgerbregman.substack.com/p/10-signs-of-fascism-america-has-all>).

<sup>76</sup>It brings me no pleasure to say this: I have half of my family there; I have long found many aspects of their national philosophy (however imperfectly implemented) truly inspiring (see [appendix E](#), ¶ 45); and I have even received an award from Congress when I was younger.

<sup>77</sup>Hague Group, ‘States announce unprecedented measures to halt the Gaza genocide at Bogotá conference’ (16 July 2025) (<https://thehaguegroup.org/meetings-bogota-en/>).

<sup>78</sup>For France (though I am usually no fan of *Monsieur* Macron), see Hugh Schofield, ‘Macron urges Europe to start acting like world power’ (*BBC News*, 10 February 2026) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ce8n1zdnpd3o>).

<sup>79</sup>For Spain, see Maira Butt, ‘How Spain became Europe’s conscience as Sanchez leads ‘moral’ pushback against **US** and Israel’ (*The Independent*, 12 April 2026) (<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/spain-israel-iran-netanyahu-pedro-sanchez-b2955299.html>). For Germany, see Jaroslav Lukiv, ‘World’s rules-based order “no longer exists”, Germany’s Merz warns’ (*BBC News*, 13 February 2026) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4wpy0wx43o>) (though, as stated, Merz is a veritable monster in other respects). For Canada, see Mark Carney, ‘Davos 2026: Special address by Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada’ (*WEF*, 20 January 2026) (<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2026/01/davos-2026-special-address-by-mark-carney-prime-minister-of-canada/>). For Europe as a whole, see Leticia Batista Cabanas and Elisabeth Heinz, ‘How close is the **EU** to break free from Visa and Mastercard’s grip?’ (*Euronews*, 3 March 2026) (<https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2026/03/03/how-close-is-the-eu-to-break-free-from-visa-and-mastercards-grip>).

<sup>80</sup>See Anna Gross and others, ‘**US** government to fund **Maga**-aligned think-tanks and charities in Europe’ *Financial Times* (5 February 2026) (<https://www.ft.com/content/f8696da1-5fe6-4218-be9c-5309bd9a6ae5>); Amy Kazmin and Silvia Sciorilli Borrelli, ‘Italy clarifies **ICE**’s role during Winter Olympics as public backlash grows’ [2026] *Financial Times* (<https://www.ft.com/content/859536a7-5343-4820-b235-58a9e049fb56>), for two examples of this transnational threat.

<sup>81</sup>See Operation Paperclip, Operation Gladio, and the rehabilitation of figures like Klaus Barbie, Hans Speidel and Adolf Heusinger.

governments—across party lines—consistently act in the interests of capital and against those of the populace. I have seen the country’s patrimony plundered (much of it built with wealth previous plundered from the colonies) and the nation asset-stripped.<sup>82</sup> I believe that these governments are responsible for the wilful social murder of as many as two million people during the **COVID-19** pandemic,<sup>83</sup> on top of over 300,000 during the preceding years of austerity.<sup>84</sup>

I have seen progressive hostility and scapegoating of immigrants,<sup>85</sup> with even my own mother affected. I have seen the rise of a domestic far right, currently poised to take power in the next few years if polls are to be believed. I have seen tens of thousands disappear beneath the waves of the Mediterranean—conservatively 2,000 last year,<sup>86</sup> perhaps as many as 1,000 in the last month<sup>87</sup>—and suffocate in lorry containers and wash up bloated on the shores of Fortress Europe.<sup>88</sup> In the face of such ‘mountainish inhumanity’,<sup>89</sup> I would sooner count myself on the side of those inside the hotels, than those clamouring outside them.

I have seen the **UK** government and Armed Forces enable and facilitate a multi-year campaign of extermination in Gaza. I believe this is the logical endpoint of the ‘new wars’<sup>90</sup> pioneered throughout my life in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen and elsewhere, just as the Nazi forms of warfare represented the logical endpoint of the forms of colonial oppression long-practiced by European states. I believe that the Nazis’ real crime in the eyes of the other European powers was only to apply their well-honed techniques within Europe proper.<sup>91</sup>

These beliefs have not been developed solely in the past few months. The question to ask, then, is not *why now?*, but *why not earlier?*

In some sense, such concerns about the wider world and Britain’s role within it have always been somewhat distant from my position as a part-time medic; I am more directly complicit in the Gaza genocide by virtue of paying my taxes than I am by anything I’ve done with the military.<sup>92</sup> In truth, for many years I have been trying to maintain an uncomfortable—

<sup>82</sup>I am in the process of writing a detailed article about this, see Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Bye-Bye Britain’ (*ben-goldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/bye-bye-britain>).

<sup>83</sup>Kamran Abbasi, ‘Covid-19: Social murder, they wrote—elected, unaccountable, and unrepentant’ (2021) 372 *BMJ* (<https://www.bmj.com/content/372/bmj.n314>).

<sup>84</sup>David Walsh and others, ‘Bearing the burden of austerity: how do changing mortality rates in the **UK** compare between men and women?’ (2022) 76(12) *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 1027 (<https://jech.bmj.com/content/76/12/1027>).

<sup>85</sup>See **appendix E**, ¶¶ 134 and 212 to 214 and George Monbiot, ‘Read these words from 100 years ago about immigrants in Britain — and see how history is chillingly repeating itself’ (*The Guardian*, 5 March 2026) (<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/mar/05/shabana-mahmood-immigrants-britain-history>).

<sup>86</sup>**UNHCR**, ‘UNHCR’s Menikdiwela: Boat tragedies highlight urgent need for new approach in Med’ (*UNHCR*, 30 January 2026) (<https://www.unhcr.org/news/press-releases/unhcr-s-menikdiwela-boat-tragedies-highlight-urgent-need-new-approach-med>).

<sup>87</sup>Pierfrancesco Loreto, ‘Nearly 1,000 feared missing in latest migrant tragedy’ (*Vatican News*, 3 February 2026) (<https://www.unhcr.org/news/press-releases/unhcr-s-menikdiwela-boat-tragedies-highlight-urgent-need-new-approach-med>).

<sup>88</sup>Wikipedia, ‘Death of Alan Kurdi’ (*Wikipedia*) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death\\_of\\_Alan\\_Kurdi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Alan_Kurdi)).

<sup>89</sup>Ian McKellen, ‘Ian McKellen performs speech about immigrants by Shakespeare from Thomas More (23/4/2016)’ (*TFotF [YouTube]*) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DceEunnTA3A>).

<sup>90</sup>Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Stanford University Press 2012).

<sup>91</sup>Sven Lindqvist, ‘*Exterminate All the Brutes*’ (1 April 1996); Chris Hedges, ‘The Western Way of Genocide’ *The Chris Hedges Report* (1 February 2025) (<https://chrishedges.substack.com/p/the-western-way-of-genocide>); Aimé Césaire, *Discours sur le colonialisme [Discourse on Colonialism]* (Joan Pinkham tr, Monthly Review Press 1955) ([https://files.libcom.org/files/zz\\_aime\\_cesaie\\_robin\\_d.g\\_kelley\\_discourse\\_on\\_colbook4me.org\\_.pdf#page=19](https://files.libcom.org/files/zz_aime_cesaie_robin_d.g_kelley_discourse_on_colbook4me.org_.pdf#page=19)) 36–37

<sup>92</sup>Also, as protected persons under the Geneva Conventions, medical personnel are quite unique in ac-

perhaps irreconcilable—contradiction. But I have always found ways of managing it, from self-imposed restrictions on what roles I can take to being increasingly open about what I believe in military settings. In the past few years, I have pursued two projects: to play to my strengths and facilitate, as much as possible, the clinical work of others within **335 MER** (e.g., by providing comms training, or promoting the use of wargaming, or taking on leadership roles); and to attempt, at the level of strategy, to exert some tiny amount of influence on the direction of the Armed Forces in a more humanitarian direction.<sup>93</sup>

I have summarised my stance to several people as follows: ‘I have a Union Jack on my sleeve, but my allegiance is to the red cross in the centre.’ But increasingly, we are moving away from this emblem and the universalist values it symbolises.<sup>94</sup> I completely understand the operational needs to do so, and I do not wish to make light of the intensely thorny moral problems the profession of military medicine is presently facing, from prioritising survivability over caregiving to the need for reverse triage to regenerate fighting power. But as the ‘military’ is now increasingly dominant over the ‘medicine’, and as I have found red crosses to wear elsewhere, my last tenuous justification is lost; at the same time, the arguments in favour of leaving have become overwhelming.<sup>95</sup>

Russian revanchism is a threat, primarily to its neighbours in the post-Soviet states. Chinese authoritarianism is a threat to its internal minorities and to Taiwan. Iranian theocracy is a threat to its dissident population. I certainly do not discount these. But **American** fascism is a threat to the entire world, and Israeli Zionism has become a death cult that threatens the very ideals of truth, justice and mercy. And British complicity in both is a shame that shall never wash off.

I don’t know what future historians will call this period or its dominant ideology, but I believe that until we go through a comprehensive period of *de-it*-ification there can be no lasting reconciliation; no forgiveness. Until our political and military leaders—Tony Blair, Keir Starmer, Rishi Sunak, Davids Cameron & Lammy, **ACM** Knighton and **Adm** Radakin, at an absolute minimum<sup>96</sup>—are arraigned in the Hague, there can be no justice. Until the structures that allowed these great crimes to happen are utterly dismantled, there can be no peace. I believe that we—the people of the world—are at war with fascism once again. If ‘we’ includes me but does not include the British state, then Britain can no longer include me.

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cepting that we have loyalty to principles beyond, and at times in conflict with, the state and military of which we are part. In addition, in the event of capture we are expected to work as retained personnel and provide medical services to the enemy force ([Third Geneva Convention](#), art 33). Whilst the analogy is not perfect (as I don’t imagine the Russians would send me skiing were I to be retained by them) this had had some influence in my willingness to continue serving even as my view of the **UK** government has become increasingly critical.

<sup>93</sup>See [appendix F.1](#) and [appendix E](#), ¶¶ 154, 167, 205, 207, 218, 219, 221 and 232. I have described my goal to several people, pithily, as being to turn the Armed Forces into an ‘angry Red Cross’.

<sup>94</sup>See [appendix E](#), ¶ 168.

<sup>95</sup>I have also, to some degree, been holding on in the expectation that there have been some **UN** deployment to Gaza to which **UK** troops would be contributed. However, I do not see signs that this is likely to happen.

<sup>96</sup>Though it is outside the scope of this letter, I would add to this list particularly prominent media propagandists such as Douglas Murray, following the example of RTL M trials in Rwanda. Those military personnel based at **RAF** Akrotiri should also be investigated for participation in war crimes, and those who failed to exercise their duties under **JSP** 383, para 16.48 appropriately sanctioned.

## 4. Counter-Arguments

In this section, I will address what I can picture a sceptic proposing as my ulterior motives in submitting this request. However, I think the strongest argument against all of them is the very presence of this document: one would have to believe that I have chosen a far more difficult and fraught process despite a far simpler one being available to me, then excavated over a decade of my personal history, compiled it into a near 150-page dossier and borne my soul to one from whom I have no reason to expect much sympathy.

### Am I just frustrated with the Army?

Despite my ten years of service, I am still a **private**. I have been career failed on several occasions. This is not due to any incompetence on my part: in the three annual reports for which I have been eligible, I have received glowing reviews and recommendations for promotion.<sup>97</sup> I am currently awaiting a promotion that is blocked by my medical downgrading following eye surgery in September,<sup>98</sup> the lifting of which is now blocked by **Defence Primary Healthcare (DPHC)** having lost my paperwork.

But I have never shown symptoms of careerism. When I made the decision to throw away years of work and start again as a **Combat Medical Technician (CMT)**, I accepted it as the price of what I considered to be ethical conduct. I stuck with the decision through subsequent years of delay. I have remained in a unit with an incredibly weird rank distribution, knowing that I would be unlikely to ever progress too far when surrounded by far more clinically competent full-time healthcare professionals, content to carve out my own little force-multiplying niche of radios and wargaming and enable the rest of unit to best perform its task. That has been quite enough for me.

### Have I just had enough of the Army?

Ten years is a long time to do anything. If I never have to complete another **ITR** e-learning course, that will certainly be a bonus.

But from a career perspective things have never looked so exciting: I am finally a fully-qualified **CMT**; I am inches away from a long-delayed promotion, after which I would expect to progress rapidly; there are more opportunities for mobilisation available now than I've ever seen; and I have rekindled my original interest in commissioning, with a range of compelling, humanitarian-focussed roles on offer if I were to do so.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>See **appendix C**.

<sup>98</sup>See **appendix E**, ¶ 245.

<sup>99</sup>See **appendix E**, ¶¶ 222 and 234.

## Is this just because I have moved abroad?

Last year I split my time roughly 60/40 between France and the **UK**, respectively. On the one hand, it's true that I now intend to have a much more limited relationship with the **UK** and to make far fewer visits; it's also true that I would require permission to continue serving from abroad for more than two years.<sup>100</sup>

But, on the other hand, I have asked about the likelihood of receiving that permission, and been told that it should not be an issue. I have achieved my **Certificate of Efficiency (CoE)** in both training years since moving to France. I am in a **Nationally Recruited Unit (NRU)**, where long travel distances are expected (and cross-country trains are roughly comparable with flights from France in terms of both price and travel time). I earn around £2,500/yr from the Reserves, and even without attending any training being in it grants me an overseas tax advantage worth up to £12,000/yr.<sup>101</sup> I have made some limited inroads in connecting with local French military medical units for cross-**NATO** placements. And, most of all, many of my friends and family still live in the **UK**, and the training calendar has provided a useful skeleton around which to pepper travel and visits.

## Is this a media stunt?

I appreciate that there may be some sensitivities around this possibility, given the experience of the former **CO** of an **SMSG** fellow-unit.<sup>102</sup> So I will be transparent about my plans on this point:

Once this process has finished, I will publish this letter (with redaction of personally-identifying information, etc.) on my site, as I have everything else for well over a decade (and without which producing this letter would have been nigh-impossible).

I have no specific follow-on plans as yet, but I will reserve the right to share any of this material with media outlets and antimilitarist groups, as and when I believe doing so may help to achieve my desired goals of changing **UK** policy or, failing that, promoting the practice of conscientious objection. I will also aim to share it with some of the outlets and individuals that have been instrumental in its genesis (whether they know it or not), as that feels the polite thing to do.

However, I am a very private person and have no interest in the limelight. This may seem contradictory, given my comprehensive self-documentation. However, I make a distinction between transparency and publicity. For well over ten years I have been utterly transparent in collating my writings, actions, etc. on my Web site, but I have not sought publicity from them—the site is specifically not indexed by search engines, and I have never made any effort to advertise it. Where I have made contributions to public discourse (such as my *Wavell Room* articles), I have done so under pseudonyms or my first name only. I never never sought out media appearances, but I have accepted them when offered and accepted no monetary recompense for doing so. All of this would remain my policy going forwards.

<sup>100</sup>See The **Reserve Land Forces Regulations** 2016, amendment number 13 (**RLFR**) 01.03.032.

<sup>101</sup>See <https://www.gov.uk/tax-uk-income-live-abroad/personal-allowance#:~:text=you%E2%80%99ve%20worked%20for%20the%20UK%20government%20at%20any%20time%20during%20that%20tax%20year>.

<sup>102</sup>Georgina Cutler, 'Army officer "forced out of army" for simply stating "men cannot be women"' (*GB News*, 30 June 2023) (<https://www.gbnews.com/news/army-officer-lgbt-transgender-complaint>).

## Am I just afraid?

Perhaps there is a suspicion that, having got what I could out of the Army during peacetime, I am trying to renege on my part of the deal now that there is talk of war. However, for most of the past decade I have been liable for call-up in the event of a crisis; that no such crisis has occurred is simply good luck on my part. Also, war talk in military circles has grown more serious since 2022,<sup>103</sup> but I did not leave then either. I confess I am afraid for what is to come, but I concluded some time ago that death is unavoidable; all one can do is try to go out on one's own terms, with integrity uncompromised. I make no particular claims as to my own bravery, but I do surprise myself sometimes.

In the early days of **COVID-19**, when we still did not know how bad a bug we were facing, inundated with stories of overflowing morgues in Italy and France and setting up Nightingale Hospitals in anticipation, I chose to serve on the frontline. In Central America, I travelled to dangerous areas—from paramilitary-ravaged Chiapas to the immense jungles of Darién—solely for the things I could do and learn there.

Whatever is to happen next, I have confidence in myself that I will rise to the occasion once again. Should the British state come under attack, I will not lift a finger to help it. But, though I cannot predict what form of aid I might render, I would surely do whatever was in my power to help the British people, as I would for any people.

Despite the sombreness of this document and the seriousness of its content, you know me: hopefully I am not nearly so dour in person. In truth I love life—its unpredictability, its challenges, its ceaseless possibility—and it is for this reason above all that I wish for as many others as possible to be able to keep theirs.

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<sup>103</sup>I took part in **EX IRON TITAN** in 2023 (see British Army, 'Iron Titan' (*British Army*, 25 September 2023) (<https://www.army.mod.uk/news/iron-titan-army-s-largest-land-exercise-for-twenty-years/>)), where the **RLC** were practising digging mass graves and **SF** playing **OPFOR** stalked and snatched sentries away in the night.

## 5. Why *This* Process?

Hopefully by now, I (and my two referees) have convinced you of the sincerity of my beliefs and why continued service in the Armed Forces is no longer possible for me. But a very fair question that I anticipate is: ‘that being so, why not just request a voluntary discharge and be done with it?’

First, I am seeking to get ahead of events. If, as has been floated by various figures, the UK decides to introduce conscription in the coming years (or to recall those with prior military experience) I will refuse to serve. By getting that recorded now, we need not waste time later.

Second, if conscription does happen, I expect that there will be widespread refusal.<sup>104</sup> The right to conscientious objection was not generously granted by the state: it was hard-won through countless sacrifices, including those who gave their lives for conscience.<sup>105</sup> In the past two decades there have been only a handful of high-profile objection cases—Ben Griffin in 2005,<sup>106</sup> Joe Glenton in 2010, Michael Lyons in 2011, Ahmed al-Batati in 2021<sup>107</sup>—reflecting the reliance on a professional, volunteer military. But a right must continue to be exercised from time-to-time or it is useless, especially in a context where so many have already been abrogated.

Third, I am deeply indebted to the influence of Quakerism in my political development over the past several years.<sup>108</sup> I consider my exercise of this right as the most potent way to pay tribute to those who have come before me.

Fourth, and lastly, I need only point to my own track record of quixotic pig-headedness. I have spent eight years systematically refusing to step through doors that lay open to me, making things harder than they need to be, all for the sake of what I consider to be ethical. I am someone who, having made the decision to trigger this process, thought nothing of producing an 280-page, 26,000-word document to justify why.<sup>109</sup> I don’t know why I am like this, but all I know is this: occasionally I am struck, as if by lightning, by the sense that a certain course of action is so self-evidently the correct one, that to do otherwise would be akin to wearing my shoes on my hands. I may not be able to articulate quite why at that

<sup>104</sup>See Matthew Smith, ‘Why won’t Britons serve in the armed forces if called?’ (*YouGov*, 26 February 2024) <<https://yougov.com/en-gb/articles/48749-why-wont-britons-serve-in-the-armed-forces-if-called>>.

<sup>105</sup>*Peace Pledge Union*, ‘Sentenced to Death’ (*The Men Who Said No: Conscientious Objectors 1915–1919*) <<https://menwhosaidno.org/Sentenced/index.html>>.

<sup>106</sup>Ben Griffin, ‘Ex-UK soldier Ben Griffin: Why I we[sic] will not fight for Queen and country’ (*Stop the War Coalition*, 1 February 2014) <<https://www.stopwar.org.uk/article/ex-british-soldier-ben-griffin-on-why-we-will-not-fight-for-queen-and-country-2/>>.

<sup>107</sup>Areeb Ullah, ‘British soldier says UK has Yemeni “blood on its hands” over Saudi arms sales’ (*Middle East Eye*, 26 August 2020) <<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/british-soldier-ahmed-batati-protest-saudi-arabia-arms-sales-yemen>>.

<sup>108</sup>See [appendix E](#), ¶¶ 94, 109, 117, 118, 142, 144, 152, 155, 161, 163, 196, 209, 223, 224, 233 and 248.

<sup>109</sup>Ironically, I probably would have made a *fantastic* intelligence officer.

stage, but for each time I have followed such a feeling, I have never yet regretted it.

## 6. Conclusion

Whilst the meaning assigned to specific anniversaries is, to some extent, arbitrary—there is clearly a difference between 1 and 10 years, but is there really a significant one between 9 and 10?—I cannot deny the draw of a nice round number. Having my military decennial take place only a couple weeks apart from my whole-life tricennial was bound to leave me in a particularly reflective mood.

If you will indulge me one final ropery simile, I think of myself as something like a slime mould.<sup>110</sup> My twenties were a period of maximal *receptivity* as I branched outwards in search of something and all paths may have proved fruitful, so none could be discounted. As I turn thirty,<sup>111</sup> I believe I have finally found some sense of what I have been groping towards, and that my thirties will be a period of heightened and focussed *selectivity* as I strengthen those paths that bring me closer to my goals, and let wither those that do not.

I thank you for your patience in reading this lengthy letter, and I await your response. I will leave you, below and overleaf, with a handful of quotations which I have collected over the years and which I find particularly resonant to this moment. I hope you will find them likewise.

Yours sincerely,

Pte B R Goldsworthy VR RAMS

16 February 2026

P.S. This letter was written and submitted just shy of two weeks before the launch of illegal US–Israeli attacks on Iran. For a post-script to this letter, including calls to action to avert the course of war, see [appendix A](#).

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<sup>110</sup>See ‘Slime mold searching for food’ (*YouTube*, 13 January 2019) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9a-VLLOsBrw>) for an example of the odd visual comparison I am making.

<sup>111</sup>I plan to discuss my thoughts on this milestone more in a later work, see Ben Goldsworthy, ‘The First Thirty Years’ (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/the-first-thirty-years>).

Wherever you are, whatever sand you can throw on the gears of genocide, do it now. It's a handful, throw it. If it's a fingernail full, scrape it out and throw. Get in the way however you can.

Rasha Abdulhadi



My country, right or wrong; if right, to be kept right; and if wrong, to be set right.

Carl Shurz

... I should like to be able to love my country and still love justice. I don't want just any greatness for it, particularly a greatness born of blood and falsehood. I want to keep it alive by keeping justice alive.

Albert Camus<sup>112</sup>



A bayonet is a weapon with a worker at each end.

James Hudson, pacifist

By the feverish activity of my hands, I might help to save a fraction of the present human wreckage. That would be for me no sacrifice. It costs far more to spend mind and spirit, if need be, in the silence of a prison cell, in passionate witness for the great truths of Peace. That is the call I hear.

Corder Catchpool,<sup>113</sup> FAU member and conscientious objector



Wrong life cannot be lived rightly.

Theodor Adorno<sup>114</sup>

Everybody's free. The slave is free ... The ultimate weapon has always existed. Every man, every woman, every child owns it. It's the ability to say No and take the consequences.

Hagbard Celine<sup>115</sup>

[T]here always comes a day when the palaces of oppression crumble, when exile comes to an end, when liberty catches fire. Such calm hope justifies your action. If, after all, men cannot always make history have a meaning, they can always act so that their own lives have one.

Albert Camus<sup>116</sup>

[E]very small act of resistance trains the muscle that's used to to do it, in much the same way that turning one's eyes from the horror strengthens that particular muscle, readies it to ignore even greater horror to come. One builds the muscle by walking away from the most minor things ... and realizes in the doing of these things that there is a wide spectrum of negative resistance.

Omar El Akkad<sup>117</sup>



No one asks the *Zapatistas* anything. If they did, perhaps they wouldn't respond. Or maybe they'd say about their absurd effort: 'You think we're trying to take down the whole wall? It's enough to make a crack.'

*Subcomandante Galeano*,<sup>118</sup> EZLN

## A. Post-Script

My application for discharge was submitted on Feb 16. My warnings about the increasing belligerence of the **US** administration, Israeli moral collapse and risks of **UK** association with either were vindicated less than two weeks later when the **US** and Israel launched an illegal war of aggression against Iran. This surprise attack began with an apparent double-tap strike against a girls' elementary school,<sup>120</sup> as the head of the **US** military pledged to offer 'no quarter'<sup>121</sup> [art. 8, 2(b)(xii)] *romestatutea* and that there would be 'no stupid rules of engagement'.<sup>122</sup> The latest Israeli invasion of Lebanon has already seen them specifically target paramedics, often through 'double tap' strikes;<sup>123</sup> the first ten days of the conflict alone resulted in the deaths of ten classrooms' worth of children.<sup>124</sup> It is clear that the **US** and Israel intend to repeat their Gaza playbook.<sup>125</sup>

Retaliatory strikes from Iran have hit targets including the neighbouring Gulf states, Cyprus and Turkey. **UK** involvement has been hazy,<sup>126</sup> and public statements from government (and across Eu-

<sup>112</sup>Albert Camus, 'Letters to a German Friend' in *Lettres à un ami allemand* [Resistance, Rebellion and Death] (first published 1943, 1961)

<sup>113</sup>Britain Yearly Meeting, *Quaker Faith & Practice* (5th edn, 1 November 2013) (<https://qfp.quaker.org.uk/>) (QFP) ch 24, s 23

<sup>114</sup>Theodor W Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life* (Dennis Redmond tr, first published 1951, 2005)

<sup>115</sup>Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson, 'Leviathan' in *Illuminatus! trilogy* (25 June 1987)

<sup>116</sup>Albert Camus, 'Homage to an Exile' in *Lettres à un ami allemand* [Resistance, Rebellion and Death] (first published 1955, 1961)

<sup>117</sup>Omar El Akkad, *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (25 February 2025)

<sup>118</sup>Subcomandante Galeano, 'The Crack in the Wall' (Enlace Zapatista, Mexico, 3 May 2015) (<https://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/2015/05/10/the-crack-in-the-wall-first-note-on-zapatista-method/>)

<sup>120</sup>Exclusive: Iranian girls killed by 'double-tap' strikes on Minab school' (*Middle East Eye*, 4 March 2026) (<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/exclusive-iranian-girls-killed-double-tap-strikes-minab-school>).

<sup>121</sup>Pete Hegseth, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Air Force Gen. Dan Caine Hold a Press Briefing, 'US Department of Defence' (13 March 2026) (<https://www.war.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/4434484/secretary-of-war-pete-hegseth-and-chairman-of-the-joint-chiefs-air-force-gen-da/>).

<sup>122</sup>Haley Fuller, 'Hegseth's "Stupid Rules of Engagement" Line and What ROE Actually Do' (*Military.com*, 11 March 2026) (<https://www.military.com/feature/2026/03/05/hegseths-stupid-rules-of-engagement-line-and-what-roe-actually-do.html>).

<sup>123</sup>Lylla Younes, 'Israel Killed Over a Dozen Lebanese Paramedics in Three Days, Now Claiming That Ambulances Are "Hezbollah" Targets' (*Drop Site News*, 17 March 2026) (<https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/lebanon-medical-workers-paramedics-israel-targeted-ambulances-hezbollah-islamic-health-authority>); Leila Aad and Zeina Kovacs, 'Comment l'armée israélienne cible les secouristes du Liban' (*Mediapart*, 19 March 2026) (<https://www.mediapart.fr/journal/international/190326/comment-l-armee-israelienne-cible-les-secouristes-du-liban>).

<sup>124</sup>Save the Children, 'Ten days of conflict claim lives of 10 classrooms full of children with 83 killed in Lebanon' (*Save the Children*, 9 March 2026) (<https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/news/media-centre/press-releases/2026/ten-days-conflict-claim-lives-10-classrooms-full-children-83>).

<sup>125</sup>Ayoub Khan, 'The Gazafication of Lebanon' [2026] *Tribune* (<https://tribunemag.co.uk/2026/05/the-gazafication-of-lebanon>).

<sup>126</sup>Dania Akkad, 'How Britain is involved in Trump's Iran war' (*Declassified UK*, 10 March 2026) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/how-britain-is-involved-in-trumps-iran-war/>); Phil Miller, 'Starmers "defensive strikes"

rope) equivocal. In theory, the **US** or Turkey could choose to invoke **NATO's** Article 5, which would oblige the **UK** to come to their aid. So far they have not done so, but **NATO** Secretary General Mark Rutte has a long track record of obsequiousness towards the **US** regime and has not ruled out the possibility, specifically stating that he wishes to keep the conditions under which he would do so ambiguous.<sup>127</sup> In addition, the only previous invocation of Article 5, following the September 11 attacks, was done unilaterally by **NATO** (without a request from the **US**) and in spite of reservations of several member states. Thusfar, the war has gone disastrously, with thousands already killed and an order of magnitude more injured. As I write this—in a grim echo of the state of things when I submitted my application<sup>128</sup>—the **US** military is massing to assault Cuba,<sup>129</sup> which they have already been starving for months.

