

Red Crosses, Green Fatigues and White Poppies

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

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The views expressed represent those of the author