In the wider context, the **UN** is currently looking at financial collapse by this summer.<sup>130</sup> Like the League of Nations before them, they have manifestly failed to guarantee peace; this latest attack is, in many ways, the killing blow of an organisation hobbled at birth by the **UN Security Council**.<sup>131</sup> But just as the **UN** succeeded (and was more successful, for longer) than the League of Nations, so there must be a successor to it that shall learn from its failings. Today's global battle lines are drawn between two competing visions of what that successor will be, which we can divide into the 'Board of Peace' camp (in which a handful of regional hegemony and their pliant vassal states use authoritarian means to enrich their shared elite classes<sup>132</sup>) or the 'Hague Group'<sup>133</sup> camp (in which individually-vulnerable 'middle powers', which nonetheless represent the bulk of humanity, build a coalition and system designed to restrain those same hegemony).

There is a gun pointed at our collective heads. Whilst my original letter had only one demand to make of my **CO** (i.e., to discharge me), I wish to accompany this public letter with a series of demands that form, as far as I can see, the best way out of this crisis and towards some semblance of national redemption.

The **UK** government must:

- join with the Spanish government in publicly declaring that this aggression is illegal and that we oppose it,<sup>134</sup> denying the use of any British military assets in its prosecution and supporting the **ICC** and **UN**;<sup>135</sup>

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on Iran are a "fiction", air force veteran warns' (*Declassified UK*, 7 April 2026) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/starmers-defensive-strikes-on-iran-are-a-fiction-air-force-veteran-warns/>).

<sup>127</sup>NATO Chief Rutte to Newsmax: Trump's Iran Mission Has Broad Allied Support' (*Newsmax*, 4 March 2026) (<https://www.newsmax.com/newsmax-tv/nato-chief-rutte-to-newsmax-trumps-iran-mission-has-broad-allied-support/2026/03/04/id/1248354/>).

<sup>128</sup>See footnote 392.

<sup>129</sup>Thomas Spencer and Adam Durbin, 'US military jets and drones tracked near Cuba as tensions rise' (*BBC Verify*, 20 May 2026) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjep1wx7w0ko>); Nicholas Greven, 'Raúl Castro's Indictment Is a Pretext for War' (*Jacobin*, 20 May 2026) (<https://jacobin.com/2026/05/castro-indictment-cuba-us-war>).

<sup>130</sup>Maia Davies and Imogen Foulkes, 'UN risks "imminent financial collapse", secretary general warns' (*BBC News*, 30 January 2026) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cr579mdv4m7o>).

<sup>131</sup>Jeffrey D Sachs and Sybil Fares, 'This Illegal US-Israeli Attack on Iran Is Also an Assault on the United Nations' (*Common Dreams*, 2 March 2026) (<https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/united-nations-israel-us-attack-iran>).

<sup>132</sup>Nick Turse, 'Trump's Orwellian Board of Peace Consists Entirely of Human Rights Abusers' (*The Intercept*, 2 March 2026) (<https://theintercept.com/2026/03/02/trump-board-peace-human-right-abuses/>).

<sup>133</sup>Hague Group (n 77).

<sup>134</sup>Sam Jones, "'No to war": Sánchez doubles down after Trump threat to cut off trade with Spain' (*The Guardian*, 4 March 2026) (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/mar/04/pedro-sanchez-donald-trump-threat-cut-off-trade-spain>); Butt (n 79).

<sup>135</sup>Seyma Erkul Dayanc, 'Spain urges EU to take steps to protect independence of ICC, UN, their actions to end Gaza genocide' (*Andadolu*, 6 May 2026) (<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/spain-urges-eu-to-take-steps-to-protect-independence-of-icc-un-their-actions-to-end-gaza-genocide/3928464>).

- undermine **NATO** Secretary General Rutte’s incredibly dangerous policy of ambiguity by stating openly that the **UK** would not honour an Article 5 invocation where a member is defending themselves against retaliation following an illegal war of aggression. I’m sure legal analyses could be found to support this position, and this would ensure that **NATO** deterrence against Russia would not be weakened by a complete disarming of Article 5;
- explicitly reject any possibility of joining the Board of Peace, or its legitimacy;
- commit to the measures agreed upon in the inaugural Hague Group meeting in July 2025:<sup>136</sup>
  - Prevent the provision or transfer of arms, munitions, military fuel, related military equipment, and dual-use items to Israel. . .
  - Prevent the transit, docking, and servicing of vessels at any port. . . in all cases where there is a clear risk of the vessel being used to carry arms, munitions, military fuel, related military equipment, and dual-use items to Israel
  - Prevent the carriage of arms, munitions, military fuel, related military equipment, and dual-use items to Israel on vessels bearing our flag. . . and ensure full accountability, including de-flagging, for non-compliance with this prohibition.
  - Commence an urgent review of all public contracts, to prevent public institutions and funds from supporting Israel’s illegal occupation of the Palestinian Territory and entrenching its unlawful presence.
  - Comply with obligations to ensure accountability for the most serious crimes under international law, through robust, impartial and independent investigations and prosecutions at national or international levels, to ensure justice for all victims and the prevention of future crimes.
  - Support universal jurisdiction mandates, as and where applicable in national legal frameworks and judiciaries, to ensure justice for victims of international crimes committed in the **Occupied Palestinian Territory**.
- support South Africa in their case against Israel in the **ICJ**;<sup>137</sup>
- commit to providing, alongside other European and regional militaries, a naval escort for the Global Sumud Flotilla<sup>138</sup> to Gaza which launched in April, and which has already been attacked twice by Israeli naval forces off the coasts of Crete and Cyprus;
- deploy military forces, in coalition with other European and regional militaries (perhaps under the auspices of the **UN**, perhaps not), to guarantee the access of aid to Gaza;<sup>139</sup>
- drop the appeal against the deproscription of Palestine Action, and deproscribe the civil wings of Hezbollah and **Hamas** (which were only proscribed in 2019<sup>140</sup> and 2021,<sup>141</sup> respectively). This would not affect the proscription of the military wings of these organisations, but would massively simplify the entry of aid into these regions and must be done at some point if there is to be any hope of beginning a peace process; and

<sup>136</sup>Hague Group (n 77).

<sup>137</sup>*Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip* (n 28).

<sup>138</sup>‘Homepage’ (*Global Sumud Flotilla*) (<https://globalsumudflotilla.org/>).

<sup>139</sup>Wikipedia, ‘Israeli direct action against aid delivery to Gaza’ (n 43).

<sup>140</sup>Matt Kennard and Phil Miller, ‘How the Israel lobby got Hezbollah banned in Britain’ (*Declassified UK*, 26 September 2024) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/how-the-israel-lobby-got-hezbollah-banned-in-britain/>).

<sup>141</sup>‘**Hamas** to be declared a terrorist group by **UK**’ (*BBC News*, 19 November 2021) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-59346441>); There is already an ongoing deproscription effort, see *Application for the Removal from the List of Proscribed Organisations under Section 4 of the Terrorism Act 2000*.

- remove (at a minimum) Keir Starmer, David Lammy, Yvette Cooper, Shabana Mahmood, ACM Knighton and Adm Radakin from their positions, and launch a public inquiry into UK complicity in the Gaza genocide. Given the recent example of the Filton Six<sup>142</sup> I have serious doubts about the impartiality of the British judiciary to try any resulting charges, but that is a matter for the ICC.

UK service personnel (in particular those RAF personnel in bases like Akrotiri) must:

- familiarise themselves with JSP 383, para 16.47<sup>143</sup> and the article linked in footnote 345 and refuse any further orders to participate in or to facilitate the Gaza genocide, or US–Israeli crimes against humanity in Iran and Lebanon. This does not preclude acts of self-defence in the face of incoming Iranian attacks;
- familiarise themselves with AGAI 55<sup>144</sup> and decide whether continued military service is still possible given the events of the past few years. Even if it is, identify now your red lines,<sup>145</sup> the crossing of which would change this (such as being asked to participate *directly* in any future aggressions);
- discuss these issues and your concerns amongst your peers (being mindful of the restrictions imposed on service personnel to do so, particularly Regular personnel<sup>146</sup>), chains-of-command, padres, etc.;
- browse appendix F.4.3.1 and take inspiration and courage from those who have previously acted in line with their consciences;
- for those who have directly witnessed and/or participated in war crimes and crimes against humanity,<sup>147</sup> familiarise themselves with the *Ministry of Defence Raising a Concern Policy*,<sup>148</sup> taking special note of:
  - the fact that ‘protected disclosures’ made by SPs are protected as per the PIDA<sup>149</sup> despite SPs being technically exempt from that Act;<sup>150</sup>
  - the first point of contact for raising an internal concern;<sup>151</sup>
  - what is considered a valid concern,<sup>152</sup> including ‘failure to comply with legal obligations’<sup>153</sup> (such as the *Genocide Convention*), ‘deceiving, or knowingly misleading Ministers, Par-

<sup>142</sup>Craig Murray, ‘The Morass of Injustice’ (*Craig Murray*, 2 May 2026) (<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2026/05/the-morass-of-injustice/>).

<sup>143</sup>JSP 383, para 16.47.

<sup>144</sup>AGAI 55.

<sup>145</sup>For an accessible video essay arguing for why this is important to do *now*, see Ian Danskin, ‘The Alt-Right Playbook: The South Bank of the Rubicon’ (*Innuendo Studios [YouTube]*, 27 January 2025) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YFdwfNh5vs>). See also appendix E, ¶ 126.

<sup>146</sup>Armed Forces Act 2006, ss 3, 6 & 19; The *Queen’s Regulations* for the Army 1975, AC 13206, amendment number 37 (*King’s Regs*) pt 14 (and equivalents for other Services); For Reservists, see *RLFR*, pt 1, ch 3, s 7.

<sup>147</sup>See Alex Morris and Phil Miller, “Release Gaza footage,” British victim demands in new spy flight documentary’ (*Declassified UK*, 11 December 2025) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0fk3t28TiAc>) for a concrete example where we have a pretty good idea that the MOD is concealing evidence it holds relating to the killing of a former Royal Marine.

<sup>148</sup>*Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Defence Raising a Concern Policy* (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministry-of-defence-raising-a-concern-policy>).

<sup>149</sup>Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA).

<sup>150</sup>*Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Defence Raising a Concern Policy* (n 148) s 47.

<sup>151</sup>*ibid* s 23.

<sup>152</sup>*ibid* ss 27–28.

<sup>153</sup>*ibid* 28(d).

liament, or others'<sup>154</sup> and 'ignoring inconvenient facts or relevant considerations when providing advice or making decisions';<sup>155</sup> and

– when external (or 'wider') disclosure is permitted and how to do so.<sup>156</sup>

- **seek advice from the appropriate internal channels (or legal advice, if considering making an external disclosure) before making any decisions; however, personnel must acknowledge the real risk (particularly in the latter case) that they will likely face serious repercussions!**

The UK general population must:

- pressure their MPs, regardless of party affiliation, to press for the above;
- identify and join local anti-war organising efforts; and
- start to make plans for what they will do in the event of mass conscription.<sup>157</sup>

Activists in the UK must:

- improve their understanding of the British Armed Forces, including by linking up with groups already engaged with service personnel and making links between the military and the wider society (for which Reservists may play a crucial role);<sup>158</sup>
- organise anti-war and antimilitarist efforts and campaigns; and
- identify how to respond effectively in the event of mass conscription, including not ceding the terrain of the military exclusively to the far right.<sup>159</sup>

Lastly, Scottish independence has potential as a means of breaking the UNSC stranglehold on world affairs, as proposed by Craig Murray.<sup>160</sup> This would be quite the long shot, but it is the only viable path I can see to doing so in the event that the UK government remains resistant to accepting its historic responsibility. As such, Scots should work towards this goal, and others should support them in doing so.

<sup>154</sup>Ministry of Defence, *Ministry of Defence Raising a Concern Policy* (n 148) 28(i).

<sup>155</sup>*ibid* 28(k).

<sup>156</sup>Ministry of Defence, *Ministry of Defence Raising a Concern Policy* (n 148) ss 51 & 130; PIDA, ss 43G–43H.

<sup>157</sup>I plan to discuss possible approaches further in a future work, see Ben Goldsworthy, 'Bystanders, Rescuers and I plan to discuss possible approaches further in a future work, see *Children of Men*' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/children-of-men>).

<sup>158</sup>I intend to make my own contribution to this mutual understanding with a future work, see Ben Goldsworthy, 'A Militant in the Military' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/a-militant-in-the-military>).

<sup>159</sup>For Germany historical examples of why this is a fatal error, see appendix E, ¶¶ 14 and 121.

<sup>160</sup>Craig Murray, 'UN Reform and Scottish Independence' (*Craig Murray*, 14 November 2025) (<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2025/11/un-reform-and-scottish-independence/>).

Damn those who didn't care. Damn those who did care but  
were afraid to act. Damn those who intimidated them into  
inertia. Damn the cowards and careerists.

Damn those who put power before morality. Damn the  
pragmatists.

Damn those who had their doubts but didn't voice them.  
Damn those who didn't know. Damn those who didn't want  
to know.

Damn those who didn't understand. Damn those who didn't  
want to understand.

Damn all who were complicit in this brazen, public, and  
protracted crime against humanity.

I expect you all think you will get away with it. You have in  
the past.

But the world may be starting to change.

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Peter Osborne<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>161</sup>Peter Osborne, *Complicit: Britain's Role in the Destruction of Gaza* (OR Books 30 October 2025)

## B. How the Process Worked

In this appendix, I will detail my experience during the discharge process. As stated above, I experienced quite a smooth exit and encountered no problems. However, this is likely the result of two things: a) my unit is unusually progressive, and I had a supportive CoC and b) I am a Reservist and was exercising my right to leave at will (albeit as a conscientious objector, and stating that I would refuse any future callouts), rather than objecting to mobilisation. Nevertheless, I am presumably the most recent person to go through the CO process, so others may find the details useful.

I made my decision around the start of February, and contacted my intended referees<sup>162</sup> between Feb 6–8. I also contacted At Ease on Feb 6 for advice, but did not receive a response until after I had submitted my application.

I chose Feb 16 as my target date for submitting my application for several reasons:

- I had a bid already in for a course at the start of March, and that gave me time to figure out if I had a place on it or not;
- I would be attending training with my unit in mid-March (and travelling back to the UK for it), so that would give enough notice for them to get everything in place for me (e.g., to return my kit) whilst I was back and avoid me having to make another trip;
- it gave me a couple weeks to write my application; and
- it was a Friday, so I'd be able to relax over the weekend before anyone would read it.

It was only later that I realised that it was *also* the exact ten-year anniversary of me joining the Reserves.

I compiled my application and submitted it, along with my two references, by email to my OC as planned on Feb 16. I sent her a Signal message the following day to let her know.<sup>163</sup> On Feb 18, she read the application and we discussed it and the next steps over the phone. She was supportive, and detailed how she would share the exact reasons for the discharge on a need-to-know basis amongst the administrative staff who would be required to process it (but that I was free to share as I saw fit).

On Feb 22, my OC informed the PSAO, PSI and my Tp Comd to inform them that I will be leaving and will need to dekit. She referenced 'another email chain', but I was not included in that; the email I was CC'd on stated only that 'His paperwork is sitting with the Adjutant to disseminate to all the various requisite parties [and that] I had a good chat with him on 20 Feb and concur that this the right path for him.' I continued to arrange with the PSI for my de-kitting.

As expected, nobody in my CoC had any experience with the CO process. At first, my OC shared my full application only with the Regimental Adjutant, who contacted the SO2 Reserves Ops/CM RAMS (a major) at the APC in Glasgow. She forwarded my application to a brigadier in Army HQ, and returned on Feb 25 with the following:

<sup>162</sup>See appendix C.

<sup>163</sup>As part-timers, Reservists often do not check their MOD mailboxes regularly.

I have since learned that **AGAI 55**<sup>164</sup> is out of date and applications from soldiers can be actioned at unit level. This is because the way reserve soldiers are discharged from service has changed in recent years.

For soldiers in the reserves with no previous regular service there is no reserve liability for callout or recall.<sup>165</sup> So, for a **conscientious objector** they just ask for voluntary discharge using the normal AFE 20037 application.<sup>166</sup> The competent military authority for discharge is the **CO**.

This guidance is from the Reserves Policy team in **APC**.

That same day, the **Adj** informed me that my application had been passed to the **CO** who would read it prior to the upcoming training event in March, adding that he 'note[s] [my] concerns from the letter' but that he hopes I am 'reassured by there being no recall liability for **volunteer reserve** soldiers.'<sup>167</sup> From the email, it seems that the **PSAO** had also been provided some details of my application, as the **Adj** **CC'd** him in and added that 'following our previous comms **Pte** Goldsworthy can be discharged under normal terms as per **APC** advice'.

On Mar 4 I was contacted by the unit admin clerk with some paperwork to complete for the discharge process; there was no indication that she had been informed of the exact details.

On Mar 6–8 I attended my final training weekend with **335 MER**. People had been told that I was leaving, but not the details of why; I had no intention of concealing them, and everybody I spoke to was supportive (including a couple people with whom I was pleasantly surprised).

Towards the end of the weekend I had my exit interview with **CO**. Unexpectedly, he had clearly read through the entire application (including appendices), to the point of correcting me that 'prison *guard*' should have read 'prison *officer*' (and, if he's reading this, I hope he appreciates my correction to **appendix E, ¶ 157**). We had an interesting conversation and he was generally supportive. The **RSM** was also present, though did not appear to have seen the application; the **CO** suggested that he take a look at it, so perhaps he did do later.

It had not been possible to return my kit on the weekend, so on Mar 11 I drove to our **HQ** to de-kit; travel expenses and a partial **RSD** were paid as per usual.

On Mar 10, I emailed my **OC**, **1RO** and **Tp Comd** to ask for a personal reference.<sup>168</sup>

On Mar 30, the admin clerk informed me that my discharge would take place after my final pay has been processed, at the end of April.

On Apr 30, I received my final payslip. Attending the March training weekend meant that I fulfilled my **CoE** for the **training year**, so I receive my annual bonus as expected.

On May 1, the clerk announced that my discharge was now complete, attaching my final certificate of service.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> **AGAI 55**.

<sup>165</sup> **Ministry of Defence**, *Soldier Terms of Service* (1st edn, version 6.0, first published 2020, AC 64671, 12 March 2026) (**SToS**) sect 6, para 2.6.1(b).

<sup>166</sup> **Ministry of Defence**, Army Reserve Application for Voluntary Discharge, 'GOVUK' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministry-of-defence-raising-a-concern-policy>) (AFE 20037); See also **SToS**, sect 6, para 2.6.4.

<sup>167</sup> The government is proposing to change this again, making all former **Volunteer Reservists** liable for recall as is currently the case for former Regulars and commissioned **officers** (Armed Forces HC Bill [2024–26] [3] [AFB 26] cll 33(1)–(4)) and lowering the threshold of recall from 'national danger, great emergency or attack on the **UK**' to 'warlike preparations' (**AFB 26**, cll 33(5)–(6) & 33(7)); see also Army Strategic Centre, 'Changes to Recall Liability for **Other Ranks**' [2026] (**ABN 032/2026**) (Access restricted.) (<https://jive.defencegateway.mod.uk/docs/DOC-1341044>)

<sup>168</sup> Service Leavers' Guide, s 3.14.

<sup>169</sup> **Ministry of Defence**, *Certificate of Service* (2026).

On May 7, my OC messaged me to say that I am still being put forward to the private-to-lance corporal promotion board (presumably because I had had an efficient year). She explained that I am entitled to a leaving report and did well in the grading (top third).

As of May 21, I still have access to my Army email account and the internal MOD social media site. I have updated my profile to serve as a sort of career memorial and explain my reasons for leaving, should anyone stumble across it in future, and I have included a link to this document.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>170</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'An application for discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection to continued military service (21 May 2026)' (*Defence Connect*, 21 May 2026) (<https://jive.defencegateway.mod.uk/blogs/bengoldsworthy/2026/05/21/an-application-for-discharge-subtitle-on-the-grounds-of-conscientious-objection-to-continued-military-service-21-may-2026>).

DRAFT

## C. Supporting References

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of the character of Ben Goldsworthy, in relation to this application for his discharge from the Army Reserves on the grounds of conscientious objection.

I have known, and been friends with, Ben for some 12 years since our studies at Lancaster University. Ben is a strong individual with a penchant for championing relatively niche causes, and this has been consistent since the first few months of knowing him. Similarly, it has long been clear that Ben is admirably firm in his political beliefs, and it was at University where these first clearly manifested themselves in support of leftist causes. I graduated from University a couple years after Ben <sup>[sic, should read 'before Ben']</sup> [REDACTED], whilst Jeremy Corbyn was the Labour leader. Ben took a firm view on the characterisation of Mr Corbyn in the media and wrote and advocated in his defence on a myriad of issues – not least foreign policy. While these have crystallised and focused somewhat since, they are a clear theme of commonality throughout Ben's personal politics.

[REDACTED] At the time, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and Israel's retaliation against Hamas following the October 7th attacks were dominating the news, and Ben and I had many full-throated and passionate – albeit mutually respectful – debates, given these issues were at the heart of Ben's political identity while being so dominant of my professional life.

I have never agreed with Ben's views on these matters, nor will I ever, but his thoughts, theories, and opinions were and are well-developed, well-researched, strongly held, and most definitely consistent. It is a strength of Ben's that he is able to maintain a objective view of the opinions of others while holding such strident views, and I know that this is central to his continued service in the Army Reserves to date but I have often questioned the ability for this to continue, and I am therefore not surprised he is petitioning for discharge on conscientious grounds.

Ben is a morally driven, thoughtful, and passionate individual I am honoured to know despite our diverging and different views.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

15/02/2026

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of Ben Goldsworthy's application for discharge from the Army Reserves on the grounds of conscientious objection.

I first met Ben in 2023 on a solidarity trip of young trade unionists to Cuba. While planting herbs in a field, we spoke about the military's exemption from emissions reporting to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. At this point, I did not know that Ben was in the Army Reserves but it was clear that he was viewing the military through a critical lens. In my role as Senior Climate Advocacy Officer at the Conflict and Environment Observatory, I regularly speak to individuals about the topic of military emissions reporting, from senior policymakers to climate activists. It is rare that someone knows the level of detail that Ben did; from the offset of our friendship, Ben's opinions have been consistently well researched.

Over the past few years, we have spoken at great length on multiple occasions about the ethics of non-combative military service, Ben's reasons and logic for serving in the Army Reserves, and his experiences with the other Army personnel who he clearly had a great deal of respect for. As a former Vice-chair of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and a committed disarmament activist for over a decade, it has been interesting to follow Ben's journey to coming to this decision. He is regularly recommending to me the books and articles he is reading in relation to pacifism, anti-militarism and broader left wing causes. With this in mind, it is no surprise to me at all that I am writing this letter.

Ben was visiting me on the weekend of Hamas' attacks on October 7<sup>th</sup> 2023. Understanding the context of these attacks, we spoke of Israel's likely retaliation but in truth, nothing prepared me for the scale that retaliation. This undoubtedly marked a change in his relationship to the British Armed Forces, as detailed in his contribution to this application, and the boundaries which previously allowed for his non-combative involvement in the Army had been crossed through the British Government's clear facilitation of a genocide. Personally, I cannot see how he can continue to serve given this gross injustice and nor should he be expected to.

In peace,

Ellie Kinney



## D. Annual Reports

As in most workplaces, military personnel receive annual reviews (called ‘SJARs’, or ‘reports’) from their line managers (their **first** and **second** reporting officers, in military parlance). These are separate from the annual **CoE** and bounty system, but generally:

- a **training year** must have been **efficient** in order to merit a report;
- a report may or may not recommend the subject for promotion; and
- a set number of recommendations (e.g. two for **private** to **lance corporal**) are required before the subject will be considered by the annual appraisal board for promotion to the next rank.

For various administrative reasons, I was not eligible for my first report until the 2022–23 training year. This appendix contains that and all of my subsequent reports.

The below texts have been copied verbatim; [*sic*]s throughout.

### Training year 2022–23

1RO:

**Pte** Goldsworthy has hit the ground running and has had a very busy personal year too, but still has found time to successfully complete most of his training going out of his way to do so. He has become one of the most proactive **privates** in the troop over the short time he has been with us. He has continually sought out opportunities to show his potential to raise his profile quickly amongst a strong peer group. [...] **Pte** Goldsworthy is fit, proactive, and quick minded, he takes part in organised **PT**. maintaining an excellent level of fitness. He has, in short order become a firmly supportive member of the **Unit** and **troop** and is keen to be involved in all **Unit** and **Troop** activities. With his resolute and eagerness to move forward there more to come from **Pte** Goldsworthy.

**Pte** Goldsworthy currently sits in the top third of the 12 **Pte**'s on whom I report on. He is a knowledgeable individual who's accumulated drive exceeds that of many of his new peers, continue with the drive and proactive nature and seek every opportunity place in front of him. Looking forward he should apply his skills set now to the next rank and project himself further, broadening his horizons further, focus on junior leadership and instructional qualifications that he is able to take up now. He has the potential to make a remarkable **JNCO**, but not recommended for promotion this year (...)

2RO:

Agree with **1RO**. This has been a good reporting period for **Pte** Goldsworthy, his sheer determination and proactive manner has seen him soar amongst his peers. Using every

opportunity to gain experience as both an operator and a reservist, building on his technical knowledge and personal development has put him in good stead for a very productive new training year. A very well liked individual in **500 Comms Tp**, **Pte Goldsworthy** has definitely found his feet and settled very well.

**Pte Goldsworthy** shows clear potential as a Communications Operator and has made a very positive start to his career. Having completed both his Class 3 and 2 Communications Operators course back to back, **Pte Goldsworthy** is well ahead of where he should be and should grasp every possibility now to use and put his newly learnt skill set to the test both in barracks and in the field. He should also seek out opportunities to take on extra responsibilities building on his leadership skills. Although **Pte Goldsworthy** still needs more time to develop, he is starting to show attributes required of a **JNCO** and I have no doubt that he will be pushing for a recommendation for promotion in the very near future.

## Training year 2023–24

### 1RO:

**Pte Goldsworthy** is a valued member of the troop with a mature attitude and desire to undertake additional tasks. He has shown a good technical understanding of the Bowman system and compliments this with an eagerness to learn. A knowledgeable and enthusiastic soldier, his competency in the field has earned him praise on **Exercise IRON TITAN**<sup>171</sup> and **SEPTEMBER SERPENT**,<sup>172</sup> working tirelessly to deliver robust communications throughout. **Pte Goldsworthy's** drive to enhance his personal development and **Regimental** employability has been evident in the attendance on multiple adventure training courses, gaining qualifications as a Mountain Leader, **BSAC** Sports Diver, Competent crew, small boat handler, Marine radio Operator and 2 star foundation in Open Canoe. A well-liked and respected member of the **Troop**, **Pte Goldsworthy** produces good results beyond the remit of his current job role. A willing volunteer for all **troop** and **Regimental** events. **Pte Goldsworthy** has completed all his mandatory training for the year and successfully qualified for his **Certificate of Efficiency**.

**Pte Goldsworthy** is placed in the top third of a highly competitive peer group within **500 Tp**.

Promotion: **Pte Goldsworthy** receives a recommendation for promotion

Potential: Given the opportunity, his attitude and attention to detail will see him develop into an excellent **JNCO**. Long term **Pte Goldsworthy** comfortably has the reach and knowledge to make a good section **2IC**. (...)

### 2RO:

Agree with **1RO's** assessment.

**Pte Goldsworthy** has had an extremely busy year and has demonstrated on more than one occasion he is ready to take on more responsibility and move to the next level. He is a motivated and determined individual who I believe will make an excellent **JNCO**, therefore I strongly support his recommendation for promotion to **LCpl**.

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<sup>171</sup>See footnote 103.

<sup>172</sup>See appendix E, ¶ 184.

## Training year 2024–25

### 1RO:

Pte Goldsworthy has compiled an impressive and extremely diverse training year driven by his own ambition and strengths. Pte Goldsworthy exhibit's exceptional initiative and taken deliberate, strategic control of their career trajectory, demonstrating a clear commitment to professional growth and mission readiness. Completion of ITR/ITT, expansion of knowledge following his review of the Legal analysis of the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* and Israle-Gaza WAR<sup>173</sup> as highlighted to him by Comd 16 Bde,<sup>174</sup> attendance to A Sqn drill night, and a 2<sup>nd</sup> in October where he delivers on radio comms and, a move to pursue his own civilian career in Montpellier. Following on from the successful attendance at 335 ADE24, he exhibited a high level of subject matter expertise in radio communications throughout the second week of the exercise phase. His proficiency played a critical role in ensuring seamless communication and operational effectiveness during a period of increased activity and complexity. Pte Goldsworthy also undertook medium van familiarisation, an asset to the unit once again. In Nov he completed the CMT2 course taking on the role of Bronze Comd in the MASCAL event, a difficult and pressured role. Later in the TY he completed another career progression course, CMT1 this time, further demonstrating his exceptional commitment to progression and self-driven attitude. He takes on further self-driven tasks, engaging with his OC on how to better utilise overseas based reserves (OBR's), I'm sure his input in this will be invaluable and gratefully received. This report does not contain ALL that was achieved by Pte Goldsworthy in this TY, it is aimed to summaries his exceptionally high achieving training year. Pte Goldsworthy was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> top in the unit Private cohort.

### 2RO:

I agree with the 1RO.

Pte Goldsworthy is continuing to show excellent potential and is rapidly becoming a key enabler for 335MER. He demonstrates excellent subject knowledge from his civilian career and uses this effectively in training for 335. When in this area he shows good skills in mentorship, and shows several leadership attributes. He is encouraged to further show his leadership skills when performing training in the field with a focus on Section level leadership. This would go a long way to getting him ready for promotion. In regards to clinical competencies as a non-vocational CMT gaining hands on experience is key for future development and Pte Goldsworthy should make this his top level aim for the coming training year. Pte Goldsworthy receives a recommendation for promotion.

<sup>173</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Israel–Gaza War' (Wavell Room) (<https://wavellroom.com/2024/06/11/the-legal-risk-of-complicity/>).

<sup>174</sup>See footnote 346.

## E. Timeline

The remainder of this document is an incredibly detailed forensic review of all of the events and decisions that have led me to this point.

I do not expect anyone but me to read it in full. I compiled it only incidentally in order to support this submission; in truth, it is something I have been intending to do for some time, as an long-postponed act of both self-accounting and transparency. Once I started to write, I could not stop; I finally had the opportunity to get off my chest things I have been carrying for nearly a decade now, and to crystallise into words things I have been thinking for just as long.

For ease of reading, I have divided the timeline into five thematic tracks:

1. My personal political views as they have developed over time;
2. Events relating to, and my changing opinions of, **Britain**: its state, structure, and role in the world;
3. Events relating to, and my changing opinions of, the British Armed Forces;
4. Items relating to my developing sense of antimilitarism, and my developing (though still arms-length) understanding of pacifism; and
5. World events, and my own personal sense of internationalist solidarity.

Per-track bibliographies are available in [appendix F.2](#).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(2) 1996				I was born to a <b>British</b> father and <b>American</b> mother, becoming a citizen of both countries. My mother's mother was also German, meaning that two generations ago I had relatives fighting on both sides of both world wars. As a result, nationalism has never had much sway on me, and I have always considered it somewhat absurd.	
(3) 2002–2005		I was too young to remember them starting, but the invasions of Iraq & Afghanistan have formed the background of my world since my earliest memories, colouring my formative years and ending—disastrously—in 2021. From some of my earliest memories, I have been aware of the invasions and occupations as dubious. Specifically, some of my earliest online memories are of critical Flash animations like <i>Gulf War Game</i> <sup>175</sup> and <i>Bush Shoot-Out</i> . <sup>176</sup>			
(4) Jan 2002					51 <b>IDF</b> reservists publicly refuse to fight beyond the 1967 borders of the country. <sup>177</sup>
(5) Sep 2003					27 <b>IDF</b> pilots (both active and reserve) protest the use of targeted assassination in Gaza. <sup>178</sup>

<sup>175</sup>Idleworm, 'Gulf War Game' (*Idleworm*, 2002) ([https://www.idleworm.com/animation/gulf\\_war\\_game.shtml](https://www.idleworm.com/animation/gulf_war_game.shtml)). The Flash tool required to view the game has long since died, but an emulated version is accessible at <https://www.albinoblacksheep.com/flash/iraq2>.

<sup>176</sup>MiniClip, 'Bush Shoot-Out' (*Newgrounds*, 17 February 2004) (<https://www.newgrounds.com/portal/view/150999>).

<sup>177</sup>Noam Sheizaf, 'How an army refusal letter became the last stand of the Zionist left' (*+972 Magazine*, 29 March 2026) (<https://www.972mag.com/combatants-letter-army-refusal-zionist-left/>).

<sup>178</sup>Conal Urquhart, 'Israeli pilots refuse to fly assassination missions' *The Guardian* (25 September 2003) (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/sep/25/israel>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(6) Dec 2003					13 IDF commando reservists refuse to serve in the <b>Occupied Palestinian Territory</b> . <sup>179</sup>
(7) 2010		WikiLeaks release of <i>Collateral Murder</i> <sup>180</sup> video. I don't know when I saw it, but I do remember watching it, probably my first indication that governments and militaries may choose secrecy over justice.			
(8) May 2010					Israeli commandos attack the humanitarian ship <i>MV Mavi Marmara</i> , killing nine activists.
(9) 2011					I went on a school field trip to Belgium to visit the <b>WWI</b> battlefields and cemeteries. This had quite an impact on me; in particular, the contrast between Tyne Cot and the German cemetery at Langemark. <sup>181</sup>

<sup>179</sup>Molly Moore, 'Elite Israeli Troops Refuse To Serve in the Territories' *The Washington Post* (22 December 2003) (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2003/12/22/elite-israeli-troops-refuse-to-serve-in-the-territories/4783d8c3-97d0-4ae8-a976-7b60ad37d6de/>).

<sup>180</sup>WikiLeaks, 'Collateral Murder' (*WikiLeaks*, 5 April 2010) (<https://collateralmurder.wikileaks.org/>).

<sup>181</sup>See ¶ 23.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(10) 2011/2012	<p>I was at least somewhat aware of the <b>Occupy movement</b>,<sup>182</sup> likely my first indication that there could be an economic alternative to the present system.</p> <p>My only real memory is of a video in which a Wall Street <b>CEO</b> talks to protestors in the encampment.<sup>183</sup> All very silly now in retrospect, but I distinctly remember his comments about agreeing with the protestors that the banks should have been allowed to fail and that bailing them out wasn't capitalism; if it wasn't what it said it was, then what was the economic system under which we lived? And why would it lie?</p>				
(11) 2012	<p>Julian Assange sought refuge in the Ecuadoran embassy in London. I don't know when I first became aware of him, but I evidently already knew about WikiLeaks and would at some point begin following his case.</p>				
(12) Pre-2013	<p>From 2013 I started recording a film diary that I continue to this day. However, I remember two documentaries that were eye-opening to me and pre-date this log: <i>Taking Liberties</i>,<sup>184</sup> detailing the erosion of civil liberties in the <b>UK</b> under Tony Blair; and <i>The Power of Nightmares</i>,<sup>185</sup> detailing the role of <b>US</b> neoconservatives in inventing the spectre of radical Islamism for their own purposes.</p>				

<sup>182</sup>As evidenced in my **GCSE** Art & Design sketchbooks from the time; see Ben Goldsworthy, '5, 10, 20' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 13 March 2021) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/5-10-20/>) n 1.

<sup>183</sup>Peter Schiff, 'Peter Schiff at **OWS**: "Walmart Doesn't Hold a Gun to Your Head!"' (*ReasonTV [YouTube]*, 27 October 2011) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGL-Ex1CD1c>).

<sup>184</sup>Chris Atkins, *Taking Liberties* (8 June 2007) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/26273-taking-liberties>).

<sup>185</sup>Adam Curtis, *The Power of Nightmares* (20 October–3 November 2004) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/6132-the-power-of-nightmares>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(13) Pre-2013			<p>Also, to get an idea of the ambient media environment I grew up in, I had by this point already seen the <i>Armadillo</i><sup>186</sup> and <i>Restrepo</i><sup>187</sup> documentaries and am still deeply cynical about the ongoing military presence in Afghanistan.</p> <p>I also vividly remember the <i>Band of Brothers</i> episode <i>Bastogne</i>,<sup>188</sup> which followed the unit's medic, and a small Mormon-backed WWII film called <i>Saints and Soldiers</i><sup>189</sup> which featured a medic as a major (and particularly ethical) character; both likely planted the seed that would later be realised when I decided to become a CMT.</p> <p>I had already seen <i>Lebanon</i><sup>190</sup> and <i>Waltz with Bashir</i><sup>191</sup> about the Israel–Palestine conflict (albeit from the Israeli perspective). The 1995 documentary <i>Executions</i><sup>192</sup> embeds opposition to the death penalty at an early age.</p> <p>I had also seen <i>Stalingrad</i>,<sup>193</sup> a German film about the experience of the <i>Wehrmacht</i> on the Eastern front, and <i>Letters from Iwo Jima</i><sup>194</sup> about the Japanese perspective.</p>		
(14)			<p>In GCSE History I study the German Revolution of 1918–19<sup>195</sup> the Sino–Japanese War (including watching <i>City of Life and Death</i>,<sup>196</sup> about the Rape of Nanking) and Russian history from Tsardom to the death of Stalin. These are my introductions to many lesser-known historical events, and I will frequently return to them to add richness to my future historical perspectives.</p>		

<sup>186</sup>Janus Metz, *Armadillo* (8 April 2011) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/37828-armadillo>>.

<sup>187</sup>Tim Hetherington and Sebastian Junger, *Restrepo* (25 June 2010) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/39312-restrepo>>.

<sup>188</sup>David Leland, *Bastogne* (HBO 2 November 2001) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/4613-band-of-brothers/season/1/episode/6>>.

<sup>189</sup>Ryan Little, *Saints and Soldiers* (9 October 2006) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/10105-saints-and-soldiers>>.

<sup>190</sup>Samual Maoz, *Lebanon* (9 April 2010) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/32084>>.

<sup>191</sup>Ari Folman, *Waltz with Bashir* (21 November 2008) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/search?query=waltz%20with%20bashir>>.

<sup>192</sup>David Herman, *Executions* (27 October 1995) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/63198-executions>>.

<sup>193</sup>Joseph Vilsmaier, *Stalingrad* (15 April 1994) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/11101-stalingrad>>.

<sup>194</sup>Clint Eastwood, *Letters from Iwo Jima* (20 December 2006) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/1251-letters-from-iwo-jima>>.

<sup>195</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Why Did the German Revolution of 1918–19 Fail in Its Goals?' [2014] <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/why-did-the-german-revolution-of-191819-fail-in-its-goals/>>.

<sup>196</sup>Chuan Lu, *City of Life and Death* (15 April 2010) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/21345>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(15) From May 2013</b>	Edward Snowden's global surveillance disclosures, which began in May 2013 and continue to today. Here was copious evidence of what most people had always suspected but could never prove: the <b>US</b> and Five Eyes countries, including the <b>UK</b> , were deeply involved in illegal surveillance and intrusion of privacy on a global scale. This was the background against which I entered university as an aspiring technologist myself.				
<b>(16) May 2014</b>	I wrote about the <b>EU</b> Parliament election <sup>197</sup> —my first election of voting age—describing how I had accidentally read Emma Goldman as part of another project and commenting that I had found her politics influential. <sup>198</sup>				

<sup>197</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'On the 2014 European Parliament Election' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 12 May 2014) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/on-the-2014-european-parliament-election/>>.

<sup>198</sup>Emma Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays* (1910) <<https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/emma-goldman-anarchism-and-other-essays>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(17) Sep 2014	<p>I start university, studying a Bachelor's in Computer Science. I studied at Lancaster University, an <b>Academic Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security Education (ACE-CSE)</b>; many of the faculty had links to, or were involved in projects alongside the Security services, primarily <b>GCHQ</b>. I also publish a blog post about one of my favourite musicians, and touch on my political views.<sup>199</sup></p>				<p>43 <b>IDF</b> intelligence reservists publish a letter refusing to participate in actions designed to 'harm the Palestinian population in the West Bank'.<sup>200</sup></p>

<sup>199</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'On Pat 'the Bunny' Schneeweis' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 2 September 2014) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/on-pat-the-bunny-schneeweis/>); Patrick Schneeweis, *Music of* (<https://patthebunny.bandcamp.com/music>).

<sup>200</sup>'Israeli intelligence veterans' letter to Netanyahu and military chiefs - in full' *The Guardian* (12 September 2014) (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/12/israeli-intelligence-veterans-letter-netanyahu-military-chiefs>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(18)	I also decided to install Linux on my computer instead of Windows: in part the result of having recently encountered the free software movement (I had read <i>Free as in Freedom 2.0</i> , <sup>201</sup> a biography of the movement's founder Richard Stallman, in Aug 2014); and in part influenced by the Snowden's disclosure's reveal of Microsoft's complicity in the global surveillance project.				
(19) Nov 2014	I wrote an article for my college paper about recent campus protests against BAE Systems' presence at a careers fair. <sup>202</sup> I expressed discomfort over BAE's historical record, including singling out sales to Saudi Arabia and Pinochet's Chile, but otherwise concluded that governments and militaries were ultimately responsible for using those weapons. I expressed only a surface-level understanding of the realities of the military-industrial complex.				

<sup>201</sup>Sam Williams and Richard Stallman, *Free as in Freedom 2.0: Richard Stallman and the Free Software Revolution* (Free Software Foundation 2010) (<https://www.fsf.org/faif>).

<sup>202</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Big Bad BAE?' *The Witch* (23 November 2014) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/on-bae-systems/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(20) Dec 2014</b>	I first watched <i>Army of Shadows</i> <sup>203</sup> —one of my favourite films to this day—which unromantically depicts the impossible choices and pervasive uncertainty and thread of death in which the French resistance operated.				
<b>(21) 16 Feb 2016</b>			I joined the <b>Liverpool University Officers' Training Corps (LUOTC)</b> . I have no record of my original motives, but this in the context of my second year of university where I was trying out as many new things as possible.		

<sup>203</sup>Jean-Pierre Melville, *L'Armée des ombres [Army of Shadows]* (23 March 1978) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/15383-l-armee-des-ombres>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(22) Jul 2016		The comically long-awaited <a href="#">Chilcot Report</a> <sup>204</sup> was finally published. I was aware of this, but I did not read it in-depth at the time as I had at no point in my life ever doubted that the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan were illegal, and thus did not need to be convinced. Many of its conclusions nonetheless reached me via <i>Private Eye</i> , to which I was subscribed for many years.			
(23) Nov 2016					I wrote a Remembrance Day article for the student paper titled “To Bloom Side by Side”, discussing the red and white poppy campaigns and my own experiences in Belgium <sup>205</sup> and coming from a multi-national background. <sup>206</sup>

<sup>204</sup>Iraq Inquiry, *The Report of the Iraq Inquiry* (2016) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-report-of-the-iraq-inquiry>) (Chilcot Report).

<sup>205</sup>See ¶ 9.

<sup>206</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, “To Bloom Side by Side”: The Red and the White Poppy’ *SCAN: Student Comment & News* (11 November 2016) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/to-bloom-side-by-side/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(24) 2016			<p>[One of our permanent staff] in the UOTC was the most sociopathic person I have ever met in the military. When drunk, he would excitedly talk about room clearances, bayonets and throwing grenades into houses, including one time where he said he almost threw one in, didn't, and then turned the corner to find a family huddling in the corner.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(25)			<p>At this point, he was a <b>colour sergeant</b>. Unless this is a very unfortunate case of mistaken identity, a soldier from his previous unit, with the same first and last name, who had been a <b>private</b> in 2003, was specifically highlighted in the Baha Mousa Inquiry as having been involved in abuse of prisoners in Iraq (though not Mousa specifically), and then deemed to have withheld evidence under questioning.<sup>207</sup></p>		

<sup>207</sup>Baha Mousa Public Inquiry, *Baha Mousa Public Inquiry report* (2011) vol III ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7c08f3ed915d41476225bb/1452\\_iii.pdf#page=395](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7c08f3ed915d41476225bb/1452_iii.pdf#page=395)), para 81 in particular (p 1,298).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(26) Apr 2017	I joined the <b>Free Software Foundation (FSF)</b> as an Associate Member, which I maintained until Nov 2024. The <b>FSF</b> is an activist group working to support the use of open source software tools, and its causes overlap often with anti-capitalist and pro-privacy groups as a result.				
(27) May 2017			potential officer (PO) visit to <b>6 Battalion, Military Intelligence (6 MI)</b> . I later emailed my <b>Int Corps 2IC</b> who had arranged the visit that 'my plan is to probably apply for [the course required to become an intelligence officer] in summer 2018'.		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(28) Jul–Sep 2017</b>	<p>With the direction and support of my faculty, I applied for<sup>208</sup> and was accepted on a <b>GCHQ</b>-run Cyber Insights summer school in Cheltenham, which resulted in job interviews for all attendees. A minority of the other attendees had no intentions of working for <b>GCHQ</b>, and through conversations with them I learnt much more about the Snowden revelations: in particular, I remember being surprised to learn about <b>JTRIG</b>'s open use of 'dirty tricks', including false flag operations, which I would have chalked up to conspiracy theories had they not been disclosed by leaked intelligence agency documents. Nonetheless, I passed the interview and moved on to <b>DV</b> security vetting. I decided to be completely honest and listed my early university drug use in detail.</p>				
<b>(29) Jul 2017–Jun 2018</b>	<p>During this period, I frequently had Parliamentary debates over the <b>EU</b> Withdrawal Bill on in the background. I grew increasingly disillusioned with Parliament, and this marks the high water mark of my liberal, institutionalist period.</p>				
<b>(30) Aug 2018</b>			<p>I was contacted by <b>6 MI</b> regarding the course to become an intelligence officer. I replied that 'I'm interested in [the course] next summer'.</p>		

<sup>208</sup>For the question 'What do you perceive as being the biggest current threat to cyber security in the **UK**', I talked about 'human error (on the defender's end)'. I think they were expecting a country.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(31) Aug 2017–Jul 2018</b>	I briefly recorded a diary, prompted by having watched <i>The Promise</i> , <sup>209</sup> a 2011 TV serial about a young woman visiting Israel and Palestine whilst reading the journal of her grandfather, who had served in the British Army in Mandatory Palestine. I shall quote the entries and length here, as this is the most detailed contemporaneous record I have of this crucial moment in my personal development.				
<b>(32) 25 Aug 2017</b>	<p>My first diary entry:</p> <p>The scariest thing about growing up is that you realise any of the morals and meanings of life you were brought up with were never absolutes. The whole Christian morality, vague notions of right and wrong, the economic rationalisations of capitalism. . . [N]ow that all of these things have been stripped from me and I'm stood at the precipice of my future, I feel distinctly vulnerable. . . I worry that it might be something too big for me to shrink it and belittle it with humour.</p> <p>I have to make a moral code now, all but from scratch. <u>That</u> is why I decided to start a diary. Let it serve as an accounting of that development. I'm grappling with quite a few big issues. How can I reconcile my opposition to state surveillance with my desire for a career in the intelligence services? Do I believe in Britain and the history of it, the monarchy of it, that I am due to swear to defend? Other issues too. What do I believe economically? . . . Where do I stand on some of the big political issues of the day?</p> <p>This is why people join cults, religions, the army, etc. They tell you how to live, what's right and wrong — the British Army gives you <b>CDRILS</b>, and you just go with that. Maybe I should join a cult.</p>				

<sup>209</sup>Peter Kosminsky, *The Promise* (Channel 4 6 February–272011) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/37621-the-promise>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<p>(33) 26 Aug 2017</p> <p>(34)</p>	<p>Diary entry:</p> <p>I'm soon to join, all going to plan, the <b>UK</b> intelligence community, and the military. It appears that in both roles, I will up against terrorism—fundamentalist Islamic terrorism, to be precise. It's worth, thus, figuring out my views on terrorism.<sup>210</sup> Is it ever justifiable? The big examples thrown up these days are Islamic terrorists, and Palestinian terrorism against Israel. Before this decade, it was the Irish, and in Spain it is the Basques. Asia and South America have no shortage of their own, and the <b>United States</b> [revolution] involved guerrilla tactics. Are guerrilla tactics by nature terrorism? I think my definition of the latter encompasses attacks against civilian targets. Where do I draw the line, though? Do the targets have to be exclusively civilian for it to be terrorism, or, as in the Irgun's King David Hotel bombing, do I include attacks on political targets in which civilian casualties are expected? This leads to further issues—an Israeli family in their home seems a civilian target, but do settlers carry the same weight of state power that could, perhaps, render soldiers and policemen legitimate targets? What of the Arab's use of children? Is it a cultural divide, a sign of desperation, or just the irredeemable pragmatic ruthlessness it appears to be at first blush? Indeed, violence for its own sake is wretched and senseless, but is terrorism thus? The Algerians won their independence through it, so was it [sensible]? The Palestinians have an example to strive to in that of the enemy—Israel was won through terrorism all but identical to what we see today. Here, the Republic of Ireland won all but the North through bombings and murder. We praise anti-Nazi partisan movements across Europe as brave men[sic] fighting on the [right] side of history—does that make us hypocrites when we decry <b>Daesh</b> for blowing up cafés and gunning down civilians?</p> <p>I feel like this cannot be the case. Perhaps there is a difference. The Algerians and the Jews were fighting for something achievable, perhaps? <b>Daesh</b> aspire to an impossible global caliphate, and so any blood spilt in the service of this cause is wasted. The terrorist with realistic outcomes can commit their crime under the assumption that when their chosen future comes to pass, the blood will be viewed as the necessary price for justice.</p> <p>I don't know though. Does the fact that the Palestinians seem so hopefully outgunned mean that their cause is similarly pointless? Yet I feel a sympathy for them—if not their deeds—that I cannot shake. Perhaps there are causes that, however impossible to achieve presently, remain just? Causes like opposition to oppression, and self-determination for a peoples[sic]? This begs the most dreadful question of all—am I only unable to consider <b>Daesh</b> as such because I am not religious, not Muslim? Are they, in fact, just, to the same degree as any other terrorists, just not in my estimation?</p>				

<sup>210</sup>I was in fact, here, considering political violence, but I had only the emaciated vocabulary of the time to use.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(35)	<p>Of course they are, as I understand morality to be subjective. But one of the things that comes with that understanding is the knowledge that you must always live according to your own code. It may change over time, as you continue to learn and develop, but you must always stay faithful to it.</p> <p>With that said, I must figure out where I stand on terrorism, and thus where fall the just and unjust.</p> <p>Firstly, I must start with one's cause. As per my moral sense, any cause that seeks to increase personal freedom is just—any that seeks its curtailment is unjust. In this respect, independence movements are just. The maquis were just. Irgun, in seeking independence, were just. In seeking oppression of the Arabs, they were unjust. I do not know what that sums to. <b>Daesh</b>, in seeking control according to guidelines that people are already free to follow of their own volition, are unjust.</p>				
(36)	<p>This is the <i>mens rea</i> of terrorism. Now the <i>actus rea</i>[sic]. I certainly shan't be voicing this belief within the Army, but I have to concede that attacks on the apparatus[sic] of the cause of the oppression that the just cause seeks to throw off must be justifiable. This means soldiers, police. The people behind these roles take them willingly, and as war for millennia[sic] has been fought not by individuals but by the forces they are subsumed by, so we must accept that a man in uniform is attacked not for who he is, but for what. This comes with the caveat that his choice must be voluntary—but this raises more nuance. If a conscript army like the Soviets invades Afghanistan, are the Afghans just in fighting them? All I can do here is cop out and say that conscription is thus immoral.</p>				
(37)	<p>Where does this place politicians and civil servants? I have to lean towards the inclusion of civil servants within that list of valid targets, in their role as instruments of the state. An exception must be made for emergency personnel— <i>sans</i> police—as they are obliged[sic] to be neutral and treat all threats to life by virtue of their Hippocratic oaths and such. Of course, a dictator must, too, be a just target. But what of a democratic [leader]? What of an <b>MP</b>? This poses an issue—a democratic state can only be overthrown if its people decide so. For this reason, I would have to conclude that <b>MPs</b> and such are inviolable. A group must win over the voters and get pro-cause <b>MPs</b> elected in order for those <b>MPs</b> to vote to overthrow themselves. If <b>MPs</b> can be targeted[sic], a barrier of entry of personal safety is added, and thus democracy is harmed.</p>				
(38)	<p>A thought[t] occurs, regarding civil servants. Should they not also be protected, on the basis that they possess no political capital, pledging only to serve the state neutrally, in whatever form it takes? But then, do the army and police not make the same pledges? It is an interesting notion. If soldiers are thus protected, there can be no just wars, wherein battles are just localised acts of terrorism. Have I just talked myself into pacifism? That was unexpected.</p>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(39) 27 Aug 2017	<p>Diary entry:</p> <p>I shall take a leaf out of Pepys' book and start this diary with a brief rundown of the state of the world. ... Mr Corbyn continues to baffle the nation by refusing to be an abject failure. . . 80 people burned to death in a tower block possibly due to austerity. They were poor, though, so nothing will likely come from it. Elsewhere, <b>Daesh</b> dominate the lurid side of the news in much the same way that al-Qaeda did for much of my lifetime, and I imagine the Irish did prior. They rule their caliphate of rubble in the ruins of Blair &amp; Bush's criminal wars in the Middle East, sending out jihadis to terrorise those dastardly <i>kufir</i> at nightclubs, on beaches, walking down the road.</p>				
(40)	<p>... The <b>UK</b> recently introduced the Investigatory Powers Act<sup>211</sup> to legalise all of the mass surveillance revealed[sic] in the Snowden leaks a few years ago. [When I return to Lancaster for my Master's] I'll also be readying myself to attempt the <b>Army Officer Selection Board</b>, as well as the selections I'll need to join the <b>Intelligence Corps</b>. . . I have an interview for post-Master's employment at <b>GCHQ</b> next week, so that is my immediate concern. I'm confident, however.</p>				
(41) Sep 2017	<p>I became a member of both Liberty and the <b>Open Rights Group (ORG)</b>; I attribute these decisions to my recent exposure to the true extent of unethical intelligence agency behaviour, and my own reflections. In a sense, I was belatedly reckoning with the full scope and implications of Snowden's revelations, and the now-unignorable cognitive dissonance of having been invested in technological ethics (via the <b>Free Software Foundation</b>) whilst also preparing for a career in the intelligence services.</p>				
(42) 5 Sep 2017	<p>Diary entry:</p> <p>Trump rescinded <b>DACA</b> today. He spited a generation of kids, of people who better represent what the <b>United States</b> stands for—the huddled masses, yearning to breathe free—and he fucked them over. Not for political or economical reasons, there was nothing 'republican' or 'conservative' in what he did—only cruelty. Meanwhile, the Rhohingya[sic] are butchered in Burma. The <b>IDF</b> gun down teenagers, turning away as children in Gaza swimming in contaminated water—the Israelis have besieged them long enough that their purification systems have collapsed. Unaccompanied minors are still toss'd across Europe, unwanted, unprotected.</p>				

<sup>211</sup>Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (Snoopers' Charter).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(43)	<p>There are no heroes these days. Politics is dead, the Leftists and the altruists have disappeared to far up their own arses to action anything for those who really need it. If the fucking Turks don't get to them first, we imprison people for travelling to Syria to fight <b>Rojava</b> and against <b>Daesh</b> because we want to cosy up to a dictator. Whatever happened to 'the enemy of my enemy'? In the Spanish Civil War, brave men and women travelled to fight in the International Brigades. <b>Britain</b> cheered for them, for no harbour would be found here for fascism. Now, I wonder: have we aligned ourselves with Franco this time? How can I love this country if so?</p>				
(44)	<p>The <b>Torys</b> continue to squeeze the public sector to breaking point. To throttle the <b>NHS</b>. To brutalise and bully our least fortunate. Why? Because who's there to fucking stop them? The largest demonstration in British history didn't stop Iraq for A SECOND. The flow of arms to the Saudis hasn't stemmed a bit, despite the fact that we know they're using them in Yemen, where thousands are now to die of cholera. It is the tail end of the 2010s now and no, it is not a good time to be vulnerable in this world.</p>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(45)	I also watch <i>Generation War</i> , <sup>212</sup> a German TV series showing the diverging paths of a group of friends following the outbreak of the war, ending as war criminals, partisans, collaborators and dead.				At this point I also started to get very drawn into US political theory (because I discovered I was going to have to start filling out tax returns, and figured I might as well learn what the country was all about). Partly this mean reading the Constitution <sup>213</sup> (and both Federalist and anti-Federalist papers from its drafting <sup>214</sup> ); mostly this meant listening to <i>Hamilton</i> <sup>215</sup> on repeat.

<sup>212</sup>Philipp Kadelbach, *Unsere Mütter, Unsere Väter [Generation War]* (17 March–202013) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/46849-unsere-m-tter-unsere-v-ter>).

<sup>213</sup>Constitution of the United States 1787 (U.S. Const.).

<sup>214</sup>Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, *Federalist Papers* (27 October 1787–28 May 1788) (<https://guides.loc.gov/federalist-papers>); *Anti-Federalist Papers* (25 September 1787–13 August 1788) (<https://antifederalists.org/papers/>).

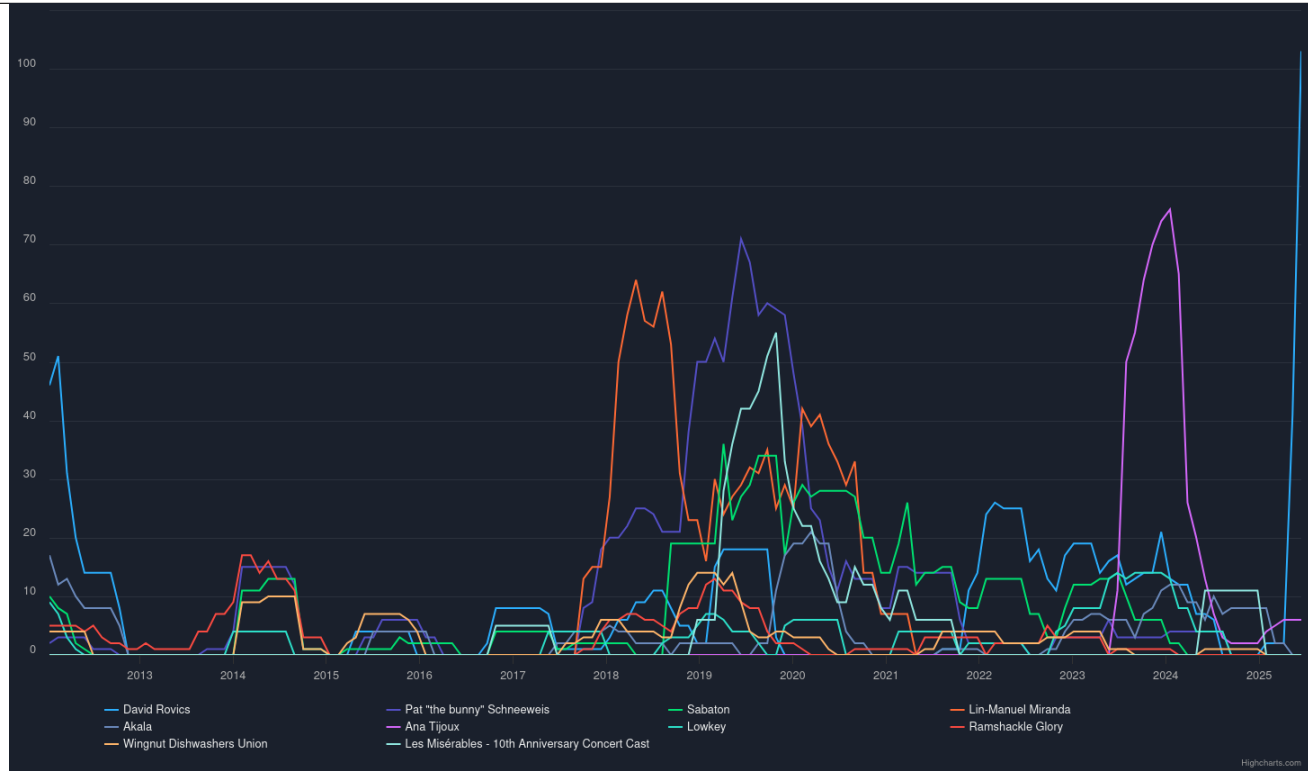
<sup>215</sup>Lin-Manuel Miranda, *Hamilton* (20 January 2015) (<https://hamiltonmusical.com/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(46)					As silly as that may sound, that musical's themes of resistance against tyranny, self sacrifice and—let's be honest here—the value of writing loads and loads and loads definitely resonated with me.
(47)	In fact, if I plot my listens for a broadly-defined set of 'political' artists onto a graph, <sup>216</sup> the turbulence of the following periods I will describe (which roughly begins with my short-lived <i>Hamilton</i> obsession) becomes impressively visual:				

<sup>216</sup>Specifically, the music of David Rovics, *Music of* (<https://www.davidrovics.com/>); Ana Tijoux, *Music of* (<https://anatiouxofficial.com/>); Schneeweis (n 199); Akala, *Music of* (<https://akalamusic.com/>); Lowkey, *Music of* ; and the musical Claude-Michel Schönberg, *Les Misérables* (24 September 1980).

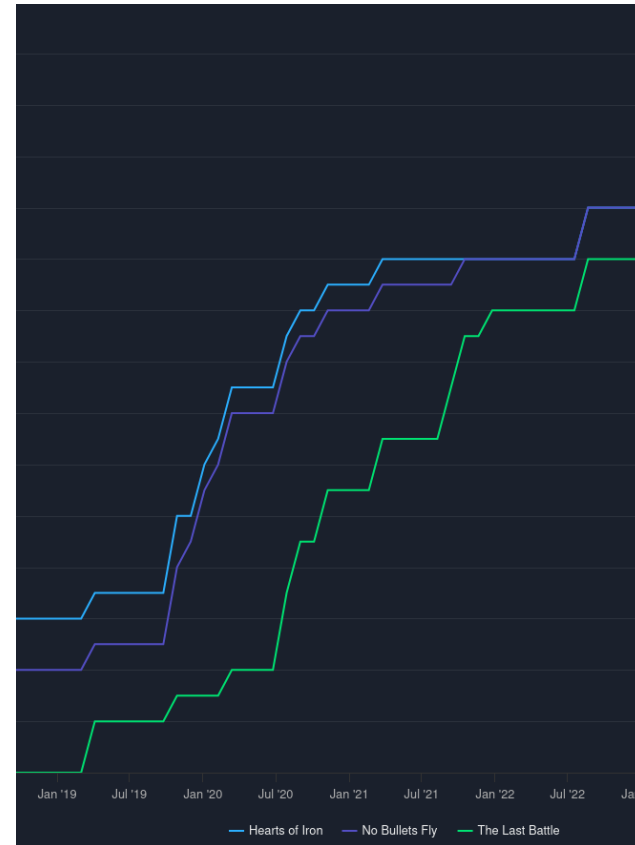
<b>(1)</b>	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
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<b>(48)</b>			<p>Note, also, the prevalence above of Sabaton: a metal group who sing about military history. I take the fact that it spiked at this same time to reflect the fact that my political uncertainties and my military uncertainties were intimately linked.</p>
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(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(49)			<p>I am later (2020) very drawn to two songs on their album <i>Heroes</i><sup>217</sup> in particular: all three about chivalry and sacrifice from German forces in <b>WWII</b>, adding shades of gray to the normally black &amp; white conflict:</p>		



<sup>217</sup>Sabaton, *Heroes* (6 May 2014) (<https://www.sabaton.net/discography/heroes/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(50) Sep 2017–May 2020	I began volunteering here with <b>St John Ambulance (SJA)</b> , initially as a first aider but eventually as an ambulance crewman (completing my training just in time for <b>COVID-19</b> ). This gave me an opportunity to act in a humanitarian clinical capacity, outside of the Army, for the first time, but it also reinforced the value of remaining in the Army as I was able to access more training and productively cross-pollinate between the two roles.				
(51) Oct 2017	My <b>GCHQ</b> vetting was rejected. From what I could gather, policy at the time was that drug use within the past 12 months was a hard no, whereas more than that was discretionary. Between this and having passed the interview, I knew that I would be able to apply again in a few months and probably be successful. However, this unexpected roadblock served to interrupt the smooth pipeline prepared by the university that I had otherwise been following with only minor questioning. I now had a lot of time to think				
(52) Oct 2017	I started my Master's in Cyber Security, again at Lancaster University.				
(53) Nov 2017		I joined the <b>Technology, Terrorism, and Armed Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TTAC21)</b> research group, where I remained until Mar 2020.			
(54)			I also watch <i>Hacksaw Ridge</i> , <sup>218</sup> about the US Army Medic Desmond Doss who—whilst objecting to carrying a rifle on religious grounds—rescued over 70 soldiers during the Battle of Okinawa.		

<sup>218</sup>Mel Gibson, *Hacksaw Ridge* (26 January 2017) (<<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/324786-hacksaw-ridge>>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(55) Dec 2017–Jan 2018</b>	I read the <i>Illuminatus! trilogy</i> trilogy of books <sup>219</sup> —an incredibly silly series of books that nonetheless introduce me to the world and politics of '70s counterculture, as well as libertarian ideas (in the US sense). The book is recognised as a cornerstone of hacker culture, <sup>220</sup> which is very much the water within which I have swum for much of my life. I still recall moments from this book to this day.				
<b>(56) 7 Feb 2018</b>	I happened to take a different route home from work one night, and saw a poster for an upcoming talk to be delivered by a returning civil volunteer from Rojava. <sup>221</sup> I was intrigued and went along, my interest in North & East Syria evidently already piqued by something based on my journal entries above (I'm not quite sure what, though).				
<b>(57) 14 Feb 2018</b>	<p>In an family email update, I recounted what I described as 'A Damascene moment':</p> <p>Cognitive dissonance is 'the mental discomfort experienced by a person who simultaneously holds two or more contradictory beliefs, ideas or values.' I think I've always had a bit of this, as most people do, but it wasn't until this summer that it became rather more acute. Despite my firm belief that Snowden, Swartz and Elbakyan <i>et al</i> are heroes (and heroines), and that the forces arrayed against them are definitively the villains of the piece, I was poised to accept my thirty pieces of silver from those same forces and was attempting to rationalise how I could do so—attempting to rationalise a state that genuinely has my best interests at heart, despite all evidence to the contrary.</p>				

<sup>219</sup>Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson, *Illuminatus! trilogy* (1975–1984).

<sup>220</sup>Quinn Norton, 'Anonymous 101: Introduction to the Lulz' (*WIRED*, 8 November 2011) (<https://www.wired.com/2011/11/anonymous-101/>) specifically the section titled 'Inevitability'.

<sup>221</sup>Plan C Rojava Solidarity Cluster, *Revolution in Rojava* (See Ben Goldsworthy, 'Revolution in Rojava' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 8 February 2018) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/revolution-in-rojava/>) for my report. 7 February 2018) (<https://www.facebook.com/events/gregson-centrethe/revolution-in-rojava-report-back-from-civil-volunteers/796295817224379/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(58)	<p>That's how domestic abuse victims act, and they are rarely the best example to follow. As such, I've attempted to abolish my cognitive dissonance by starting from first principles (in this case, literally quarks and electrons) and building up from there, doing my best to take nothing for granted...</p>				
(59)	<p>As far as the effect of the epiphany on my career goals, it means that I'm done with self-censoring to making myself more presentable to some vetting officer. My aims are not their aims, and that's one circle that cannot be squared. I'll still carry on with my plan to do that <b>Intelligence Corps</b> training over the summer though; they won't vet me until after I've finished the course and pocketed the £2,000 for doing so. If I pass the vetting, then that's on them; if I fail, it won't impact my ability to go through <b>Sandhurst</b> and commission into another cap badge (netting an additional £500–1,000 whilst I'm at it). Then I'll just play it by ear. There's something quite tasty about the thought of funnelling <b>MOD</b> money into the Red Crescent.</p>				
(60)	<p>To summarise in terms that [my brother] will better understand: it's finally happened; I've become one with my spirit Stallman [Richard Stallman, founder of the <b>Free Software Foundation</b> and renowned for his incredibly rigid adherence to his ethical positions]</p>				
(61)	<p>I also shared my account of the <b>Rojava</b> talk I had been to,<sup>222</sup> adding:</p> <p>Turkey's <b>invasion of Afrin</b> couldn't have come at a better time to serve as a catalyst for my resounding flip to distrust of the state, and more specifically my state(s). No country that could discard the Kurds so callously, especially in order to appease a scumbag like Erdoğan, deserves any respect. This goes for both the <b>US</b> and the <b>UK</b>—the former weakly suggesting that the Turks 'show restraint' in their aggression, whilst our own foreign secretary (who once wrote a limerick about Erdoğan <b>interfering with a goat</b>) agrees with Turkey's actions. I saw a poster for this talk whilst walking [home from work] for a change one evening, which can only be a sign. I've had to refrain from reading any Spanish Civil War books lately—your <i>Homages to Catalonia</i> and your <i>For Whoms the Bell Tolls</i><sup>223</sup>—because the fact we've thrown our lot in with Franco and his Fascists this time around makes it all far too depressing.</p>				

<sup>222</sup>(Goldsworthy, 'Revolution in Rojava' [n 221])

<sup>223</sup>George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (April 1938); Ernest Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (21 October 1940).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(62)			<p>I submitted an <b>Army Officer Selection Board (AOSB) CV</b>, which outlined what appealed to me about the Army and what my career plans were:</p> <p>When I joined <b>LUOTC</b> it seemed like just a fun extracurricular activity to do whilst at uni. I felt confident that I wouldn't buy in to the marketing and decide to join the Army. Jump ahead a year or so, and here I am. That was evidently not one of my more accurate predictions.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(63)			<p>As I spent time in the OTC, though, it made more and more sense. I found out about the range of roles available within the Army and, coupled with the thought of all the fun I was experiencing with what are now some of my closest friends and the skills I'd learned just through Mod. A, it was clear that a role in the Reserves would be a perfect fit for me.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(64)			<p>To fully demonstrate how wrong I was about the Army marketing not affecting me, I saw the 'This is Belonging' TV spot<sup>224</sup> recently in which a soldier sits miserably in the rain, before his mates come along with a thermos of tea and a hair touse. That sums up nicely what I've loved most about my experiences so far and what I want to experience more of in the years to come —pushing myself physically through, for example, a particularly grim night's stag, with a brew and some banter to go with it.</p>		

<sup>224</sup>British Army, 'This Is Belonging: Jungle tea' (*Army Jobs [YouTube]*, 9 January 2017) ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPSWFr9\\_sJo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPSWFr9_sJo)).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(65)			<p>Career-wise, my goal is to initially join an <b>MI</b> battalion, and to go on to experience a range of roles available within <b>1 ISR Bde</b>. I would be interested in mobilisations, in particular (if possible) a <b>UN</b> peacekeeping deployment.</p>		
(66)			<p>I also wrote that 'I hold myself to a high standard of integrity and aim to conduct myself honestly at all times' and 'I have a very precise attention to detail and take great pride in ensuring that everything I produce is as good as it can be, from the top to the minutiae.' Go figure.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(67) 16 Feb 2018			Royal Signals multi-unit potential officers (POs) showcase event		
(68) 3–8 Mar 2016	Around the same time, university staff went on strike and put on a series of “Teach Out” events which I attended; <sup>225</sup> probably my first exposure to contemporary leftist political and economic analyses.				
(69) 15 Mar 2018	Anna Campbell, a British volunteer who had fought against Daesh with the YPJ, was killed in a Turkish drone strike. I must have been aware of this, as I recall later seeing ‘RIP Anna Campbell’ graffiti along a canal in Manchester. I also remember reading how the weapons used to murder her had likely been designed and built in her hometown of Bristol. <sup>226</sup> I remember this, because it disgusted me.				
(70) Apr 2018	I watched the documentary <i>Only the Dead</i> <sup>227</sup> , which ends with a lengthy scene in which US soldiers watch an injured insurgent bleed to death without providing aid. The documentarian concludes that he ‘became a man I never thought I’d be’. I see how mere proximity to militarisation, even for a journalist, can produce a callousing effect.				
(71) 30 Apr–1 May 2018			Completed AOSB Briefing weekend, with a category 2 pass.		

<sup>225</sup> See Ben Goldsworthy, “UCU Teach Out” series’ (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 3 March–14 2018) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/series/ucu-teach-out/>) for my write-ups.

<sup>226</sup> Rory Wood, ‘British YPJ fighter Anna Campbell executed by fighter jets and missiles manufactured and serviced from her hometown of Bristol.’ (*Amity Underground*, 26 March 2018) (<https://amityunderground.com/british-ypj-fighter-anna-campbell-executed-by-fighter-jets-and-missiles-manufactured-and-serviced-from-her-hometown-of-bristol-rojava-aftrin-turkish-invasion-erdogan-uk-arms-tai-tfx-bae-systems/>).

<sup>227</sup> Michael Ware and Bill Guttentag, *Only the Dead* (11 June 2015) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/344170-only-the-dead>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(72) May 2018</b>	<p>As part of my master's, I delivered a presentation titled <i>Stop Waiting for 'Cyber-9/11'</i><sup>228</sup> to an audience comprising DSTL and Foreign Office representatives. In my slides I wrote:</p> <p>Some of the hallmarks of the 'post-9/11 era' are government surveillance and imprisonment, exploitation of fears over terrorism for the increasing of police powers and the use of the 'terrorist boogeyman' to justify military expeditions and the growth of the military–industrial complex . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-9/11 NSA spying has just been re- authorised for another 7 years; the <i>Investigatory Powers Act</i><sup>229</sup> and <i>Digital Economy Act</i><sup>230</sup> in the UK</li> <li>• War now happens without war happening (c.f. <i>Outplayed</i>,<sup>231</sup> 'hybrid'/'ambiguous'/'non-linear' war)</li> <li>• Have we just sleepwalked through the next big change in geopolitics?</li> <li>• Are we in the post-Ukraine era, or the post-Snowden era, or the post-truth era? . . .</li> <li>• 'Post-9/11 era' is rarely said in a cheery way</li> <li>• Responses to 9/11 include widespread gov't surveillance, lengthy and intractable conflicts in the Middle East, creation of groups like the IS</li> <li>• If we spend our time waiting for a 'cyber-9/11' that goes bang, we risk missing the truly era-creating event and being unable to stop the worst excesses of government in response to it</li> </ul>				

<sup>228</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, *Stop Waiting for 'Cyber-9/11'* (16 May 2018) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/presentations/stop-waiting-for-cyber-9-11/>).

<sup>229</sup>*Snoopers' Charter*.

<sup>230</sup>Digital Economy Act 2017.

<sup>231</sup>Nathan P Freier and others, *Outplayed: Regaining Strategic Initiative in the Gray Zone, A Report Sponsored by the Army Capabilities Integration Center in Coordination with Joint Staff J-39/Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment Branch* (, US Army War College Press 2016) (<https://press.armywarcollege.edu/monographs/925>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(73) Jun 2018	<p>As part of my Master's, I wrote an essay titled 'Between the Razors' Edge'.<sup>232</sup> I wrote:</p> <p>Both [reactive curtailments of freedom, 'such as by imprisoning those who openly dissent to the current regime', and proactive curtailments, 'such as by implementing a pervasive, pseudo-omniscient state surveillance apparatus (or at least the appearance of one) in order to promote pre-emptive self- censorship'] have been introduced into British life since the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks in New York; Labour governments repeatedly curtailed exercise of the right to protest and introduced indefinite detention without charge, whilst contemporary Conservative governments have attempted to further extend the reach of their intelligence agencies, falling afoul of the courts in doing so.</p> <p>This, I wrote, was in spite of the fact that 'the evidence could not be more overwhelming that these mass surveillance measures do nothing to stop terror attack' and that on the question of whether the 'invasions in the Middle East, the detentions at Guantanamo Bay or the drone campaign over Pakistan helped to alleviate the threat of worldwide Islamist terror', this 'does not appear to be the case'. I described as 'the optimistic view' the conclusion that 'the state is simply incompetent or ignorant, that contemporary state security practices are equal parts useless and, sometimes, actively counterproductive and that they serve primarily to undermine the security and liberties of the very individuals they were supposed to protect in the first place'.</p> <p>I then proposed an alternate explanation, or 'the view that sees Ms [Theresa] May's pledge to change human rights laws if they interfere with her fight against terrorism and sees the consequent and antecedent swapped, supposes that the goal of changing human rights laws came first and the means to do so—the fear of terrorism—later.' In the conclusion, after citing <i>The Power of Nightmares</i>, I asked rhetorically: 'Which nightmare keeps you up at night: terrorism from abroad or authoritarianism at home?'</p>				

<sup>232</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Between the Razors' Edge: When might state security practices become counterproductive?' [2018] (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/between-the-razors-edge/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(74) Jul 2018			<p>We had a social function on my final <b>LUOTC Annual Camp</b> in Germany. [A senior member of staff] was caught sleeping with an <b>officer cadet (OCdt)</b>, and was rapidly flown home the following day. However, from what I heard he was not subject to any disciplinary action and was instead transferred back to his original regiment to take up a promotion. This was by no means the worst crime ever (though certainly there have been similar recent cases with far more tragic consequences, hence the increased emphasis on unacceptable sexual behaviours training), but it was another small reminder that the Army will tend to cover things up.</p>		<p>Israel adopts the Nation-State Bill, officially declaring itself an apartheid state.</p>

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(75)			<p>My master's was ending, and so on return from Germany I would have to move on from the <b>UOTC</b>. I do not have documentation on exactly when I made this decision, but I had by this point decided that I was not willing to join the <b>Intelligence Corps</b>, as originally planned, because of my misgivings around the intelligence community as a whole, and specifically the fact that my intelligence efforts may (through the <b>NATO</b> alliance) serve to assist the Turkish state in its mission to exterminate the Kurds. I had decided, however, that I could ethically square medical service with my values. With my German great-grandfather in mind (and, I think, Franz Schmitz,<sup>233</sup> having recently read about him somewhere), I remember delivering a simplified version of my rationale to someone as 'only doing a role that I feel I could justify doing in the <i>Wehrmacht</i>.' And so, I put in for a transfer to <b>208 (Liverpool) Field Hospital</b>—the most local medical unit—where I intended to continue with the commissioning process and to become a <b>Medical Support Officer (MSO)</b>.</p>		

<sup>233</sup>See 'Franz Schmitz' (*Biographiesnet*) ([https://www.biographies.net/people/en/franz\\_schmitz](https://www.biographies.net/people/en/franz_schmitz)).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(76)	<p>In an email to family around the same time, I wrote the following:<sup>234</sup></p> <p>Whilst I was in Germany I read through <i>Revolution in Rojava</i>.<sup>235</sup> The book dives deep into all the facets of the <b>Rojava</b> Revolution and society within the three autonomous cantons, including the self-defence and security forces, the justice systems, the women's revolution, the democratic communes, the healthcare systems, the education systems, etc.. It was fascinating and has fully inflamed my fascination for the whole affair. Particularly interesting were the two organisations managing internationalists within <b>Rojava: YPG-International</b>, which recruits foreign fighters for the self-defence forces (not my cup of tea), and the <b>Internationalist Commune of Rojava</b>, which deals primarily with civil projects such as <b>Make Rojava Green Again</b> and has just finished building the 'Internationalist Academy <i>shid Hêlîn Qereçox</i>'<sup>2</sup> where they run courses on the history of the region, the Kurdish language, etc. for newly-arrived internationalists before setting them loose. Don't worry, I'm not planning on dashing off to Syria any time soon. I am going to see about ways of helping out from the <b>UK</b>, however, even if it's just proofreading the Internationalist Commune's newsletters (which are very clearly written by someone unfluent in English), donating/raising some dosh for medical supplies or writing to my solidly leftie <b>MP</b> to try and get her to whinge in Parliament. Plan C—the group that the guy who <b>did that talk on Rojava</b> all those months ago was with—also have a <b>Rojava</b> Solidarity Cluster that sounds promising, as well as a general Manchester group.</p>				
(77)	<p>Other than that, I've got a fair amount of reading material. The granddaddy of the Kurdish freedom movement is Abdullah Öcalan, a forgotten Chuckle Brother who kicked it all off in the '70s as [a] big Marxist thing, was arrested by the Turks (with <b>CIA</b> help) in 1999, narrowly avoided the death sentence and then spent the next decade as the sole prisoner on an island prison with 1,000 guards (like some kind of Batman villain). During his imprisonment (which continues), he was influenced by the writings of a bloke called Murray Bookchin to abandon Marxism. . . and to declare the time for armed struggle and the desire for statehood over in favour of the 'democratic confederalism' which is now being implemented in <b>Rojava</b>. I've got a lot of Öcalan and Bookchin to get through, as well as Spanish Civil War stuff like <i>Homage to Catalonia</i>. I'm also going to give <b>learning a baseline level of Kurmanji</b> (the Kurdish dialect spoken in <b>Rojava</b>) a go.</p>				

<sup>234</sup>Hyperlinks and footnotes below are reproduced as per the original text; some linked Web sites are no longer available.

<sup>235</sup>Michael Knapp, Anja Flach, and Ercan Ayboga, *Revolution in Rojava: Democratic Autonomy and Women's Liberation in Syrian Kurdistan* (Pluto Books October 2016).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(78)	<p>After years of seeing the gleam in my <b>Labour/Tory</b>/even that one <b>EDL</b> friends' eyes when they talk politics, it's nice to finally find something I give the same amount of a shit about.</p> <p><sup>1</sup> Quote from a fellow <b>Officer Cadet</b> and intellectual who read the title: 'that sounds like the most leftie book ever'.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> After the <i>nom de guerre</i> of Anna Campbell, the gal from Bristol who was killed fighting the Turks back in March.</p> <p>Fun fact: since we supply the Turkish army with arms and since Bristol has a big weapons manufacturing industry, there's every chance she was killed by a bomb from her hometown. Really makes you proud to be British.</p>				
(79)	<p>Albert Camus has been one of my favourite authors for as long as I can remember. In this month, I read <i>Between Hell and Reason</i>:<sup>236</sup> a collection of his editorials for the Resistance newspaper <i>Combat</i> both during and after the <b>war</b>. Camus details in real time how his elation at the Liberation becomes horror at the violent excesses that follow it; themes he would later develop into one of his best works.<sup>237</sup> In particular, the sequence sometimes collected as 'Neither Victims nor Executioners'<sup>238</sup> had a significant impact on me, from its rejection of the legitimacy of violence to its optimistic aspirations for what would later become the <b>UN</b>.</p>				
(80) Sep 2018	<p>The YouTube series <i>World War Two series</i>, which covers the <b>Second World War</b> one week at a time for six years, begins.<sup>239</sup> I don't know when I started to watch it, but certainly the real-time perspective is eye-opening in terms of making me realise how little of <b>World War Two</b> looked like what we picture when we think of it. Much of it was waiting, or manoeuvring in other parts of the world.</p>				

<sup>236</sup>Albert Camus, *Between Hell and Reason: Essays from the Resistance Newspaper Combat, 1944–1947* (Alexandre de Gramont tr with a forew by Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, 1 August 1991).

<sup>237</sup>Albert Camus, *L'Homme révolté [The Rebel]* (Anthony Bower tr, 1951).

<sup>238</sup>Albert Camus, 'Neither Victims nor Executioners' in *Between Hell and Reason: Essays from the Resistance Newspaper Combat, 1944–1947* (first published 1946, 1991).

<sup>239</sup>TimeGhost History, 'World War Two series' (*World War Two [YouTube]*, September 2018–September 2024) (<<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP1AejCL4DA7jYkZAELRHQ>>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(81) Nov 2018			<p>My transfer to 208 Fd Hosp had stalled. In the absence of another medical unit to transfer into, I requested a discharge instead. However, I was talked into remaining (perhaps by my LUOTC PSI?), who advised me to join the logistics unit downstairs instead, where I could continue to pursue the commissioning process, and then reapply to 208 Fd Hosp after becoming an MSO. This compromise passed my 'Wehrmacht test', so I agreed, and transferred to 381 (Lancaster) Squadron, 156 Regiment RLC on Dec 4.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(82) Mar 2019		<p>In a <b>TTAC21</b> article review,<sup>240</sup> I wrote the following:</p> <p>The author of this piece makes a plea for a Western-led reinforcement of international legal norms as the most potent counter to revisionist states like Russia and their ‘instrumentalisation of law for political purposes’. Concerned that ‘[p]ersistent and serious breaches of international law undermine respect for the rule of law in international affairs’, they propose a three-step plan: strengthening local preparedness, including ‘identifying legal threats and taking stock of legal vulnerabilities at the national and institutional level’; strengthening their legal resilience and deterrence; and strengthening their capability for legal defence. All of this seems like very reasonable advice, although Western institutions have gifted themselves a steep uphill climb here through their own historic ‘persistent and serious’ breaches of international law when it suited them, from the <b>CIA’s</b> Cold War government-toppling misadventures to the Pakistani drone war of today. However, one hopes that states, like people, can change, and if they were truly interested in reclaiming this mantle as defenders-of-the-norms, I would suggest that they start by making sure their own house is order. Perhaps they could dip their collective toes in the water and consider doing something about the ethnic cleansing of Kurds that <b>NATO</b> ally Turkey is currently chomping at the bit to finish in <b>Northern Syria</b>. Just a thought.</p>			
(83)		<p>In another review,<sup>241</sup> I expressed concern over the use of machine learning algorithms in making military targeting decisions.</p>			
(84)		<p>In a third,<sup>242</sup> I expressed concern over the use of <b>autonomous weapon system (AWS)</b> in the ability to produce a ‘temporary autonomous zone of slaughter’.</p>			

<sup>240</sup>Aurel Sari, ‘Blurred lines: hybrid threats and the politics of international law’ [2018] Strategic Analysis, The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (See Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Sari’ (*TTAC21*, 1 April 2019) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/sari/>) for my response.).

<sup>241</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Should Robots be Allowed to Target People?’ (*TTAC21*, 4 March 2019) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/should-robots-be-allowed-to-target-people/>).

<sup>242</sup>Ian GR Shaw, ‘Robot Wars: **US** Empire and geopolitics in the robotic age’ (2017) 48(5) Security dialogue 451 (See Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Shaw’ (*TTAC21*, 11 March 2019) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/shaw/>) for my response.).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(85) Apr 2019</b>	Julian Assange, after seven years imprisoned in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, was arrested. Shortly thereafter, Swedish prosecutors dropped their charges against him (which had ostensibly been the original reason for his seeking asylum).		A leaked video showing <b>3 PARA</b> soldiers shooting at a Jeremy Corbyn caused a minor scandal, <sup>243</sup> but ultimately they were not discharged.		
<b>(86) 11 Apr 2019</b>			I emailed my <b>National Recruiting Centre (NRC) Candidate Support Manager (CSM)</b> : 'As for my commissioning plans: I plan to attend a <b>Main Board</b> at some point in Q4 this year'		

<sup>243</sup>Forces News, 'Paratroopers Who Used Corbyn Picture for Target Practice Avoid Sacking' (*Forces News*, 3 July 2019) (<https://www.forcesnews.com/news/uk/paratroopers-who-used-corbyn-picture-target-practice-avoid-sacking>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(87) Between 11 Apr and 13 May 2019</b>			At some point during this month, I seem to have decided to abandon the commissioning process. Whilst I had been waiting, I had got to know the two <b>Combat Medical Technicians (CMTs)</b> in <b>381 Sqn</b> , and I had decided that being <b>other ranks</b> interested me more than being an officer. My plan A was to transfer to the <b>Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC)</b> and become a <b>CMT</b> myself.		
<b>(88) May 2019</b>		I was interviewed on a podcast about drones, cyberwarfare and the dangers of technologically distancing combatants from the violent consequences of their acts. <sup>244</sup>			

<sup>244</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, Mike Ryder, and Josh Hughes, *War-Games and the Dehumanisation of War* (In the Zone podcast, 28 May 2019) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/cv/appearances/war-games-and-the-dehumanisation-of-war/>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(89) 13–17 May 2019			<p>On a sailing expedition with the OC and ROSO, they realised that because I was no longer commissioning I would have to complete a handful of Phase 1 modules not covered by UOTC Mods A &amp; B (e.g. bayonets), and would be reverted to trainee status until I had done so.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(90) 27 May 2019			<p>I emailed my plans to my <b>Squadron Sergeant Major (SSM)</b> as part of an <b>SJAR</b> that never happened:</p> <p>My plan now is to attend a Phase 1 refresher weekend and complete Phase 2 training in 2019, and then go on a trade training course in 2020— ideally as a <b>CMT</b> if possible, but <b>[Logistics Support Specialist (LSS)]</b> if not. I have a <b>Briefing</b> pass that is good for a few more years, so I'll reconsider whether or not I want to go for a commission when that is coming up to expiry.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(91) 18 Jun 2019			The transition from officer cadet to private was not smooth. As an untrained soldier I very limited in what training I could participate in for a year and half. I finally managed to get on a Phase 1 DELTA course in Feb 2020 and (re-)complete my basic training.		
(92) 24–28 Jun 2019					I visited Kyiv and Chernobyl with a friend. <sup>245</sup> We got talking to some people in a bar, who told us about the war still ongoing in Crimea (which was, at this point, not being particularly covered in UK media). They spoke about how it makes no sense for them to hate the Russians, because most Ukrainians have Russian family members and ties; their issue was solely with their leaders.

<sup>245</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Chernobyl' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 9 July 2019) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/chernobyl/>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(93) May–Sep 2019</b>	<p>I read several books which had a major impact on me, and which I still refer to regularly today:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hannah Arendt's <i>Eichmann in Jerusalem</i>,<sup>246</sup> which introduced the world to the concept of the 'banality of evil', and <i>Responsibility and Judgement</i>,<sup>247</sup> which includes the fantastic essay 'Personal Responsibility Under Dictatorship'<sup>248</sup></li> <li>• <i>Letters of Insurgents</i>,<sup>249</sup> written as a series of letters between two former dissidents on either side of the Iron Curtain, exploring critically the many different tendencies on the Left (and thus, serving as something of a map of the territory for me)</li> <li>• <i>The Political Thought of Abdullah Öcalan</i>,<sup>250</sup> a collection of essays by the imprisoned founder and leader of the <b>Kurdish Freedom Movement</b></li> </ul>				
<b>(94) Jul 2019</b>	I attended ORGCon, the <b>Open Rights Group's</b> annual conference, at which Edward Snowden was the keynote speaker (via videolink).		ORGCon took place in the Friends' Meeting Hall in London, which I expect was my first encounter with the Quakers. Shortly afterwards, I requested an info pack from them.		

<sup>246</sup>Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963).

<sup>247</sup>Hannah Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgement* (2003).

<sup>248</sup>Arendt, 'Personal Responsibility Under Dictatorship' (n 20).

<sup>249</sup>Fredy Perlman, *Letters of Insurgents* (1976).

<sup>250</sup>Abdullah Öcalan, *The Political Thought of Abdullah Öcalan: Kurdistan, Woman's Revolution and Democratic Confederalism* (Pluto Books 2017).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(95) 8 Jul 2019			I'm not sure why, but I was contacted by 6 MI inviting me to a Specialist Selection day. I think the most likely reason was that I was still going through the recruitment process for the money, but with no intention of completing it. <sup>251</sup>		
(96) 26 Jul–10 Aug 2019					I went backpacking in Serbia. We were greeted very warmly, but also repeatedly reminded of the NATO bombing campaign. We also saw how people could somehow be both incredibly hospitable and friendly to some, whilst also harbouring incredible hatred for others. <sup>252</sup>

<sup>251</sup> See ¶ 57.


<sup>252</sup> Ben Goldsworthy, 'Explorer Belt 2019' (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 3 December 2019) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/explorer-belt-2019/>). In particular, see the end of days [one](#) and [two](#).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(97)					<p>One other moment that stands out is when we witness a car accident in a rural area. With Serbian police functioning effectively solely within the big cities, we watch as all involved—and several bystanders who come out with planks of wood—all pitch in to help pull a vehicle out of a river without acrimony, celebrate when it is done and then go on their merry ways. It's a striking demonstration of emergency response, and social solidarity, achieved through non-hierarchical means.</p>
(98) 14 Aug 2019			<p>Attended Specialist Selection day with 6 MI in Manchester.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(99) 29 Aug 2019</b>			I contacted <b>6 MI</b> to inform them that I was withdrawing my application to join as 'I've decided to go for <b>CMT</b> after all'.		
<b>(100) Sep 2019</b>	I read <i>Anarchy Works</i> , <sup>253</sup> which introduced me to several case studies of (more or less) successful non-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian societies and political projects. <sup>254</sup>				

<sup>253</sup>Peter Gelderloos, *Anarchy Works* (2010).

<sup>254</sup>See ¶ 97 for a then-fresh-in-my-mind example.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(101) 11 Nov 2019				<p>I take part in the Remembrance Day wreath-laying on behalf of <b>St John Ambulance</b>. I choose to wear a white poppy, both in recognition of the red poppy's nationalistic focus (which I don't feel appropriate to me) and in tribute to the <b>Friends' Ambulance Unit</b> and similar groups:</p>	
(102)			<p>I run into some staff and <b>OCdts</b> from my former <b>UOTC</b> in Wetherspoons later, who helpfully inform me that it was 'gay'.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(103) Nov 2019	I watched <i>Official Secrets</i> , about GCHQ whistleblower Katherine Gun.		<p>I don't recall why, but I started researching <b>Nationally Recruited Units (NRUs)</b> around this time. My shortlist (as both were interesting to me, and both roles passed my 'Wehrmacht test'), were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>500 Communications Troop, 2 Operational Support Group RLC</b> (providing comms for the <b>Army Medical Services</b>)</li> <li>• <b>335 Medical Evacuation Regiment</b></li> </ul>		I also attended a talk of the <b>Discourse and Text Analysis (DisTex)</b> research group at Lancaster University about 'mystification in press coverage of state violence on the Gaza border', which introduced me to the violent Israeli suppression of the non-violent Great March of Return. <sup>255</sup>

<sup>255</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, "28 Palestinians Died" (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 19 November 2019) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/28-palestinians-died/>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(104)			I contacted and visited 500 Comms Tp. I asked them if they had slots available for CMTs, and they said no. I contacted 335 MER and they suggested I commission, or look at joining 11 Bde in an IT role. I continued to pursue a CMT role exclusively, though, and began my transfer in late December.		
(105)		I ask a question on an online Q&A forum, asking how emergency services have functioned in past authoritarian states (with the context being whether my 'Wehrmacht test' might have unseen limitations of its own). <sup>256</sup>			

<sup>256</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Historically, what has happened to emergency services (other than the police) in corrupt/authoritarian states?' (*History Stack Exchange*, 21 November 2019) (<https://history.stackexchange.com/questions/55497/historically-what-has-happened-to-emergency-services-other-than-the-police-in>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(106) Dec 2019–Feb 2020					<p>I follow the live broadcasts of the first impeachment trial of Donald Trump. Alexander Vindman, the initial whistleblower, stands out in my memory, particularly the closing lines of his opening statement: ‘I’ll be fine for telling the truth’.<sup>257</sup> I also remember Fiona Hill’s testimony as particularly compelling. But, ultimately, it achieves nothing.</p>

<sup>257</sup>Alexander Vindman, ‘Vindman: I’ll be fine for telling the truth | Impeachment hearing opening remarks’ (*CNN [YouTube]*, 19 November 2019) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXYlgnuCoP8>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(107) Jan 2020	I read <i>Konrad Morgen</i> , <sup>258</sup> the biography of an SS judge who tried to pursue concentration camp commandants and Adolf Eichmann within the structure of the Nazi judicial system. This was a stark example of the futility of trying to behave ethically within an immoral system.				
(108) Jan 2020	I watched <i>A Hidden Life</i> , <sup>259</sup> about the true story of a man who refused to an oath to Hitler and was imprisoned and executed.				
(109) Mar–Apr 2020				I finally get around to my Quaker info pack, reading <i>Living Our Beliefs</i> and <i>Being a Quaker</i> . <sup>260</sup>	

<sup>258</sup>Herlinde Pauer-Studer and JDavid Velleman, *Konrad Morgen: Conscience of a Nazi Judge* (2015).

<sup>259</sup>Terence Malick, *A Hidden Life* (17 January 2020) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/403300-a-hidden-life>).

<sup>260</sup>Graham Ralph with young Quakers (ed), *Living Our Beliefs: An Exploration of the Faith and Practice of Quakers* (2nd edn, 2018); Ben Pink Dandelion, *Being a Quaker: A Guide for Newcomers* (Quaker Books 19 May 2010).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(110) Apr–May 2020	I read ‘ <i>Exterminate All the Brutes</i> ’, <sup>261</sup> which introduces me to decolonial arguments for the first time.				
(111) Mar–Jun 2020	The COVID-19 pandemic. By March I was out volunteering on ambulances with <b>St John Ambulance (SJA)</b> ; by June I had grown deeply disillusioned with the government’s handling of the pandemic. To this day, I consider this to be one of the greatest acts of social murder in domestic <b>British</b> history, for which nobody has been held accountable.				
(112) Jun–Nov 2020	My time with <b>SJA</b> also ends in disaster when I am expelled for gross misconduct following an investigation which, I realise belatedly, was most likely an attempt to cover for repeat and dangerous failings within the organisation. After months of exhausting every internal process for raising my concerns, I make the decision to blow the whistle to the <b>CQC</b> and Charity Commission, as well sharing my report publicly. <sup>262</sup> However, this means that the Army remains my only source of clinical training and activity. The experience also serves to kill my burgeoning plans to leave tech and move into paramedicine instead.				
(113) 9 Mar 2020			I transferred to the <b>RAMC</b> on this date.		
(114) Mar 2020			I also requested a transfer to <b>335 MER</b> .		

<sup>261</sup>Lindqvist (n 91).

<sup>262</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, *With Neither Utility nor Humanity: An account of repeat institutional failings within St John Ambulance* (2021) (<<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/with-neither-utility-nor-humanity/>>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(115) Summer 2020	The febrile period of the George Floyd uprising exposes me to many new critical perspectives around power, race, politics, etc. I read <i>Natives</i> during this time, which I will later cite as a key influence behind my decision to travel to Cuba.				
(116) May 2020			I re-watched <i>Hacksaw Ridge</i> , <sup>263</sup> the film about US Army Medic and conscientious objector Desmond Doss. Afterwards, I asked online whether someone could refuse to carry a weapon in the military today. <sup>264</sup>		
(117)				I complete an online course about the Quakers (the first of many), a MOOC titled <i>Radical Spirituality</i> . <sup>265</sup>	

<sup>263</sup>Gibson (n 218) . See also ¶ 54.

<sup>264</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Can a soldier refuse to carry a weapon?' (*Law Stack Exchange*, 2 May 2020) (<https://law.stackexchange.com/questions/51213/can-a-soldier-refuse-to-carry-a-weapon>).

<sup>265</sup>Lancaster University and Woodbrooke, *Radical Spirituality*, FutureLearn (<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/quakers>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(118) Jun 2020	I published an article about my disillusionment with the <b>British</b> government following its handling of the <b>COVID-19</b> pandemic. <sup>266</sup> In particular, I feel aggrieved at having been made to feel complicit in its crimes, and explicitly link this to my knowledge of my German ancestors.		I attend a series of Quaker courses delivered by <b>Quaker Peace &amp; Social Witness (QPSW)</b> , <sup>267</sup> including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Testimonies in action: opportunities and leadings”</li> <li>• “Quakers and the peace movement: opportunities and challenges today”</li> <li>• “Working for peace and justice in Palestine and Israel with the team at <b>EAPPI</b>”</li> <li>• “Can you teach Peace?”</li> </ul> I also read the book <i>Dining with Diplomats, Praying with Gunmen</i> , <sup>268</sup> about Quaker peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts around the world. Prior to this, my awareness had been limited to peacekeeping (i.e., through <b>UN</b> deployments).		
(119) Jul 2020	I was interviewed on a local podcast about my <b>COVID-19</b> article. <sup>269</sup> In the interview, I proposed the commune system of <b>Rojava</b> as a desirable alternative to the present <b>British</b> state structure.				From this point on, I get involved in Kurdish solidarity activity and educational courses.

<sup>266</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, ‘**COVID** and Complicity’ (*bengoldsworthynet*, 28 June 2020) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/covid-and-complicity/>>.

<sup>267</sup>**Quaker Peace & Social Witness**, *QPSW Summer Series* (<https://www.quaker.org.uk/events/summerseries>).

<sup>268</sup>Anne Bennett, *Dining with Diplomats, Praying with Gunmen: Experiences of international conciliation for a new generation of peacemakers* (Quaker Books 10 March 2020).

<sup>269</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, Aneesh de Vos, and David Buckler, ‘*Highlighting a Broken System with Covid*’ - *what can we take forward?* (Community Connections podcast [YouTube], 3 July 2020) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/cv/appearances/highlighting-a-broken-system-with-covid/>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(120) Jul–Aug 2020	I read <i>Ordinary Men</i> , <sup>270</sup> about a German police reservist unit and their gradual degradation from apolitical older men to responsible for some of the worst atrocities of the <b>Second World War</b>				
(121) Jul 2020–ongoing	I watch <i>Babylon Berlin</i> , <sup>271</sup> a German <b>TV</b> series set in Weimar Germany in which the gradual rise of the Nazis is a running throughline.				
(122) Aug 2020	<p>After learning about them through a documentary about internationalists fighting <b>ISIS</b> in Syria and listening to a podcast with the founder,<sup>272</sup> I contact <b>Shadows of Hope</b>—a ‘humanitarian private military company’. I write the following:</p> <p>I’m in a bit of an awkward position of having more than 0 military &amp; medical experience—I’ve been an Army Reservist for the past four years, volunteered with a charity ambulance service for the last two and volunteered as a first response trainer with another large charity for the last one-and-a-half—but I’m obviously a long way off from being a veteran, paramedic or medical lecturer.</p> <p>In short, would <b>SoH</b> be likely to take a chance on a block of highly-motivated but largely-unmolded clay that can be sculpted up to the required level, or is there more of an expectation that applicants will have former military experience/professional clinical qualifications before applying for those sorts of roles? Or is it completely handled on a case-by-case basis?</p> <p>I follow up again in Jan 2021, but I never hear back from them. But this shows that even at this point, I was very keen for a humanitarian role that could also leverage my military training.</p>				

<sup>270</sup>Christopher R Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1992).

<sup>271</sup>Tom Tykwer, Achim von Borries, and Hendrik Handloegten, *Babylon Berlin* (13 October 2017–2026) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/66980-babylon-berlin>).

<sup>272</sup>Emile Ghessen, *Robin Hood Complex: The Fight Against Islamic State* (Sandbag Media 9 December 2017) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/528992> -

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(123) Sep 2020		I attend a two-week Army training camp in Wales, which happens to land perfectly in-between COVID-19 lockdowns meaning we are one of the few units to have been able to train in-person in 2020. There is a festival atmosphere, and we are perched on a clifftop on the southern Welsh coast; the sunrise each morning is incredible, and it's one of the best camps of my career.			

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(124)		<p>Two particular points of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am impressed by the <b>ROSO</b>—a giant of a man—who manages to effectively delivers a mandatory <b>Diversity &amp; Inclusion (D&amp;I)</b> brief to a hostile audience and keep them on side; so much so that I ask to join his <b>D&amp;I</b> team.</li> <li>• Less impressively, I observe some profoundly sexist treatment of a <b>UOTC</b> friend of mine by several of the seniors in the unit.</li> </ul>			

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(125) Oct–Nov 2020	<p>Albert Camus has long been one of my favourite authors, and at this point I read <i>Resistance, Rebellion and Death</i><sup>273</sup> (wherein he discusses the Algerian independence struggle, his opposition to capital punishment and his experiences under totalitarianism). It also includes several editorials from <i>Combat</i>, the Resistance newspaper Camus edited during and after the war:</p> <p>The world I live in is loathsome to me, but I feel one with the men who suffer in it. There are ambitions that are not mine, and I should not feel at ease if I had to make my way by relying on the paltry privileges granted to those who adapt themselves to this world.</p>				

<sup>273</sup>Albert Camus, *Lettres à un ami allemand [Resistance, Rebellion and Death]* (Justin O'Brien tr, 1961).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(126) Nov–Dec 2020	<p>I read <i>They Thought They Were Free</i>,<sup>274</sup> a series of interviews with Germans who lived through the Nazi period conducted shortly after the end of WWII.</p> <p>I was prompted to read it after stumbling upon an excerpt online,<sup>275</sup> part of which I will reproduce here:</p> <p>“How is this to be avoided, among ordinary men, even highly educated ordinary men? Frankly, I do not know. I do not see, even now. Many, many times since it all happened I have pondered that pair of great maxims, <i>Principiis obsta</i> and <i>Finem respice</i>—‘Resist the beginnings’ and ‘Consider the end.’ But one must foresee the end in order to resist, or even see, the beginnings. One must foresee the end clearly and certainly and how is this to be done, by ordinary men or even by extraordinary men? Things <i>might</i> have. And everyone counts on that <i>might</i>.</p> <p>‘You see,’ my colleague went on, “one doesn’t see exactly where or how to move. Believe me, this is true. Each act, each occasion, is worse than the last, but only a little worse. You wait for the next and the next. You wait for one great shocking occasion, thinking that others, when such a shock comes, will join with you in resisting somehow. You don’t want to act, or even talk, alone; you don’t want to ‘go out of your way to make trouble.’ Why not?—Well, you are not in the habit of doing it. And it is not just fear, fear of standing alone, that restrains you; it is also genuine uncertainty.</p> <p>“... In... your own community, you speak privately to your colleagues, some of whom certainly feel as you do; but what do they say? They say, ‘It’s not so bad’ or ‘You’re seeing things’ or ‘You’re an alarmist.’</p> <p>“And you <i>are</i> an alarmist. You are saying that <i>this</i> must lead to <i>this</i>, and you can’t prove it. These are the beginnings, yes; but how do you know for sure when you don’t know the end, and how do you know, or even surmise, the end?... </p> <p>“But the one great shocking occasion, when tens or hundreds or thousands will join with you, never comes. That’s the difficulty. If the last and worst act of the whole regime had come immediately after the first and smallest, thousands, yes, millions would have been sufficiently shocked... But of course this isn’t the way it happens. In between come all the hundreds of little steps, some of them imperceptible, each of them preparing you not to be shocked by the next. Step C is not so much worse than Step B, and, if you did not make a stand at Step B, why should you at Step C? And so on to Step D.</p>				

<sup>274</sup>Milton Mayer, *They Thought They Were Free: The Germans, 1933–45* (University of Chicago Press 1955).

<sup>275</sup>Milton Mayer, ‘An excerpt from *They Thought They Were Free*’ (University of Chicago Press, University of Chicago Press 1955) (<https://press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/511928.html>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<p>“And one day, too late, your principles, if you were ever sensible of them, all rush in upon you. The burden of self-deception has grown too heavy, and some minor incident . . . collapses it all at once, and you see that everything, everything, has changed and changed completely under your nose. The world you live in—your nation, your people—is not the world you were born in at all. The forms are all there, all untouched, all reassuring, the houses, the shops, the jobs, the mealtimes, the visits, the concerts, the cinema, the holidays. But the spirit, which you never noticed because you made the lifelong mistake of identifying it with the forms, is changed. Now you live in a world of hate and fear, and the people who hate and fear do not even know it themselves; when everyone is transformed, no one is transformed. Now you live in a system which rules without responsibility even to God. The system itself could not have intended this in the beginning, but in order to sustain itself it was compelled to go all the way.  ‘Suddenly it all comes down, all at once. You see what you are, what you have done, or, more accurately, what you haven’t done (for that was all that was required of most of us: that we do nothing). . . . You remember everything now, and your heart breaks. Too late. You are compromised beyond repair.’</p>					
(127) 9 Dec 2020	I attend a seminar as part of the Security Lancaster research group at Lancaster University on ‘necro-geopolitics’. <sup>276</sup> This is my first introduction to the concepts of ‘biopower’ and ‘necropolitics’, which I consider central to my present worldview. Shortly thereafter, I read Mbembe’s definitive <i>Necropolitics</i> . <sup>277</sup>				
(128) 19 Dec 2020			My transfer to 335 MER finally went through.		
(129) Jan–Feb 2021					I again watch the livestreams of the second impeachment trial of Donald Trump. Again, it achieves nothing

<sup>276</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, ‘The Necro-Geopolitics of American Insecurity’ (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 9 December 2020) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/the-necro-geopolitics-of-american-insecurity/>).

<sup>277</sup>Achille Mbembe, *Necropolitics* (Steven Corcoran tr, Duke University Press 25 October 2019).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(130) Feb 2021			I attended another <b>DisTex</b> talk about the 2010 Uruzgan helicopter attack, in which 27–33 men, women and children were misidentified as combatants and killed. <sup>278</sup>		
(131)		I also attend an online talk titled <i>UK Military Spending and its Alternatives</i> . <sup>279</sup> From this point on, I consider myself an opponent of nuclear weapons.			

<sup>278</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Language, Cognition and Drone Warfare' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 8 February 2021) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/language-cognition-and-drone-warfare/>).

<sup>279</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'UK Military Spending and its Alternatives' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 5 March 2021) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/uk-military-spending-and-its-alternatives/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(132) Feb–Mar 2021			I watch <i>Battlestar Galactica</i> , <sup>280</sup> an early-2000s sci-fi show that tackles themes of military duty, sacrifice and resistance. I leave it wondering if I should join the Navy. One particular plotline that sticks with me is when the protagonists (representing a democratically-controlled flotilla of the last survivors of humanity) encounter another ship from their same former navy that has been left alone the whole time and descended into hyper-militarised fascism.		
(133) Mar 2021		The UK government releases its <b>Integrated Review</b> . I will elaborate on my criticisms of the strategy later, but one area in which I identify cause for optimism is in the focus on homeland resilience. <sup>281</sup> I have thought often about the <b>TA</b> , with its lack of pretensions to overseas warfighting, with some fondness.			

<sup>280</sup>Glen A Larson and Ronald D Moore, *Battlestar Galactica* (8 December 2003–4 April 2008) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/1972-battlestar-galactica>).

<sup>281</sup>UK Cabinet Office, *Global Britain in a Competitive Age: The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy* (, HM Stationery Office

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(134) Mar 2021–Mar 2022</b>	<p>I volunteer with my local <b>City of Sanctuary</b> chapter, working to support refugees and asylum seekers. I learn about the <b>UK</b> hostile environment policy and how people are treated in this country, and am appalled. One event I particularly remember was when the payment cards given to asylum seekers— their only means of accessing the paltry amounts they are given to live on whilst denied the ability to work—changed providers and stopped working for a time.<sup>282</sup> I saw first-hand how government incompetence (or intentional cruelty; it's immaterial) results in real harm to real people.</p>				
<b>(135) Apr 2021</b>	<p>I watch <i>La Commune (Paris, 1871)</i>,<sup>283</sup> a radical mockumentary about the Paris Commune and one of the most powerful films I have ever seen before or since.</p>				
<b>(136) Apr–May 2021</b>	<p>I read <i>The Wretched of the Earth</i>,<sup>284</sup> Franz Fanon's collection of essays about colonial and decolonial violence.</p>				

2021) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/global-britain-in-a-competitive-age-the-integrated-review-of-security-defence-development-and-foreign-policy>) part IV, §4.1.

<sup>282</sup>Diane Taylor, 'Thousands of asylum seekers go hungry after cash card problems' (*The Guardian*, 2 June 2021) (<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/02/thousands-of-asylum-seekers-go-hungry-after-cash-card-problems>).

<sup>283</sup>Peter Watkins, *La Commune (Paris, 1871)* (26 May 2000) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/128061-la-commune-de-paris>).

<sup>284</sup>Franz Fanon, *Les Damnés de la Terre [The Wretched of the Earth]* (Richard Philcox tr, first published 1961, 2004).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(137) 17 Jul 2021	<p>I meet with a couple of friends in London: ██████ (see <a href="#">appendix C</a>); and our mutual university friend who now works for a <b>Tory</b> think-tank. At one point, we debate the repatriation of foreign <b>ISIS</b> fighters (Shamima Begum being then in the news). I am at this point aware of the fact that Kurdish forces have landed with the responsibility for detaining them (having abolished the death penalty as part of their revolutionary programme), and I warn that if they are simply ignored then at some point there will be a jailbreak, and we will all regret it.</p>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(138) Sep–Oct 2021</b>	<p>I read some more influential books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Eichmann</i><sup>285</sup> (via the <b>ALIS</b> system, ironically enough), a far more historically robust account of the architect of the Holocaust</li> <li>• <i>Why We Fight</i><sup>286</sup></li> <li>• <i>Every Man Dies Alone</i>,<sup>287</sup> about a husband and wife who ‘acting alone, became part of the German Resistance’ laying out anti-Nazi postcards.</li> </ul>		<p>I also develop an interest in the issue of military democracy (e.g., voting for leaders, unionisation) and the human rights restrictions imposed on <b>British</b> military personnel<sup>288</sup> (though must less limited for me as a Reservist<sup>289</sup>). I join the <b>British Armed Forces Federation (BAFF)</b>, of which I remain a member until Oct 2022.</p>		

<sup>285</sup>David Cesarani, *Eichmann: His Life and Crimes* (6 October 2005).

<sup>286</sup>Shane Burley, *Why We Fight: Essays on Fascism, Resistance, and Surviving the Apocalypse* (AK Press 13 April 2021).

<sup>287</sup>Hans Fallada, *Jeder stirbt für sich allein [Every Man Dies Alone]* (first published 1947, 2009).

<sup>288</sup>For example, see **King's Regs**, pt 14 (and equivalents for other Services).

<sup>289</sup>See **RLFR**, pt 1, ch 3, s 7.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(139) Apr 2021		I attended a talk organised by the group Conscience: Taxes for Peace Not War titled <i>Exploring the history of conscientious objection to military taxation</i> . <sup>290</sup> This is perhaps my first introduction to conscientious objection in a modern (UK) context, rather than just something from WWI.			
(140) 10 May 2021	<p>I have never been much of a monarchist, but generally didn't think about it too much. However, as my politics were changing I began to reassess my view, and realised that I am in fact wholly opposed to the system. I contacted Forces Law about the legality of being openly republican in the Armed Forces:</p> <p>I'm a currently-serving Army Reservist (within England &amp; Wales), but I also personally support the cause of peacefully abolishing the monarchy, as championed by groups like Republic. Currently, I am not a member of any such groups, do not donate to them and do not discuss my republicanism outside of my circle of friends. However, given the likelihood that Charles will be up for coronation within the next few years, I feel we are coming up to a potentially once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that should not be missed.</p> <p>They gave the go-ahead, so I started to follow Republic (and was a member between Jan–Aug 2022).</p>				
(141) 15 May 2021				Intrigued by the previous month's event, I attended the online ceremony event for International conscientious objectors' Day, <sup>291</sup> which introduced me to the struggles of COs all around the world, including Turkey, Cyprus and Israel.	

<sup>290</sup>Conscience: Taxes for Peace Not War, *Exploring the history of conscientious objection to military taxation* (19 April 2021) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eym2iFLjbZY>).

<sup>291</sup>Peace Pledge Union, *National Online Ceremony - International Conscientious Objectors' Day 2021* (15 May 2021) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHSfq68Tt3I>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(142) 3 Jun 2021	<p>I was starting a new job at a consulting company that primarily serviced the public sector, including many MOD and GCHQ projects; as a result, I needed Security Check (SC) clearance.</p> <p>I had an interview with the vetting officer on this day. I had decided that I would be completely honest, and if that meant missing the vetting then it had already worked out for the best for me once before. We discussed drug supply chains and the ethics of consumption, the ethics of media piracy (complicated by my long-standing commitment to free software and love of obscure media, for which there are sometimes no viable ways for me to access legitimately) and, most relevantly, my interest in Quakers and support for conscientious objectors around the world (including my objection to conscription). I should very much like to see the interview notes he made.</p>				
(143) 13 Jul 2021	<p>Somewhat unexpectedly, I am granted my security clearance (however, with a reduced 5-year review schedule). This does actually serve to increase my waning faith in government somewhat if they can accept me after everything I said, they can't be <i>too</i> bad.<sup>292</sup></p>				
(144) Jul 2021–Apr 2022				<p>I began to occasionally attend Lancaster Quaker meeting. Specifically, I remember going on Remembrance Day, and again when Russia first launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Both experiences were very affecting.</p>	
(145) Aug 2021	<p>The UK withdraws from Afghanistan following the lightning collapse of the government to the Taliban.</p> <p>The military presence in Afghanistan, which has existed for as long as I can remember, is gone (almost overnight).</p> <p>The mood amongst those who served there (and in some cases lost people) is sombre.</p>				
(146) Oct 2021–Jul 2022	<p>I work at my new consulting job, but not on any MOD/GCHQ projects.</p> <p>One project I do work on is a wide-ranging IT system risk assessment for the Home Office. Applying my 'Wehrmacht test' outside of a military context, I tell my boss that I'm not willing to work on any systems relating to immigration enforcement or policing. My first public exercise of conscientious objection is accepted.</p>				
(147) Oct 2021	<p>I first contact the military blog <i>Wavell Room</i> to propose an article. As we go back and forth over the next few months, this becomes two articles.</p>				

<sup>292</sup>However, see ¶ 157 for the darker side to this.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International	
(148)		I also watch <i>War School</i> , <sup>293</sup> a documentary about the increased militarisation of British society (particularly targeting children).				
(149) Sep 2021		One project I work on in my consulting job is a IT security <b>tabletop training exercise (TTX)</b> . Between this and previous TTX/simulation projects I have worked on, I develop an interest in professional wargaming, and so join the newly-launched <b>UK Fight Club (UKFC)</b> . <sup>294</sup> I also complete the Centre for Military Ethics' <b>MOOC</b> <sup>295</sup> featuring modules such as 'Introduction to the Just War Tradition' and 'Armouring Against Atrocity', and attend an Army Inclusion Conference.				
(150) 9 Sep 2021		At a <b>335</b> conference, I get in to a debate with a <b>lieutenant colonel</b> about ethics (me arguing for deontology, he for consequentialism). This lasts most of the night and variously draws in other participants; this is all particularly coloured by the recent withdrawal from Afghanistan (where many present had served, and who were now in a rather reflective mood). At one point we go through someone's very impressive chest of medals and ask him for each one: do you think the British Army made a positive difference there? Each time: 'not really'.				

<sup>293</sup>Mic Dixon, *War School* (25 April 2020) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/892275-war-school-the-battle-for-britain-s-children>).

<sup>294</sup>Oli Elliott, 'UK Fight Club' (*Wavell Room*, 27 July 2020) (<https://wavellroom.com/2020/08/27/uk-fight-club-iron-sharpens-iron/>).

<sup>295</sup>Centre for Military Ethics, *Centre for Military Ethics MOOC*, Centre for Military Ethics (<https://militaryethics.uk/en/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(151)		<p>The <b>lieutenant colonel</b>, learning about my <b>IT</b> background, says I should consider getting into <b>medical intelligence (MEDINT)</b>—something I’ve never heard of before. He introduces me to one guest, an officer with the <b>UKSF MSU</b>. I speak to him about my <b>IT</b> background and my ethical concerns about military service. I am quite drunk at this point and so do not remember the details of what we discussed, but I do remember quoting the <i>Mitchell &amp; Webb Look ‘Are We the Baddies?’</i><sup>296</sup></p> <p>A few days later, he emails me to offer me an opportunity to work on a medical planning/data analysis project they are developing. Ultimately, it doesn’t go ahead, but I do take the opportunity to ask him about medical roles within <b>UKSF</b>. Referencing our initial conversation (which I don’t remember), he suggests some ‘non-kinetic’ options that he suggests may be of more interest to me. Nothing comes of this either, but I do remember being positively surprised by this entire interaction, which suggested that at the most elite levels of the Army there was apparently scope for, and appreciation of, challenge and criticism.</p>			
(152) Dec 2021	<p>Another Quaker course: <i>Jesus Against Empire</i>.<sup>297</sup> I introduce myself as follows:</p> <p>I come from an irreligious background, but I’ve been fascinated by the idea of the historic Jesus as an anti- establishment radical since I was a teenager, hearing my favourite musician <b>warmly describe him</b> as a homeless hippie peace activist. That interest led me to Tolstoy and Christian anarchism (and reading the Bible cover-to-cover), which in turn eventually led me to the English Dissenters and the Quakers.</p>				

<sup>296</sup>David Mitchell and Robert Webb, ‘Are We the Baddies?’ (That Mitchell and Webb Look, 2006) (<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h242eDB84zY>>).

<sup>297</sup>Woodbrooke, *Jesus Against Empire* (See Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Jesus Against Empire’ (*bengoldsworthynet*, 5 April 2022) (<<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/jesus-against-empire/>>) for my report. 2022).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(153) Most of 2022</b>	Finding the ethical arguments in favour to be quite convincing, and fancying a challenge, I spend the best part of the year maintaining a vegan diet. <sup>298</sup> Whilst I abandon it when I start travelling later in the year and never pick it up again, it does effectively demonstrate to me the feasibility of making comparatively small sacrifices on moral grounds.				

<sup>298</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, "Ben's Twenty" series' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 14 January–28 November 2022) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/series/bens-twenty/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(154) Jan 2022</b>	<p>I publish my first two articles in <i>Wavell Room</i>, under a pseudonym, heavily inspired by the conversations at the recent <b>335</b> conference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lead Us Not into Temptation</i>,<sup>299</sup> which draws on my time studying historical figures like Eichmann (and the works of several thinkers) to argue that the British Army is too focussed on a philosophically idealist approach to ethics, and neglects a materialist analysis at its peril (particularly in the context of the then-recently released <b>Integrated Review</b>)</li> <li>• <i>A New Model Army for a Miserable Century</i>,<sup>300</sup> which extends the previous to argue that the Armed Forces risk sleepwalking into becoming a necropolitical tool for violent border enforcement, and instead proposing we reimagine the purpose of the Armed Forces as primarily humanitarian (seeing some positive signs in that direction).</li> </ul> <p>The first article triggered some discussion on the <b>ARRSE</b> forums<sup>301</sup> and some positive responses on social media.<sup>302</sup> Later that month, I am contacted by an <b>RLC lieutenant</b> who wanted to discuss some things brought up in the second article. I also discover the Rethinking Security project<sup>303</sup> when they respond positively to the article. Shortly thereafter, I join them as a supporter. Their flagship project is an <i>Alternate Security Review</i>, seeking to address the militaristic tendencies of the <b>Integrated Review</b> with a more human security-focussed approach.<sup>304</sup></p>				
<b>(155)</b>	<p>I also attend a webinar delivered by the <b>Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA)</b> titled <i>Is COP26 enough?</i><sup>305</sup></p>				

<sup>299</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Lead Us Not into Temptation' (*Wavell Room*, 5 January 2022) (<https://wavellroom.com/2022/01/05/moral-failure-and-the-integrated-review/>).

<sup>300</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'A New Model Army for a Miserable Century' (*Wavell Room*, 7 January 2022) (<https://wavellroom.com/2022/01/07/a-new-model-army-for-a-miserable-century/>).

<sup>301</sup>'Stonker' and others, 'Changing the army - how?' (**ARRSE**) (<https://www.arrse.co.uk/community/threads/changing-the-army-how.305390/page-258#post-11222270>).

<sup>302</sup>Nigel Jordan-Barber, 'Tweet thread in response to Goldsworthy, "Lead Us Not into Temptation" (n 299)' (*Twitter*) (<https://x.com/NigelJB/status/1480528854850719744>); (Gareth Sutton, 'Tweet in response to Goldsworthy, "Lead Us Not into Temptation" [n 299] (ex-Royal Navy)' (*Twitter*) (<https://x.com/RugbyMan1865/status/1480687019084980228>)); (Ollie Kingsbury, 'Tweets in response to Goldsworthy, "Lead Us Not into Temptation" [n 299] (now a **Maj Gen**, and **Col Comdt PARA**)' (*Twitter*) ([https://x.com/kingsbury\\_ollie/status/1481773862660583431](https://x.com/kingsbury_ollie/status/1481773862660583431))); ('SO2 Plausible Deniability', 'Tweets in response to Goldsworthy, "Lead Us Not into Temptation" [n 299]' (*Twitter*) (<https://x.com/B4ck1n/status/1481899645152505859#m>))

<sup>303</sup>'Homepage' (*Rethinking Security*) (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/>).

<sup>304</sup>Rethinking Security, 'Alternate Security Review' (*Rethinking Security*, 2025) (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/alternative-security-review/>).

<sup>305</sup>**Quaker Council for European Affairs**, *Is COP26 enough?*

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(156) Feb 2022			Six years since joining the , over a year and a half since making the decision to throw away my career on principle to become a CMT instead, and after six unsuccessful bids, I finally got on to and completed a CMT3(R) course (and, by extension, my Phase 2 training).		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(157)			<p>This was very rewarding, and the course was one of the best things I've done with the Army. The student cohort were great and very tight-knit; however, there was one guy—a prison officer at <b>HMP</b> Belmarsh, where Julian Assange was then being held, who also intimated that he had some sort of security services role—who was the second most sociopathic person I've met in my time in the Army.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(158)			<p>One evening in Wetherspoons, he began reciting Goebbels' speeches in German. I said (not entirely jokingly) that I should make a Prevent referral; he replied that he was already DV STRAP-cleared, and there was nothing they didn't already know. I think about this guy quite often.<sup>306</sup></p>		

<sup>306</sup> In this and other examples, it can be very hard to determine when dark humour (which is unsurprisingly very common in the military) becomes something more concerning. In this case, obviously, there is the fact that memorising a speech in a language you don't speak is quite a commitment to the bit. But for a little bit of (not entirely exculpatory) context, in this same course I was routinely putting RT on the TVs in our accommodation and in the 'spoons that evening me and another student from Northern Ireland had just been singing "Come Out You Black and Tans" to annoy him. Of course, I also don't speak German; perhaps he was just making up vaguely-Germanic noises.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International	
<b>(159) Feb–Mar 2022</b>	<p>I attended an online course organised by Rethinking Security titled “Rethinking Security: Steps to sustainable peace with justice”.<sup>307</sup> I introduced myself as follows:</p> <p>I’m interested in this course for several reasons: I work in (cyber) security and am a Reservist in the <b>Royal Army Medical Corps</b>, so I’m coming from something of a different perspective and have (hopefully) some helpful insider insight into the realities of securitised and militarised logics and their influence. I’m keen to learn about viable, effective ways of both a) challenging those logics and b) presenting more positive alternatives in their stead.</p> <p>I’m also of an age where practically my entire life has been lived in the post-9/11 era, in which things like continuous engagement in Afghanistan just seemed like unavoidable facts of life until suddenly, last year, they weren’t. Combined with some other things that were going on around the same time, I was motivated me to reclaim some agency and to learn how I can get involved in challenging those the same disastrous patterns of decision- making that the <b>IR</b> shows are still so dominant.</p>					
<b>(160) 24 Feb 2022</b>					Russia launches its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.	

<sup>307</sup>Woodbrooke, *Rethinking Security* (See Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Rethinking Security’ (*bengoldsworthynet*, 6 April 2022) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/rethinking-security/>) for my report. 2022).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(161) Mar 2022	I attend a workshop with my civilian union, titled <i>Communications</i> . <sup>308</sup>		Just after I completed my <b>CMT3(R)</b> course, it was announced that the <b>CMT2(R)</b> courses would be suspended indefinitely pending a review. Reasoning that training of Reservist <b>CMTs</b> was probably not a priority (and with <b>335 MER</b> announcing that they were refocussing away from non-vocational <b>CMTs</b> ), I decided to try and find a way to use my primary specialist skillset— <b>IT</b> —to support the <b>AMS</b> . I got back in touch with <b>500 Comms Tp</b> , <b>2 OSG RLC</b> .	Rethinking Security publish <i>To the victor go the spoils... a heap of ashes</i> , <sup>309</sup> in which the authors:  ... acknowledging the right of Ukrainians to resist the invasion of their country by any means, ... make the case for a cessation of military struggle, in favour of civilian-based resistance which might avert the 'desertification' of their land, its institutions, its infrastructure and its social fabric.  This is probably the first time I am reading a case for pacifism in a modern context, and I find the arguments quite convincing.	

<sup>308</sup>Prospect, *Communications* (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/communications-presenting-an-argument-7-tickets-288537372047>).

<sup>309</sup>Diana Francis, 'To the victor go the spoils... a heap of ashes' (*Rethinking Security*, 23 March 2022) (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2022/03/23/to-the-victor-go-the-spoils-a-heap-of-ashes/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(162) Apr–Jun 2022</b>	<p>I deliver internal training at work on the <i>Tallinn Manual</i> (a legal analysis around cyberwarfare),<sup>310</sup> To illustrate the unfortunate limitations of international law, I highlight several areas where Britain contravenes accepted international law, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recruiting child soldiers<sup>311</sup></li> <li>• infringing on the rights of disabled people</li> <li>• illegal treatment of asylum seekers and refugees</li> </ul>				

<sup>310</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'The *Tallinn Manual* and the Law(s) of Cyber Conflict' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 20 April 2022) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/presentations/the-tallinn-manual-and-the-laws-of-cyber-conflict/>).

<sup>311</sup>Jim Patrick Wyke, 'Minor Problems' (*Rethinking Security*, 13 February 2026) (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2026/02/13/benefits-of-an-all-adult-recruitment-model-for-the-british-armed-forces/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(163)				<p>My two biggest blockers to getting really into Quakerism have been: remaining unconvinced by pacifism; and having grown up in an irreligious household. In an effort to address the latter, I attended a few courses over these months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Why Attend Meeting for Worship if You Don't Believe in God?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are Quakers Christian?</i></li> <li>• <i>Nontheist Approaches to Religious Language</i></li> </ul>	

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(164) Apr 2022</b>	I facilitate a session of <i>AFTERSHOCK</i> —a board game about humanitarian disaster relief—at the Connections Online professional wargaming conference.		I attend a training weekend with <b>500 Comms Tp</b> and start my transfer paperwork.		
<b>(165) May 2022</b>			I end up as the radio operator during a mass casualty scenario, and am later commended my the <b>DS</b> for my performance. My ongoing transfer to <b>500 Comms Tp</b> bodes well for my ability to make a real contribution to the work of the <b>AMS</b> .		
<b>(166) Jun 2022</b>			I participate in the <b>AMS Tactical Training Exercise (AMSTTE)</b> competition with a joint <b>NRU</b> team, including a Padre who spends the whole time running around armed only with Haribo. As funny as it is, I can't help but be a little inspired by the Desmond Doss of it all.		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(167) Jul 2022	I publish an article for Rethinking Security titled <i>The MOD's Accidental Roadmap to Peace</i> , <sup>312</sup> proposing a radical reverse reading of the <i>Integrated Operating Concept</i> and exploring the perspectives of non-state actors like the <b>Kurdish Freedom Movement</b> in arguing that we are already in a 'Third World War', as well as specific calls to internationalist people-to-people solidarity, prosecuting senior <b>UK</b> war criminals (such as Tony Blair) and a rejection of nuclear weapons.				
(168)			The <i>Wavell Room</i> published an article from several senior military personnel titled <i>Dread Cross?</i> , arguing that militaries need to move away from reliance on Red Cross protection. <sup>313</sup>		

<sup>312</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'The MOD's Accidental Roadmap to Peace' (*Rethinking Security*, 12 July 2022) (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2022/07/12/the-mods-accidental-roadmap-to-peace/>).

<sup>313</sup>Paul Parker, Andy Haldane, and Tim Hodgetts, 'Dread Cross?' (*Wavell Room*, 27 July 2022) (<https://wavellroom.com/2022/07/27/dread-cross/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(169)	<p>I am fed up with my civilian job (for mundane reasons, rather than ethical ones). I also realise I am burnt out after COVID-19 and, having not taken a break between school and university, I decide that I am due a gap year. I quite my job, get rid of my apartment and plan to spend a year backpacking in Central America.</p>		<p>I also transfer into 500 Comms Tp.</p>		
(170) Oct 2022–Jan 2023	<p>I am in discussions with Rojava University about a potential role helping to develop their IT Master's programme. Ultimately, it doesn't go anywhere, but it was probably the closest I have yet got to travelling there.</p>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(171) Oct 2022–Aug 2023</b>	I spend ten months in Central America, travelling from Darién, Panama all the way to southern Mexico. <sup>314</sup> In between all the fun bits, my political and personal development continues.	This is also the first time I leave the UK for a substantial amount of time.	In Nov 2022, I read <i>Martin Monath</i> , <sup>315</sup> a biography about a Jewish resistance fighter who tried (with some limited successes) to organise <i>Wehrmacht</i> soldiers via a clandestine newspaper.	My first stop is Costa Rica, which I've been intrigued by ever since learning that they abolished their military in 1948. <sup>316</sup> In Panama, whilst teaching English in Darién, I find out that one of my students is volunteering with the <i>Cruz Roja</i> a refugee reception centre for those emerging from the Gap. <sup>317</sup> I try to arrange to join her, but am unsuccessful; however, I am now acutely aware of the Red Cross as an international movement and commit to investigating further when I get back to Britain.	

<sup>314</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, "Bentral American Diaries" series' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 14 January–23 August 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/series/bentral-american-diaries/>).

<sup>315</sup>Nathaniel Flakin, *Martin Monath: A Jewish Resistance Fighter Among Nazi Soldiers* (Pluto Press October 2019).

<sup>316</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Costa Rica' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 5 March 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/costa-rica/>), particularly the section titled '*Día de la Abolición del Ejército*'.

<sup>317</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Panama' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 9 May 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/panama/>), particularly the section titled '*There be Dragons*'.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(172)	<p>In Nicaragua, I learnt about the revolution and its subsequent betrayal in León, amidst buildings still pockmarked with bullet-holes from the 2018–2020 suppression of student protests.<sup>318</sup></p> <p>In Honduras I saw the lasting scars of American imperialism first-hand<sup>319</sup> and toured local healthcare facilities (with a Cuban doctor on staff, unsurprisingly).<sup>320</sup> In Guatemala I found a city that had kicked out the government (and which seemed no worse for having done so).<sup>321</sup></p>				

<sup>318</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Nicaragua' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 22 May 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/nicaragua/>), section titled 'Nicaragua, According to the Nicaraguans'.

<sup>319</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Honduras & Guatemala' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 17 July 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/honduras-guatemala/>), section titled 'Fruity Business'.

<sup>320</sup>*ibid*, section titled '*Hospitalito Atitlán*'.

<sup>321</sup>*ibid*, section titled '*Atitlán*'.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(173)	By far, though, the most impactful times were those I spent in Cuba and Mexico.				
(174) Mar 2023					Israeli reservist pilots refuse to train in protest of the government's judicial overhaul, fearing that the reforms could serve to expose them to ICC prosecution for war crimes. <sup>322</sup>

<sup>322</sup>'Israel air force reservists refuse to train in protest against judicial reforms' (*Middle East Eye*, 5 March 2023) (<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-air-force-reservists-refuse-training-protest-judicial-overhaul>); Simon Hooper and Lubna Masarwa, 'Pilots in Israeli squadron that killed Nasrallah feared war crimes prosecutions' (*Middle East Eye*, 4 October 2024) (<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/pilots-israeli-squadron-which-killed-nasrallah-feared-war-crimes-prosecutions>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(175) Apr–May 2023</b>	In Cuba I joined a delegation of <b>UK</b> trade unionists on an international solidarity brigade. <sup>323</sup> For three intense weeks I explored politics with the full range of the contemporary Left, from fairly standard social democrats to very weird dictatorship apologists who are way too into the <b>Soviet Union</b> .			I also met many people from all over the world in Cuba, and we discussed our different nations' political situations and different struggles. I was particularly impressed by how highly regarded Cuba was, particularly amongst countries in the global South. In the <b>UK</b> I'd say we barely think about it; in the <b>US</b> they are driven mad by their hate for it; but in most of the world, it is the country that helped them win their independence, or provides medical services, or delivered a cheap <b>COVID-19</b> vaccine unencumbered by patents. It demonstrated a vision of humanitarian interventionism and foreign policy that, whatever the other failings of the Revolution, I found greatly inspiring. I was also impressed by the universal support for Palestinian liberation; a recognition of what Nelson Mandela had meant when he declared 'our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians'.	
<b>(176)</b>				I particularly remember a young Russian guy and his new wife who came to our hotel bar because we had the cheapest rum. He barely spoke English and I don't speak Russian, so our conversation was pretty limited. He was working as a chef in the Russian Embassy. I offered that I bet he was glad to have been posted to Cuba, consider where else a young Russian man might find himself sent these days. He was indeed. We toasted to Cuba and he and his wife set off. I hope he's still there in Havana, cooking up a storm and enjoying his married life.	
<b>(177) 8 Dec 2022</b>				I published an article titled <i>Of Kurds and Quakers</i> , <sup>324</sup> comparing the values and structures of the two movements.	

<sup>323</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Cuba' (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 29 June 2023) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/cuba/>>.

<sup>324</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Of Kurds and Quakers' (*Kurdistan Solidarity Network*, 8 December 2022) <<https://kurdistan-solidarity.net/2022/12/08/of-kurds-and-quakers/>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(178) 15 Dec 2022			<p>In my article <i>Lead Us Not into Temptation</i>, published at the start of the year, I wrote:</p> <p>Pair two decades of demoralising counterinsurgency with a lack of effective oversight or threat of consequences and it becomes clear that beneath every ‘Kill Team’ or Haditha Massacre, every Abu Ghraib or Marine A, there could be a sizeable mound of atrocities that have simply yet to see the light of day.</p> <p>At the end of the same year, the Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan is launched to investigate allegations of UKSF war crimes,<sup>325</sup> following allegations made in <i>BBC Panorama</i>.</p>		
(179) 19 Dec 2022		The UK government publishes its post- <i>Integrated Review Government Resilience Framework</i> . <sup>326</sup>			

<sup>325</sup>‘Homepage’ (*IIA*) (<https://www.iiaindependent-inquiry.uk/>).

<sup>326</sup>UK Cabinet Office, *Government Resilience Framework* (, HM Stationery Office 2022) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-government-resilience-framework>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(180) Jun–Jul 2023</b>	<p>In Chiapas (southern Mexico) I spent time learning Spanish amongst the radical <b>Zapatista</b> communities, learning about how they have lived outside of (and in resistance of) the state since 1994.<sup>327</sup></p> <p>In writing up my time in Cuba I also, for perhaps the first time in public, explained my present political beliefs in detail, concluding that ‘I’m currently best described as a ‘democratic confederalist’ or ‘communalist’, and one could broadly lump me under the banner of ‘libertarian socialism’.<sup>328</sup></p>		<p>Afterwards, I joined a human rights observation mission to a remote community of indigenous pacifists (which had suffered a state-sanctioned massacre in 1997, for which they still seek justice), who were dealing with attacks from state forces, right-wing paramilitaries and cartel forces.<sup>329</sup></p>		<p>Again, I studied and worked alongside activists from several countries during these activities, massively broadening my own horizons.</p>

<sup>327</sup> Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Mexico’ (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 9 August 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/mexico/>), section titled ‘Chiapas’.

<sup>328</sup> Goldsworthy, ‘Cuba’ (n 323), section titled ‘Ben, the Anarcho-Trotskyist CIA Agent’.

<sup>329</sup> Goldsworthy, ‘Mexico’ (n 327), section titled ‘BriCO Boys’.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(181) Jul–Dec 2023</b>	When I return home, I find myself depressed and struggling to readjust to life in <b>Britain</b> . <sup>330</sup> I sign up for Universal Credit, and experience the pointless cruelty of the <b>UK</b> benefits system first-hand when they demand I either attend a meeting at a time I am already attending training (i.e., working) or forfeit my payments. However, whilst I wait for a new job I keep myself busy with Army training, and I am grateful to it for providing me with a way out of both my post-trip funk and financial shakiness.				
<b>(182) Aug 2023</b>				My article <i>Of Kurds and Quakers</i> was republished in a 'zine. <sup>331</sup>	
<b>(183) Sep–Dec 2023</b>	I read <i>Everyday Stalinism</i> , <sup>332</sup> a book about everyday life in the <b>Soviet Union</b> . It adds depth to my understanding of life under a totalitarian regime, and teaches me that the appearance of regular life is not, on its own, sufficient evidence of regular circumstances.				

<sup>330</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Back to the **UK**' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 9 August 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/back-to-the-uk/>), section titled 'Homecoming'.

<sup>331</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Of Kurds and Quakers' *Bad Apple* (22 August 2023) (Abridged from Goldsworthy, 'Of Kurds and Quakers' [n 324].) (<https://badapplemagazine.org/2023/08/22/of-kurds-and-quakers/>).

<sup>332</sup>Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930* (Oxford University Press 1999).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(184) Sep 2023			I provide comms on EX SEPTEMBER SERPENT, 335 MER's ADE for the year. It's nice to see a lot of old faces again.		
(185) 5 Oct 2023	I apply for what will eventually become my new job, in France.				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(186) 7 Oct 2023					<p>Palestinian resistance factions launch Operation al-Aqsa Flood: a series of coordinated attacks from Gaza into Israel. To quote their own words:</p> <p>Gaza had become the world's largest open-air prison, and it was a matter of time for the people of Gaza to 'bang on the walls of the tank'... in rejection of the slow death inside that great prison.<sup>333</sup></p> <p>I am visiting Ellie that weekend. We worry about what will come next.</p>

<sup>333</sup> Hamas Media Office, 'Our Narrative... Al-Aqsa Flood' (5 June 2025) (<https://palinfo.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/OurNarrative.pdf>) 8; note that this should not be considered an indication of my support for any of those groups, nor the very real atrocities committed both by them and by unaffiliated groups during the attacks.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(187) Since Oct 2023</b>			As she mentioned in <b>appendix C</b> , Ellie and I have gone on to have many conversations about the ethics of military service. Whilst I am soon once again considering leaving the , from these conversations (and my accumulated experiences with the military) I eventually decide that, whilst I would not choose to <i>join</i> the Army now, as I am already in I have a fairly unique opportunity to try and organise within an organisation that I believe is strategically important, and largely overlooked by contemporary leftists. Especially given my lack of connection to local struggles (having been away travelling, and then moving back into my hometown where I don't know anyone), I determine that this represents the best for me to try and organise, and so I decide to stay in (for now).		
<b>(188) 11 Oct 2023</b>		Keir Starmer, then still in Opposition, declares that Israel 'has the right' to withhold power and water from Gaza.			
<b>(189) 14 Oct 2023</b>			I am awarded the King's Coronation Medal.		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(190) Nov 2023			<p>Whilst on a mountaineering weekend in Pen y Fan with <b>2 OSG RLC</b> we encounter a pro-Palestine demo on the summit of all places. There, and later in the pub, the others are dismissive of it; I challenge one <b>major</b>, saying that whilst he may be used to a certain historic conformity of opinion within the when it comes to Israel, my generation and the one after it (who will, necessarily, be more and more present as time passes) are overwhelmingly more critical of it. To his credit, he does seem to take the point on board. Also present is someone who works as a lawyer for the <b>MOD</b> in her day job, who disillusioned me of my belief that the Army is a remarkably egalitarian organisation with some of her horror stories from women in employment tribunals.</p> <p>In general, whilst I am getting on in <b>500 Comms Tp</b>, it is also a far more right-leaning environment than <b>335 MER</b>. Perhaps inspired by this (and my previous reading around Martin Monath), I attend a course on <i>Relational Campaigning for Climate Action</i> (not, so much, for the climate action, but to learn more about person-to-person relational campaigning).</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(191)			<p>Also, around a decade after she first introduced me to anarchism,<sup>334</sup> I finally get around to reading Emma Goldman's autobiography, <i>Living My Life</i>. I am particularly struck by the character of William Buwalda, a soldier who attended one of Goldman's speeches on a whim and found himself won over, before being arrested and court-martialled for doing so.<sup>335</sup></p>		

<sup>334</sup>See ¶ 16.

<sup>335</sup>(Emma Goldman, *Living My Life* (1931–1932)), particularly pt. I, ch. 34 (though Buwalda first appears in ch. 33).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(192) Nov or Dec 2023			<p>Chatting in the bar in the evening of a training weekend, I hear from a couple of the seniors in <b>500 Comms Tp</b> about the positive impact the Army has had on them, coming from poor backgrounds. They credit the Army with providing them opportunities for education, personal development, leadership and adventure that they never would have had access to otherwise. Both are women, and they talk about their experiences as women in the Army and how, in their eyes, they have never been held back by it and they appreciate that they have always been assessed on their capability, rather than anything else.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(193)			It is an incredibly interesting perspective to learn about, and is it maybe here where I start to develop my theory that the Army is, in some ways, the exact kind of socialist utopia one might wish for the rest of society.		
(194) 10 Dec 2023		Whilst I am no longer following a fully vegan diet, <sup>336</sup> I have retained a much more vegetable-based diet since as well as an appreciation for the ethical values behind it. To support this (and also to see what activism looks like within the MOD) I join the MOD Vegan & Vegetarian Network. <sup>337</sup>			

<sup>336</sup>See ¶ 153.

<sup>337</sup>'MOD Vegan & Vegetarian Network' (Facebook) <<https://menwhosaidno.org/Sentenced/index.html>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(195) 29 Dec 2023					South Africa launches its <b>ICJ</b> case against Israel for breach of the <b>Genocide Convention</b> . <sup>338</sup>
(196) Jan 2024	I start my new job in France.		I look at how the review of the <b>CMT2(R)</b> courses is going, and am surprised to find that they are due to restart soon. I contact <b>335 MER</b> again and if they are still taking non- vocational <b>CMTs</b> . They are, and I am starting to get fed up with <b>500 Comms Tp</b> (both the environment and the role), so I request to transfer back.	I take a course in <b>Nonviolent Communication (NVC)</b> , through the Quakers.	The <b>ICJ's</b> initial ruling deems the case plausible and orders Israel to take provisional measures (which Israel ignores). <sup>339</sup>
(197)		The <b>UK</b> government takes no meaningful action following the <b>ICJ</b> ruling. Instead, based on unevidenced Israeli allegations, they withhold funding for <b>UNRWA</b> , a vital lifeline for the besieged Gazans.			

<sup>338</sup> *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip* (n 28).

<sup>339</sup> *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v Israel)* (Provisional Measures, Order of 26 January 2024) [2024] ICJ Rep 3.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(198) Feb 2024	<p>With elections coming up, I write to family:</p> <p>As the most (semi) notable party to call for an end to the genocide in Gaza, at this rate I'll be voting for the <b>Lib Dems</b> (which would no doubt surprise a 2014 Ben looking at his tuition fees bill for the first time). I probably won't bother with the <b>US</b>.</p>				
(199) 6 Feb 2024			<p><i>Wavell Room</i> publishes a piece of propaganda that attempts to justify Israel's genocide in Gaza in terms of international law.<sup>340</sup> Unusually, there is no information provided about the author. However, from looking online he appears to serving British Army officer. In a <a href="#">subsequent post on LinkedIn</a>, however, he does admit that 'the actual conduct of the war has perhaps overtaken [his] initial thinking'.</p>		
(200) 13 Feb 2024			<p><i>BBC Panorama</i> reveals that <b>British Special Forces</b> have vetoed resettlement requests from 2,000 Afghan Special Forces troops with whom they fought, effectively sentencing them to death.<sup>341</sup> The most obvious motive appears to be to prevent them from being able to testify to the ongoing War Crimes Inquiry.</p>		
(201) 25 Feb 2024					<p><b>US</b> Airman Aaron Bushnell self-immolates in front of the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C., shouting 'Free Palestine!' as he burns to death.</p>
(202) 1 Mar 2024			<p>I transfer back to <b>335 MER</b>, the <b>RAMC</b>, and my old role as a <b>CMT</b>. I am very happy to be back.</p>		

<sup>340</sup>James Cowen, 'Just War in Gaza' (*Wavell Room*, 6 February 2024) (<https://wavellroom.com/2024/02/06/just-war-in-gaza/>).

<sup>341</sup>Hannah O'Grady and others, '**Special forces** blocked **UK** resettlement applications from elite Afghan troops' (*BBC News* 19 February 2024) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-68332923>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(203) 30 Mar 2024</b>	I attend the 11 <sup>th</sup> National March for Palestine in London. This is my first time at a protest action (except a small one outside a Barclays branch the week prior); it will be the first of many. I later write an article about the media misrepresentation of the March. <sup>342</sup>				
<b>(204) May–Jun 2024</b>	I read <i>When Soldiers Say No</i> : a collection of academic papers, including case studies from multiple armies around the world (including the British Armed Forces). <sup>343</sup> This is probably the first time I learn about the existence of <b>AGAI 55</b> , and in the back of my mind I probably know that one day that will inevitably be the way I go out.				
<b>(205) May 2024</b>		I pitch another article for the <i>Wavell Room</i> , writing:  I'd like to explore two topics that are related enough to be a single longer article, but I think would maybe work better as two separate, shorter and more focussed pieces. First, I'd like to explore what constitutes (or could constitute) an illegal order in the context of genocide. . . Second, I want to explore what options exist in the British Armed Forces around objection, specifically selective objection. I'll talk about the current discharge-by-conscience process ( <b>AGAI 55</b> , vol 2, ch 55) and the issues with it, discuss several informal options of selective objection available and argue that in light of the conclusions reached in part 1 there should exist a clearly defined means of registering a selective objection. I'll address counter- arguments and look at examples from other armed forces and how they handle objections. I'll end by proposing that a more robust objection system could play a role in helping recruitment and retention, making military service more appealing to increasingly more politically-engaged (and cynical) cohorts and providing those who register a specific objection with options beyond complete discharge.			
<b>(206) 1 May 2024</b>	I take part in a demonstration organised by <b>Workers for a Free Palestine (WFFP)</b> , blockading the <b>Department for Business &amp; Trade</b> . <sup>344</sup>				

<sup>342</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Thousands of Protestors Marched' (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 2 April 2024) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/thousands-of-protestors-marched/>).

<sup>343</sup>Andrea Ellner, Paul Robinson, and David Whetham (eds), *When Soldiers Say No: Selective Conscientious Objection in the Modern Military* (Routledge 11 February 2016) specifically chs 8 & 13.

<sup>344</sup>**Workers for a Free Palestine**, 'Why did we shut down the **Department for Business & Trade**?' (*WFFP*, 3 May 2024) (<https://workersforfreepalestine.com/index.php/2024/05/03/why-did-we-shut-down-the-department-of-business-trade/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(207) 11 Jun 2024</b>		<p>My article <i>Israel–Gaza War</i> is published by the <i>Wavell Room</i>, under the same pseudonym as before.<sup>345</sup> In it, I attempt to warn service personnel (thinking, primarily, of the <b>RAF</b> personnel in Cyprus) that:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Defence personnel who act in support of, and are thus complicit in, [the Israeli genocide in Gaza] could face a lifetime of legal hounding wherever in the world they may go: an unenviable life bearing the stigma of <i>hostis humani generis</i>, an enemy of mankind.</p> <p>The editor later tells me that the commander of <b>16 Bde</b> brought up the article in conversation.<sup>346</sup></p>			
<b>(208) 24 Jun 2024</b>	Julian Assange is, at long last, released after twelve years of Hell, for the crime of exposing the dishonesty of governments around the world.				
<b>(209) Jul 2024</b>				I attend a course as part of the celebrations of the quartercentenary of birth of the founder of Quakerism: <i>George Fox</i>	

<sup>345</sup>Goldsworthy, 'Israel–Gaza War' (n 173)

<sup>346</sup>I am only now, very belatedly as I prepare this evidence, learning that **Col Comdt 16X** may have also responded to my previous article about leadership; see **foot-note 302**. Apparently, I have a fan.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(210) 19 Jul 2024					The ICJ rules that Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory is unlawful. It also affirms that the Israeli government is guilty of the crime of apartheid. <sup>347</sup>
(211)		The UK government does nothing.			
(212) Jul–Aug 2024		Violent race riots break out across the UK. Fuelled by racism and online misinformation, large of thugs attempt to set fire to hotels housing asylum seekers.			
(213)		I am still in a WhatsApp group with people from 500 Comms Tp. They are mostly supportive of the rioters, including one who says his friends will be joining a protest in London. In the end, that particular protest (is several) is easily outnumbered by antifascist counter-protestors. I take the piss that his friends 'lost their bottle'.			

<sup>347</sup> *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (Advisory Opinion) [2024] ICJ Rep 753.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(214) Sep 2024		<p>In the <b>500 Comms Tp</b> group, they discover that they have lost accommodation for an upcoming weekend so that the base can be used to house Afghans under the Resettlement Scheme. Some choice messages:</p> <p>I'm running a sweepstake on how long till they're[sic] complaining they're[sic] human rights have been violated because they have to live like British <b>SP</b></p> <p>It is Live firing, house clearance <b>CQB</b>. Targets will fall when hit except ones sleeping.</p> <p>We've got them all in crowborough camp fuckers walk around the town and all sorts shouldn't be let out all men mind you</p> <p>I finally leave the group. I feel like I should report it somewhere, but in the group is one person who works for <b>HM Courts &amp; Tribunals Service</b> and another who is a police officer. It doesn't seem like there's much point; this is just how things are in most of the Army.</p>			
(215)			<p>I also attend a training exercise with <b>335 MER</b> in which we are joined by some <b>US Army</b> medical reservists from Georgia. We generally get on (though we are warned in advance to avoid political topics), but one thing that sticks with me is when Gaza nonetheless comes up in conversation during a mess function. One of the American Captains describes what is being done there, with an approving tone, as a 'Dresdening'.</p>		
(216)			<p>By chance, I also end up spending most of the <b>EX</b> phase in <b>EXCON</b> with several seniors, and we have quite a few interesting and candid discussions. I do manage to get out of the ground for a couple of days, but without a rifle signed out I have to run around unarmed. As silly as it is—I end up spending several days doing a Borat impression—I have ended up with an opportunity to live out my inner Desmond Doss.</p>		
(217) 6 Sep 2024				<p>Turkish–American activist Ayşenur Eygi is murdered by Israeli forces. I do not know this at the time, but we actually know someone in common. Seeing them grieve, the violence of the occupation, the physical distance between here and there, hits closer to home than ever.</p>	

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(218) Nov 2024			<p>I am contacted by a major on the ISCS(L) course who is writing an essay on how military leaders can make adjustments in order to enforce adherence to the law of armed conflict. He wanted to interview me, having read my <i>Lead Us Not into Temptation</i> article.<sup>348</sup> We have a very interesting conversation, and my article ends up cited in his essay.<sup>349</sup></p>		

<sup>348</sup>Goldsworthy, 'Lead Us Not into Temptation' (n 299).

<sup>349</sup>██████████, 'How should commanders adjust to the conceptual challenge posed by facing adversaries who do not share our stand standards?' [2024].

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(219)			<p>Following the conversation, I sent the following:<sup>350</sup></p> <p>Here are a few follow-on notes and links you might find interesting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I talked about Freedom to Speak Up within the NHS, which all stems from the 2015 Francis Report into whistleblowing within the NHS.</li> <li>• We talked about encouraging challenge, and relevant to making that practical is training in things like graded assertiveness (e.g. the PACE model in healthcare and aviation) so even people who are temperamentally</li> </ul>		<p>The International Criminal Court (ICC) issues arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Minister of Defence Gallant.<sup>359</sup></p>
<p><sup>350</sup>Hyperlinks and footnotes below are reproduced as per the original text.</p>					

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(220)	I also complete a <b>CMT2(R)</b> course. At the same time, the camp we are on is being used to train Ukrainian conscripts. We are instructed not to interact with them, but we can see them walking around camp. They look to be no younger than in their '50s. They come over, receive a few weeks of training, and are then sent to the frontline. It is quite uncomfortable; at the same time, I recognise the terrible situation that Ukraine has been put in. I am conflicted. I think back to that Rethinking Security article arguing for nonviolent resistance.				
(221) Dec 2024	I decide that it's finally time to 'legitimise my bastards': I request the <i>Wavell Room</i> editors to remove my byline pseudonym, share them on the internal <b>MOD</b> social media <sup>360</sup> and declare them to my <b>CoC</b> as part of my annual reporting process.				
(222) Jan 2025		The <b>CHACR</b> launch their <i>Facing Coming Storms</i> podcast. I don't know when exactly I started listening to it, but it is relevant here as the host's introduction is the first time I have heard of 'Specialist Reserves'. I can't find much information online, but this promises to be a potential means to continue with 'unusual' forms of military service.			

<sup>351</sup>Michael L Gross, 'Saving life, limb, and eyesight: assessing the medical rules of eligibility during armed conflict' (2017) 17(10) *The American Journal of Bioethics* 40.

<sup>352</sup>Michael L Gross, 'Comradery, community, and care in military medical ethics' (2011) 32(5) *Theoretical medicine and bioethics* 337.

<sup>353</sup>Thomas E Beam and Linette R Sparacino (eds), *Military Medical Ethics* (vol 1, Department of the Army 2003) (<https://medcoe.army.mil/borden-tb-mil-med-ethics-vol1>).

<sup>354</sup>Thomas E Beam and Linette R Sparacino (eds), *Military Medical Ethics* (vol 2, Department of the Army 2003) (<https://medcoe.army.mil/borden-tb-mil-med-ethics-vol2>).

<sup>355</sup>Edmund G Howe, 'Mixed agency in military medicine: Ethical roles in conflict' in (Department of the Army 2003) vol 1.

<sup>356</sup>Thomas E Beam, 'Medical Ethics on the Battlefield: The Crucible of the Military' in (Department of the Army 2003).

<sup>357</sup>Jay Stanley, 'Societal Influences and the Ethics of Military Healthcare' in (Department of the Army 2003).

<sup>358</sup>Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force, *Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry Report* (2020) (<https://www.defence.gov.au/about/reviews-inquiries/afghanistan-inquiry>) (Brereton Report).

<sup>359</sup>ICC, 'Situation in the State of Palestine: ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I rejects the State of Israel's challenges to jurisdiction and issues warrants of arrest for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant' (21 November 2024) (<https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/situation-state-palestine-icc-pre-trial-chamber-i-rejects-state-israels-challenges>).

<sup>360</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, '*Lead Us Not into Temptation (Wavell Room, 5 Jan 2022)*' (*Defence Connect*, 9 April 2025) (<https://jive.defencegateway.mod.uk/blogs/bengoldsworthy/2025/04/09/lead-us-not-into-temptation-wavell-room-5-jan-2022>); Ben Goldsworthy, '*A New Model Army for a Miserable Century (Wavell Room, 7 Jan 2022)*' (*Defence Connect*, 9 April 2025) (<https://jive.defencegateway.mod.uk/blogs/bengoldsworthy/2025/04/09/a-new-model-army-for-a-miserable-century-wavell-room-7-jan-2022>); Ben Goldsworthy, '*Israel-Gaza War (Wavell Room, 11 Jun 2024)*' (*Defence Connect*, 9 April 2025) (<https://jive.defencegateway.mod.uk/blogs/bengoldsworthy/2025/04/09/israel-gaza-war-the-legal-risk-of-complicity-wavell-room-11-jun-2024>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(223) Feb–Mar 2025</b>	I finally get around to reading <i>Permanent Record</i> , Edward Snowden’s autobiography.			I also attend an online Quaker course titled <i>Talking Peace</i> specifically about the Peace testimony (the one I find most challenging). I am surprised to find another course participant (and long-standing Quaker) also has a military background, having served on several UN peacekeeping tours.	
<b>(224) Feb 2025</b>				I attend my first Quaker meeting in Congènies, near where I now live in France.	
<b>(225) 17 Feb 2025</b>				I watch <i>Innocence</i> , <sup>361</sup> a documentary about anti-war Israelis who nonetheless consent to conscription for a variety of reasons. Many later take their own lives. Footage of Israeli school indoctrination reminds me of <i>War School</i> . <sup>362</sup>	

<sup>361</sup>Guy Davidi, *Innocence* (28 September 2023) (<<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/1005290-innocence>>).

<sup>362</sup>Dixon (n 293).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(226) 20 Feb 2025	<p>In my traditional annual review of the previous year,<sup>363</sup> I wrote:</p> <p>... I think it is impossible to have been paying the slightest attention during 2024 and not have been radicalised in some way.</p> <p>From January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> (and beyond in both directions), we have collectively had to watch as the state of Israel daily obliterates children, women, and men in Gaza (and, again, beyond in all directions) with near impunity. The political establishments in the <b>US</b>, <b>UK</b> and many other Western states have fallen over themselves to defend, excuse, bald-facedly lie about and materially facilitate this genocide. This remains <b>one of the most evil things I have ever witnessed</b>, and whatever residual liberal sentiments left over from my comfortable middle class upbringing have now been thoroughly scoured away.</p>				
(227)	<p>I see now that these political authorities can dare claim no legitimacy and deserve neither deference, respect, nor peace; the Mandate of Heaven is utterly forfeit. I am left with no faith in their supposedly democratic institutions, nor their rituals of elections, petitions and peaceful protests, as means to affect necessary change. I see that Mao was correct in saying <b>power grows out of the barrel of a gun</b>, and that international law (at least as currently constituted) is little more than a pleasant fairy tale. Despite my previous reticence, I see now that <b>dismantling the present world order</b> is, in fact, a desirable end in and of itself, independent of the merits or presence of any proposed replacement (though I do, of course, have preferences).</p> <p>I see, in the end, that the necropolitics of Gaza is an extreme expression of a <b>future we all face</b> sooner or later.</p> <p>This is a brief summary of my political disillusionment, though there were of course many other cont[r]ibuting factors: the <b>UK</b> elected a noxious cretin with the sheer perversity to present the reheated far-right politics of his predecessors under the utterly undeserved banner of 'labour'; the <b>US</b> decided to launch itself whole-heartedly into fascism, nukes and all; annual conflict-related deaths are the <b>highest they've been</b> in over a quarter-century; <b>income</b> and <b>wealth inequality</b> continue to skyrocket; and the odds of a runaway collapse of the planetary ecosystem raise daily.</p> <p>That's not to say the year has been without positives and small causes for cheer. Moving to France has brought me to a country that retains, however imperfectly, a vibrant, muscular Left, a widespread syndicalist tradition and a diffuse sense of resistance to government authority. The Assad regime finally fell in Syria, opening new doors for the <b>Rojava revolution</b> (as well as bringing peril, of course). And the actions of both state actors (South Africa, Spain, Ireland, <i>et al.</i>) and grassroots efforts (e.g., Palestine Action,<sup>364</sup> the Hind Rajab Foundation, Tech for Palestine and, of course, the unfathomably resilient Palestinian people) in trying to halt the extermination campaign and bring Israel and its accomplices to justice have been truly inspiring.</p>				

<sup>363</sup>Ben Goldsworthy, 'Review of 2024' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 20 February 2025) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/review-of-2024/>>, section titled 'Values & Purpose'; links as per the original.

<sup>364</sup>This was written prior to the proscription of the group. For other statements made *prior* to the group's proscription, see Ben Goldsworthy, 'Tomorrow, This Post Will Be Illegal' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 4 July 2025) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/tomorrow-this-post-will-be-illegal/>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(228)	<p>I'm also pretty confident that this isn't some sort of displaced depression or malaise: my own situation is very comfortable, and I'm generally happy with how my own life is going. But I don't expect it to last.</p> <p>This is the culmination of a years-long process of education, reflection and observation; perhaps I'll write about it some day. But in short: it is clear to me that there is simmering global struggle ongoing that will determine the future in which we are to live. I'm happy to call it the class war, others may prefer other terminology, but whatever we call it: <a href="#">now is the time of monsters</a>, and that simmer is rapidly coming to a boil.</p> <p>I am increasingly sure that we are lurching towards some sort of planetary conflagration, whether that's a traditional world war, a rolling series of individual insurgencies or a mass global uprising from below (both in the socioeconomic sense and in the sense that it will come, predominantly, from the southern hemisphere). It will probably be a combination of all three. It will almost certainly be bloody. And I know that the <a href="#">UK</a>, the <a href="#">us</a>, the ultra-wealthy and their governments will stand shoulder-to-shoulder on the wrong side of history, if there is anyone left alive after the dust has settled to still write it.</p> <p>I do expect that the current 'great' powers will eventually be brought low and humbled, by a combination of united external forces and their own rapacious missteps. I can only hope that whilst they are weakened, other forces will be ready to seize the opportunity to bind and hobble them for good, structuring a new order in light of the failings of the old so as to also dissuade future aspiring hegemonies.</p> <p>I do not claim to know what my modest role in all this may yet be. But I am clear-eyed that the time draws near when we will all be asked: <a href="#">Which side are you on, boy?</a></p> <p>I can only truthfully answer where the heart lies: <a href="#">below and to the left</a>.</p>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(229) 23 Feb 2025	<p>I write the following in an email to family:</p> <p><b>On Current Affairs</b>  Things are bad, and they will get worse. When the Taliban took over Afghanistan it was bad, particularly for Afghans, but it was unlikely to affect our lives overmuch. The same can not be said for the fascist takeover of the <b>US</b>. But whilst I think we have some responsibility to be aware of the broad strokes of what's going on in the world and how the consequences will reverberate into our lives, I think following the daily twists and turns and drama and craziness is not just damaging: <b>it's exactly what they want.</b><sup>365</sup></p> <p>Don't focus on the individuals. If someone shoots Trump tomorrow, or Musk, or both, there will be a hundred ghouls waiting to take over and continue the same as before. Politics is not about charismatic personalities or reality <b>TV</b> show drama or the bloodless twiddling of some obscure legislative procedure; it is an ongoing battle between competing ideas of what the future might be, between those with power (whose priorities are to protect what they have, and to get more of it) and those without; and about how we architect the systems we live in, whose <b>purposes they serve</b> and when reform is not enough and we need to tear down and start again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ...</li> <li>• <b>Drop Site News</b> - A couple of reporters I respect a lot launched this independent outlet last year, and it's consistently provided really interesting and in-depth coverage. It's important to remember that when liberal outlets complain about Trump <i>et al.</i> dismantling the Federal Government or threatening to break international law, they neglect that that same Federal Government just spend over a year bankrolling a genocide in full view of the world because of the personal obsessions of a senile monster. <b>Drop Site News</b> provides coverage from the perspective that does not forget that, which I think can put them in a good position to highlight that there are opportunities opening up for others amidst all the chaos (e.g. <b>this really interesting article</b><sup>366</sup>).</li> </ul>				

<sup>365</sup>Isaac Arnsdorf and Clara Ence Morse, 'Trump's first-week strategy: "Flood the zone." Repeat.' *The Washington Post* (25 January 2025) (<https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/donald-trump-elon-musk-usaid-american-empire>).

<sup>366</sup>Ryan Grim, 'Is Donald Trump actually trying to unwind and reorient American empire?' (*Drop Site News*, 4 February 2025) (<https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/donald-trump-elon-musk-usaid-american-empire>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(230) Mar 2025			I complete a <b>CMT1(R)</b> course. I also get involved in playtesting for 'MEDEVAC', a new tabletop game being developed in partnership between <b>Fight Club International</b> and the <b>AMSTC</b> .		
(231) Mar–May 2025	I read two powerful books: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This</i></li> <li>• <i>The World After Gaza</i></li> </ul>				
(232)			I also share my <i>Wavell Room</i> articles publicly on Defence Connect.		
(233) May 2025				Another Quaker course: <i>Challenging Traditional Quaker Histories</i>	

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(234) 15 May 2025	<p>I had a discussion with my OC about career options. In particular, I wanted to explore the possibility of commissioning and becoming an MSO after all, both as it seemed like a better use of my talents and more doable from France. I was also very interested in Outreach Group, but that would also require commissioning before I could do anything with them.</p> <p>She also asks me, as many have previously, about why I don't look into some of the more obvious roles available, given my civilian skillset. As I later described it to my family: I expected her to ask why I didn't also look into the Intelligence Corps/Cyber/Signals stuff, so I had to figure out a succinct articulation of my why I wasn't interested (which I've implicitly understood for a long time, but haven't really defined explicitly before). I ended up telling her that I have a default presumption in favour of leaving the Army unless and only unless I feel that I'm doing something of justifiable humanitarian (i.e. not UK government) benefit.</p>				
(235) Jun 2025			<p>I start providing first aid at protests in France (which, as you can imagine, are quite spicy here). Provision of medical care in a semi-permissible environment provides some of the elements of military medicine that I find compelling about my Reserves service.</p>		
(236)			<p>I also deliver a presentation to my Sqn promoting the use of wargaming for medical training.</p>		
(237) 2 Jun 2025		<p>The UK government publishes its 2025 Strategic Defence Review (SDR).<sup>367</sup> Despite earlier promising claims of a 'radical' approach (and the interesting inclusion of on the committee, who I remembered positively from the first Trump impeachment trial), the final result is wholly militarist and utterly insufficient, as well as tying the UK even tighter to the US.<sup>368</sup> The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) launch an Alternative Defence Review (ADR) shortly beforehand.<sup>369</sup></p>			

<sup>367</sup> Ministry of Defence, *Strategic Defence Review: Making Britain Safer: secure at home, strong abroad* (, HM Government 2025) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-strategic-defence-review-2025-making-britain-safer-secure-at-home-strong-abroad>).

<sup>368</sup> Richard Reeve, 'SDR 2025' (*Rethinking Security*, 4 June 2025) (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2025/06/04/sdr-2025-america-first-last-and-everything/>).

<sup>369</sup> Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, *Alternative Defence Review* (, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament 2025) (<https://cnduk.org/adr/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(238) Jul 2025					<p>Israeli human rights organisation B'Tselem publishes its report <i>Our Genocide</i>, recognising what is happening in Gaza as such.<sup>370</sup></p> <p>Israeli genocide scholar Omer Bartov, previously reluctant to do so, announces that Israel's actions amount to genocide.<sup>371</sup></p>
(239) 2 Jul 2025					<p>UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese releases her report <i>From economy of occupation to economy of genocide</i>, detailing international corporate complicity in the Gaza genocide.<sup>372</sup></p>

<sup>370</sup> B'Tselem, *Our Genocide* (2025) ([https://www.btselem.org/publications/202507\\_our\\_genocide](https://www.btselem.org/publications/202507_our_genocide)).

<sup>371</sup> Omer Bartov, 'I'm a Genocide Scholar. I Know It When I See It.' *New York Times* (15 July 2025) (<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/15/opinion/israel-gaza-holocaust-genocide-palestinians.html>).

<sup>372</sup> Francesca Albanese, *From economy of occupation to economy of genocide* (2 July 2025) (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc5923-economy-occupation-economy-genocide-report-special-rapporteur>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<b>(240) Jul 2025</b>	I join a project as a volunteer developer working on a telehealth system serving people in Gaza and the West Bank. I continue to work on this project today. At one point, whilst debugging an issue, I realise that the application logs contain an anonymised feed of consultation notes. I sit and watch for a few minutes as they pass by, the long-term medical consequences of living under genocide: persistent neurological issues following head injuries; progressively worsening infections for which no antibiotics can be sourced; malnourished children.				The Global Sumud Flotilla—a grassroots collection of small ships carrying vitally-needed humanitarian aid and aiming to draw attention to the suffocation siege of Gaza—is attacked by drones whilst moored off the coast of Tunisia. I watch live as they approach Gaza and are intercepted, one by one, by the Israeli Navy (illegally, in international waters).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(241)	I remove that information from the logs. It is not necessary for technical debugging, and I don't think I can bring myself to see it again.				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(242) 5 Jul 2025		<p>The UK government proscribes Palestine Action as a terrorist group<sup>373</sup> under very dubious circumstances.<sup>374</sup> To date, over 2,700 people have been arrested protesting this decision, and the authoritarian overreach of it has been criticised by UN experts, Amnesty International, Liberty and many others. In 12 Feb, a judicial review in England &amp; Wales found that the proscription was unlawful (though the group remains proscribed).<sup>375</sup> A judicial review of the decision is ongoing in Scotland.<sup>376</sup></p>			

<sup>373</sup>The Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2025, SI 2025/803.

<sup>374</sup>John McEvoy, 'Revealed: How Palestine Action was banned' (*Declassified UK*, 24 July 2025) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/revealed-how-palestine-action-was-banned/>).

<sup>375</sup>*R (Huda Ammori) v Secretary of State for the Home Department* Press Summary [2026] EWHC 292 (Admin).

<sup>376</sup>*Craig Murray for judicial review of the Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2025* P1017/25.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(243) Aug 2025		Maj Gen (Retd) Charlie Herbert begins giving interviews calling out the UK government for its support of Israeli war crimes. <sup>377</sup> This was the culmination of a process of speaking out that he had begun during the withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021. In a world of Nick Carters, be a Charlie Herbert.			
(244) Sep–Oct 2025				On Ellie’s recommendation I read <i>Comrades in Conscience</i> , a book about conscientious objectors during WWI in Huddersfield and their overlap with the socialist and trades unions movements. <sup>378</sup>	
(245) Sep 2025	I get laser eye surgery; something I’ve long considered but which I have only resolved to actually pursue this year. I am taking increasing agency over my own life and body.				The International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) passes a resolution to recognise Israel’s actions in Gaza as a genocide, <sup>379</sup> as does a UN Commission of Inquiry. <sup>380</sup>

<sup>377</sup>Charlie Herbert and Matt Kennard, ““People Should Resign!” Retired Major General on Gaza | Matt Kennard meets Charlie Herbert’ (*Palestine Deep Dive* [YouTube], 24 August 2025) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIwGasnA4QQ>).

<sup>378</sup>Cyril Pearce, *Comrades in Conscience: The story of an English community’s opposition to the Great War* (2nd edn, Francis Boutle Publishers 2015).

<sup>379</sup>IAGS, ‘IAGS Resolution on the Situation in Gaza’ (*IAGS*, 31 August 2025) (<https://genocidescholars.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/IAGS-Resolution-on-Gaza-FINAL.pdf>).

<sup>380</sup>Legal analysis of the conduct of Israel in Gaza pursuant to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (16 September 2025) (<https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/a-hrc-60-crp-3.pdf>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(246) 21 Sep 2025		The UK government are pressured into formally recognising the state of Palestine, in lieu of more concrete action. There is no change to the ongoing moral, material and diplomatic support provided to enable the genocide.			
(247) Oct 2025	I join the <i>Croix-Rouge Française</i> . I am now, finally, in a position to provide medical aid (locally and, perhaps, one day internationally) emblazoned solely with the red cross.				
(248)			<p>I also spend two weeks on a training exercise with 335. I am, at this point, making no effort to hide my views; a few times in the bar in the evenings, conversation turns to Gaza. Every time, my colleagues do not disappoint, saying that they've never felt closer to leaving the Army and (as they're all healthcare workers outside of it) searching for opportunities to help. I put a few of them in touch with some opportunities I have found for medical aid and volunteering.</p> <p>Whilst mountaineering, I have a candid discussion about the possible value of non-violent resistance in Ukraine. The other person uses <b>World War II</b> as an example of a time where military intervention was necessary; I realise I don't really know the pacifist view on that war, but I ought to. This leads me to <i>The Long Shadow</i>, a challenging case against the common narrative that <b>WWII</b> was fought on moral grounds.<sup>381</sup> I also have interesting conversations with someone who works in <b>NHS</b> procurement about the difficulties facing the government in that area, and the controversy around the forcing of Palantir systems on all practices.</p> <p>Due to my recent eye surgery, I once again end up without a rifle during the <b>EX</b> phase and doing my best Desmond Doss impression. I am later recognised by the <b>DS</b> for my 'compassion under fire'.</p>		

<sup>381</sup> Ted Grisrud, 'The Long Shadow' (*Peace Theology*, 29 September 2010) (<https://peacetheology.net/2010/09/29/the-long-shadow-world-war-iis-moral-legacy/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(249) Nov 2025			<p>Evidence given to the Independent Inquiry on Afghanistan by a senior UKSF whistleblower reveals, amongst other crimes, that UKSF personnel 'shot toddlers in their beds'. The officer is quoted as stating:</p> <p>It's not loyalty to your organisation to stand by and to watch it go down the sewer.<sup>382</sup></p> <p>The senior officer also reveals that the previous Chief of the General Staff (CGS) had been made aware of the SAS killings, and had covered it up.<sup>383</sup></p>		
(250) Dec 2025		Four senior Army officers, including Maj Gen Charlie Herbert, write to the Prime Minister to call for a full arms embargo on Israel. <sup>384</sup>			
(251)				I attend an online meeting with several Russian and Ukrainian conscientious objectors and deserters. <sup>385</sup> We hear about their reasons for resisting, and also the betrayal of the Western governments who loudly offered to welcome them, only to refuse to grant them asylum and to prosecute those who help them.	

<sup>382</sup>Richard Norton-Taylor, 'SAS "shot toddlers in their beds", Afghanistan inquiry told' (*Declassified UK*, 1 December 2025) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/sas-shot-toddlers-in-their-beds-afghanistan-inquiry-told/>).

<sup>383</sup>Joel Gunter, Hannah O'Grady, and Rory Tinman, 'SAS war crime evidence suppressed, inquiry hears' (*BBC News*, 1 December 2025) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cvgk114lrrdo>).

<sup>384</sup>David Sivills-McCann, 'Former Army officers urge Prime Minister to halt arms sales to Israel' (*Forces News*, 24 December 2025) (<https://www.forcesnews.com/services/army/former-army-officers-urge-prime-minister-halt-arms-sales-israel>).

<sup>385</sup>Peace Pledge Union, 'Russian and Ukrainian conscientious objectors speak out' (*PPU*, 24 August 2025) (<https://www.ppu.org.uk/news/russian-and-ukrainian-conscientious-objectors-speak-out>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(252)					The ‘humanity cohort’ of Gazan medical students, who have completed their studies during the genocide, hold a graduation ceremony in front of the destroyed shell of al-Shifa Hospital. <sup>386</sup> The images are astonishing; in the face of so many of the worst things humanity is capable of, this is a celebration of the best.
(253) Start of 2026	The Western-backed ‘Syrian Transitional Government’, led by former al-Qaeda affiliate Ahmed al-Jolani, launches an invasion of North & East Syria. Widespread resistance, both in Rojava and around the world (including a humanitarian caravan that self-organises and launches within a week), serves to halt the advance, and a tenuous ceasefire is declared. But not before jihadist gangs stage a jailbreak at al-Hol camp, housing the ISIS foreign fighters and their families that other nations have steadfastly refused to repatriate for years. <sup>387</sup>				

<sup>386</sup>Faisal Ali, ‘Palestinian doctors graduate in ruins of Gaza’s destroyed al-Shifa Hospital’ (*Al Jazeera*, 26 December 2025) (<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/12/26/palestinian-doctors-graduate-in-ruins-of-gazas-destroyed-al-shifa-hospital>).

<sup>387</sup>Rojava Information Center, ‘Attacks, Escapes and Withdrawals’ (*Rojava Information Center*, 25 January 2026) (<https://rojavainformationcenter.org/2026/01/attacks-escapes-and-withdrawals-a-timeline-of-events-at-al-hol-camp-on-january-20/>). I had been warning about this for years; see ¶ 137.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(254)	<p><b>US</b> fascism goes into overdrive as masked paramilitaries abduct people off the streets of Minneapolis and kill nine across the country by the time the month is over. They have inherited and expanded a domestic and international<sup>388</sup> concentration camp system that holds over 68,000 people, the majority of whom have no criminal records.<sup>389</sup> Deaths in detention are rising.<sup>390</sup> Hundreds are unaccounted for.<sup>391</sup></p> <p>The <b>US</b> is routinely murdering civilians in the Caribbean and Pacific. They attack Venezuela and kidnap its president. The <b>US</b> and Israel publicly stoke huge demonstrations in Iran, and the Iranian regime massacres unknown numbers of protestors (amongst whom Kurds are overrepresented; a fact often ignored in the media coverage). The <b>US</b> engages in blatant piracy and imposes an intensified siege on Cuba. They threaten to invade Greenland. They are right now amassing troops for an assault on Iran.<sup>392</sup></p> <p>Despite a so-called 'ceasefire', the Gaza genocide continues. Eleven were killed yesterday.<sup>393</sup></p>				

<sup>388</sup>Valentina Oropeza and others, "The cemetery of living men" (*BBC News Mundo*, 18 August 2025) (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-5bb1a625-2a25-4cc5-86f3-9132c7b9468a>); National Immigration Law Center, 'Tracking the CECOT Disappearances' (*National Immigration Law Center*, 19 August 2025) (<https://www.nilc.org/resources/tracking-the-cecot-disappearances/>).

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<sup>390</sup>Maanvi Singh, Coral Murphy Marcos, and Charlotte Simmonds, '2025 was ICE's deadliest year in two decades. Here are the 32 people who died in custody' (*The Guardian*, 4 January 2026) (<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2026/jan/04/ice-2025-deaths-timeline>).

<sup>391</sup>Ben Wieder and Shirsho Dasgupta, 'Hundreds of Alligator Alcatraz detainees drop off the grid after leaving site' (*Miami Herald*, 5 January 2026) (<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/immigration/article312042943.html>).

<sup>392</sup>Phil Stewart and Idrees Ali, 'Exclusive: US military preparing for potentially weeks-long Iran operations' (*Reuters*, 13 February 2026) (<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/us-military-preparing-potentially-weeks-long-iran-operations-2026-02-13/>).

<sup>393</sup>Joel Gunter and Fiona Nimoni, 'Eleven killed in Israeli strikes on Gaza, rescuers say' (*BBC News*, 15 February 2026) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8r15eyvk2do>).

## F. Bibliographies

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These bibliographies gather together all of my own works, appearances and the responses to them. They are listed below in chronological order.

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These bibliographies collect together all of the works of media referenced in this document, from books and films to educational courses and music, grouped by medium.

The books bibliography is ordered by author surname, whilst the others are ordered by the title of the work.

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These bibliographies present all of the media works referenced in this document, from books and films to educational courses and music.

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#### **F.4.3.10 Medical, humanitarianism and noncombatants**

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## Abbreviations

**(Retd)** retired 156

**UKSF MSU** UKSF Medical Support Unit 110

**11 Bde** 11<sup>th</sup> Brigade 90, 151

**156 Regt RLC** 156 Regiment RLC 77

**16 Bde** 16 Air Assault Brigade Combat Team 39, 140

**1RO** first reporting officer 32, 37–39

**1 ISR Bde** 1<sup>st</sup> Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Brigade 69

**208 Fd Hosp** 208 (Liverpool) Field Hospital 74, 77

**2IC** second-in-command 8, 38, 52

**2RO** second reporting officer 37–39

**2 Med Gp** 2<sup>nd</sup> Medical Group 7

**2 OSG RLC** 2 Operational Support Group RLC 37, 38, 89, 117, 133

**335 MER** 335 Medical Evacuation Regiment 6, 7, 10, 17, 32, 39, 89, 90, 93, 101, 109, 112, 117, 130, 133, 137, 138, 142, 157, 269

**381 Sqn** 381 (Lancaster) Squadron 77, 80

**3 PARA** 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Parachute Regiment 79

**500 Comms Tp** 500 Communications Troop 37, 38, 89, 90, 117, 120, 122, 133, 135, 137, 141, 142

**6 MI** 6 Battalion, Military Intelligence 52, 53, 69, 85–87

**ABC** American Broadcasting Company 12, 200, 219, 248, 251, 262

**ABN** Army Briefing Note 32, 205, 232, 240

**ACCO** Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objectors 1, 209, 221, 237, 265

**ACE-CSE** Academic Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security Education 46

**ACM** Air Chief Marshal 17, 28

**ADE** Annual Deployment Exercise 39, 73, 130

**Adj** adjutant 31, 32

**Adm** admiral 17, 28

**ADR** Alternative Defence Review 151, 176, 181, 186, 205, 223, 225, 233, 264

**AGAI** Army General and Administrative Instruction 6, 28, 32, 139, 221, 236, 241, 266

**AI** artificial intelligence 12, 196, 214, 242, 252, 258

**ALIS** Army Library and Information Service 106

**AMS** Army Medical Services 89, 117, 120, 269

**AMSTC** AMS Training Centre 150

**AMSTTE** AMS Tactical Training Exercise 120

**AOSB** Army Officer Selection Board 57, 66, 70, 79, 82

**AP** Associated Press 12, 197, 215, 243, 258

**APC** Army Personnel Centre 31, 32

**ARRC** NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps 10

**ARRSE** Army Rumour Service 112, 166, 205, 232

**AWS** autonomous weapon system 78

**A Sqn** A Squadron, 335 MER 39, 151

**BAFF** British Armed Forces Federation 106

**BBC** British Broadcasting Corporation 12, 13, 15, 26, 27, 127, 138, 158, 160, 171, 172, 176, 180–182, 185, 186, 189, 190, 196–199, 202, 203, 207, 209, 213–218, 221, 225, 228, 229, 235, 237–239, 241, 243, 244, 246–248, 251, 258–262

**BMJ** *British Medical Journal* 16, 205, 224, 230, 249, 254

**Brig** brigadier 31

**BSAC** British Sub-Aqua Club 38

**CC** carbon copy 31, 32

**CC** Creative Commons 269

**CC0 1.0** Creative Commons public domain deed 2

**CC BY-SA 4.0** Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license 2

**CDC** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 144

**CDRILS** British Army Values & Standards 54

**CECOT** *Centro de Confinamiento del Terrorismo* [Terrorism Confinement Center] 160, 176, 181, 186, 190, 213, 239, 261

**CEO** Chief Executive Officer 43

**CGS** Chief of the General Staff 158

**CHACR** Centre for Historical Research 145, 175, 181, 195, 205, 224, 232

**CIA** Central Intelligence Agency 75, 78, 128

**CM** career management 31

**CMT** Combat Medical Technician 18, 39, 44, 80, 82, 87, 90, 113, 117, 137, 138

- CMT1(R)** Combat Medical Technician (Reserves), class 1 39, 150
- CMT2(R)** Combat Medical Technician (Reserves), class 2 39, 117, 137, 145
- CMT3(R)** Combat Medical Technician (Reserves), class 3 113, 117
- CND** Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament 151, 176, 181, 186, 205, 223, 225, 233, 264
- CNN** Cable News Network 12, 91, 188, 194, 198, 214, 217, 222, 239, 245, 250, 259
- CO** Commanding Officer 6, 7, 19, 26
- CO** conscientious objector 1, 4, 6, 21, 24, 31, 32, 107, 156, 158, 186, 190, 201, 203, 209, 220, 222, 224, 237, 257
- CoC** chain-of-command 28, 31, 145
- CoE** Certificate of Efficiency 19, 32, 33, 37, 38
- Col Comdt** colonel-commandant 112, 140
- Comd** Commandant 39
- Comd** commander 39, 274
- COP26** 2021 UN Climate Change Conference 112, 180, 184, 194, 223, 224
- CoS** City of Sanctuary 104
- COVID-19** coronavirus disease 2019 10, 16, 20, 63, 93, 95, 97, 122, 126, 162, 164, 166, 170, 174, 195, 205–207, 224, 226, 227, 230, 231, 249–251, 254, 255
- CQB** close-quarters battle 142
- CQC** Care Quality Commission 93
- CSgt** colour sergeant 51
- CSM** Candidate Support Manager 79
- CV** curriculum vitae 8, 66
- D&I** Diversity & Inclusion 98
- DAANES** Democratic Autonomous Administration of North & East Syria. More commonly known as 'Rojava' 9, 58, 64, 65, 75, 78, 95, 122, 147, 159
- DACA** Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals 57
- DBT** Department for Business & Trade 139, 175, 180, 185, 189, 200, 210, 220, 230, 232, 257
- DisTex** Discourse and Text Analysis 89, 102
- DPHC** Defence Primary Healthcare 18
- DS** Directing Staff 120, 157
- DSTL** Defence Science and Technology Laboratory 71
- DV** Developed Vetting 53, 115
- EAPPI** Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel 95
- EDL** English Defence League 76

- EU** European Union 15, 26, 45, 53, 197, 211, 220, 225, 240, 243, 258
- EX** exercise 20, 38, 130, 142, 157, 271
- EXCON** Exercise Control 142
- EZLN** *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* [Zapatista Army of National Liberation] 24, 128
- FAU** Friends' Ambulance Unit 24, 88
- FCI** Fight Club International 150
- FSF** Free Software Foundation 47, 52, 57, 65, 168, 192, 230, 253, 265
- GB** Great Britain 19, 206, 225, 233, 258
- GCHQ** Government Communications Headquarters 8, 46, 53, 57, 63, 89, 108
- GCSE** General Certificate of Secondary Education 43, 44
- Hamas** *Ḥarakat al-Muqāwamah al-'Islāmiyyah* [Islamic Resistance Movement] 13, 27, 131, 197, 198, 207, 216, 217, 228, 241, 245, 259, 260
- HM** His Majesty's 103, 127, 142, 151, 171, 174–176, 179–181, 185, 186, 189, 208–210, 229, 230, 236–238, 264, 265, 271
- HMP** HM Prison 114
- HQ** headquarters 31, 32
- IAGS** International Association of Genocide Scholars 156, 198, 216, 241, 245, 257
- ICC** International Criminal Court 26, 28, 125, 144, 145, 189, 197, 198, 216, 220, 240, 241, 243, 258
- ICE** Immigration and Customs Enforcement 15, 160, 171, 172, 176, 181, 186, 190, 213, 214, 228, 239, 247, 248, 259, 261, 262
- ICJ** International Court of Justice 10, 27, 137, 141
- ICU** Intensive Care Unit 12, 198, 217, 245, 250, 259
- IDF** Israel Defense Forces 12, 13, 41, 42, 46, 57, 196, 198, 215, 217, 243, 245, 252, 258–260
- IIA** Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan 127, 202, 207, 235, 241, 245
- Int Corps** Intelligence Corps 8, 52, 57, 65, 74, 151
- IR** Integrated Review 103, 112, 116, 127
- IS** *al-Dawla al-'Islāmiyya fī al-'Irāq wa al-Shām* [Islamic State] 55–58, 70, 71, 96, 105, 159
- ISCS(L)** Intermediate Command and Staff Course (Land) 143
- IT** information technology 9, 90, 108–110, 117, 122
- ITR** Individual Training Requirement 18, 39
- ITT** Initial Trade Training 39
- IVF** in vitro fertilisation 12, 200, 219, 248, 251, 262

- JNCO** junior non-commissioned officer 37, 38
- JSP** Joint Service Publication 17, 28
- JTRIG** Joint Threat Research Intelligence Group 53
- KFM** Kurdish Freedom Movement 4, 9, 10, 84, 121, 251
- KR** King's Regulations [formerly Queen's Regulations] 28, 106, 210, 238, 242, 266
- Labour** Labour Party 72, 76
- LCpl** lance corporal 9, 33, 37, 38
- Lib Dems** Liberal Democrats 138
- LoAC** law of armed conflict 143, 144, 236, 241, 251, 266
- LSS** Logistics Support Specialist 82
- Lt** lieutenant 112
- Lt Col** lieutenant colonel 6, 109, 110
- LUOTC** Liverpool University Officers' Training Corps 48, 66, 73, 77
- MAGA** Make America Great Again 15, 212, 228, 259
- Maj** major 8, 31, 133, 143
- Maj Gen** major general 112, 156, 158, 176, 181, 186, 193, 197, 207, 216, 221, 235, 245
- MAP** Medical Aid for Palestinians 13, 198, 217, 246, 250, 260
- MASCAL** mass casualty incident 39
- MEDINT** medical intelligence 110
- MOD** Ministry of Defence 1, 6, 7, 28, 29, 31–33, 65, 108, 121, 133, 136, 145, 151, 162, 164, 166, 171, 175, 176, 180, 181, 185, 186, 189, 207–209, 221, 224, 227, 229, 234, 236, 237, 241, 247, 256, 264–266
- Mod. A** **RMAS** Reserves Commissioning Course, Module A 67, 81
- Mod. B** **RMAS** Reserves Commissioning Course, Module B 81
- MOOC** Massive Open Online Course 94, 109, 194, 205, 233, 243
- MP** Member of Parliament 29, 56, 75
- MSO** Medical Support Officer 74, 77, 151
- NATO** North Atlantic Treaty Organisation 2, 15, 19, 26, 27, 74, 78, 85, 201, 213, 218, 229, 247, 261, 269
- NHS** National Health Service 58, 144, 157
- NRC** National Recruiting Centre 79
- NRU** Nationally Recruited Unit 19, 89, 120
- NSA** National Security Agency 71

- NVC** Nonviolent Communication 137
- OBR** Overseas Based Reservist 39
- OC** Officer Commanding 31–33, 39, 81, 151
- OCdt** officer cadet 73, 76, 83, 88
- OF** officer 8, 32
- OPFOR** opposing force 20
- OPMI** Operator Military Intelligence 9
- OPT** Occupied Palestinian Territory 13, 27, 42, 141, 198, 200, 217, 219, 241, 248, 251, 262, 266
- OPTI** Operator Technical Intelligence 9
- OR** other ranks 8, 32, 80, 205, 232, 240
- ORG** Open Rights Group 57, 84
- OSCOLA** Oxford University Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities 281
- OWS** Occupy Wall Street 43, 168, 172, 193, 214, 229
- PACE** probe, assert, challenge, emergency 144
- PARA** the Parachute Regiment 112
- PBS** Public Broadcasting Service 13, 199, 218, 246, 260
- PCHR** Palestinian Centre for Human Rights 11, 199, 209, 219, 237, 242, 247, 261
- PIDA** Public Interest Disclosure Act 28, 29, 209, 221, 237, 242, 266
- PILC** Public Interest Law Centre 11, 200, 209, 219, 242, 248, 261
- PO** potential officer 52, 70
- PPU** Peace Pledge Union 6, 21, 107, 158, 184, 186, 188, 190, 193, 201, 203, 209, 219, 222, 224, 237, 257
- PSAO** Permanent Staff Administration Officer 31, 32
- PSI** Permanent Staff Instructor 31, 77
- PT** physical training 37
- Pte** private 18, 23, 32, 33, 37–39, 51, 83
- Q&A** question & answer 90
- QCEA** Quaker Council for European Affairs 112, 180, 184, 194, 223, 224
- QFP** Quaker Faith & Practice 25, 222, 265
- QPSW** Quaker Peace & Social Witness 95, 179, 184, 188, 194, 223
- R SIGNALS** Royal Corps of Signals 8, 70, 151
- RAF** Royal Air Force 17, 28, 140

**RAMC** Royal Army Medical Corps. Superseded by **RAMS** in 2024 80, 93, 116, 138

**RAMS** Royal Army Medical Services 7, 23, 31, 274

**RIP** rest in peace 70

**RLC** Royal Logistics Corps 20, 112, 268

**RLFR** Reserve Land Forces Regulations 19, 28, 106, 210, 238, 242, 266

**RMAS** Royal Military Academy Sandhurst 65, 272

**RoE** rules of engagement 25, 201, 212, 216, 244, 255

**ROSO** Regimental Operational Support Officer 81, 98

**RSD** Reserve Service Day 8, 32

**RSM** Regimental Sergeant Major 32

**RT** Russia Today 115

**SAS** Special Air Service 144, 158, 181, 186, 202, 203, 207, 209, 221, 235, 237, 241, 242, 244, 247, 259, 261

**SC** Security Check 108

**SDR** Strategic Defence Review 151, 176, 181, 186, 209, 210, 213, 224, 229, 237, 257, 264

**SJA** St John Ambulance 63, 88, 93, 166, 170, 174, 207, 221, 250, 264

**SJAR** *Service personnel*' Joint Appraisal Report 37, 82

**SMSG** Specialist Medical Support Group 7, 19

**SNCO** senior non-commissioned officer 8

**SO2** staff officer, grade 2 31, 112, 166, 205, 232

**SoH** Shadows of Hope 96

**SP** service person 28, 29, 142, 274

**SS** *Schutzstaffel* 92

**SSM** Squadron Sergeant Major 82

**SToS** Soldier Terms of Service 32, 209, 237, 266

**TA** Territorial Army 103

**tech.** technology 4, 252

**Tory** Conservative Party 58, 72, 76, 105

**Tp** troop 268, 274

**Tp Comd** *troop commander* 31, 32

**TTAC21** Technology, Terrorism, and Armed Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century 63, 78, 161, 163, 173, 174, 178, 179, 183, 212, 227, 234, 241, 252, 254, 256

**TTX** tabletop training exercise 109

**TV** television 4, 54, 59, 68, 96, 115, 149, 192

**TY** training year 32, 33, 37–39

**UCU** University and College Union 70, 161, 163, 165, 169, 173, 206, 226, 231, 255

**UK** United Kingdom 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9–13, 15–17, 19, 21, 25–29, 31, 32, 40, 41, 43, 45, 53, 55, 57, 58, 65, 70–72, 75, 83, 93, 95, 102–104, 106–108, 121, 123, 126, 127, 129, 137, 138, 141, 147, 148, 151, 155–158, 162, 164, 165, 171, 174, 175, 179–181, 184–186, 189, 193, 196, 197, 199–203, 205–211, 213, 215–222, 224, 226–228, 230, 232–239, 241–244, 246–252, 254–263, 265, 275, 281

**UKFC** UK Fight Club 109, 175, 179, 206, 233, 255

**UKSF** UK Special Forces 20, 110, 127, 138, 158, 180, 185, 189, 203, 209, 237, 247, 261, 268

**UN** United Nations 13, 17, 26, 27, 29, 69, 76, 95, 146, 152, 155, 156, 197, 200, 201, 209, 214, 219, 220, 225, 229, 240, 242, 243, 248, 251, 257, 258, 262, 270, 275

**UNHCR** Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees 16, 230, 240, 262

**UNICEF** UN Children's Fund 13, 200, 220, 248, 249, 262

**UNRWA** UN Relief & Works Agency 13, 137

**UNSC** UN Security Council 26, 29

**UOTC** University Officers' Training Corps 8, 50, 67, 74, 81, 88, 98, 272

**URL** uniform resource locator 2

**USA** United States of America 1, 2, 4, 15, 17, 23, 25, 26, 28, 41, 43, 45, 55, 57, 59, 63–65, 70, 78, 94, 126, 138, 142, 144, 147–149, 151, 160, 174, 176, 179, 182, 183, 186, 190, 196, 201, 211, 212, 214–216, 219, 220, 225, 228, 229, 238, 243, 245, 248, 252, 254, 255, 257–259, 262

**USSR** Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a.k.a. the Soviet Union 15, 126, 129

**VR** Volunteer Reserves 1, 23, 32

**WCNSF** wounded child, no surviving family 12, 197, 216, 244

**WEF** World Economic Forum 15, 211, 225, 258

**WFFP** Workers for a Free Palestine 139, 175, 180, 185, 189, 200, 210, 220, 230, 232, 257

**WWI** World War I 1, 4, 24, 41, 42, 107, 156, 186, 192, 203, 209, 221, 229, 232, 265

**WWII** World War II 4, 14, 15, 24, 44, 59, 62, 63, 76, 84, 92, 96, 99, 100, 123, 157, 203

**YPG** *Yekîneyên Parastina Gel* [People's Protection Units] 75

**YPJ** *Yekîneyên Parastina Jin* [Women's Protection Units] 70, 169, 173, 178, 183, 188, 202, 210, 230, 232, 239, 252, 257

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conscientious objection, *Wehrmacht*  
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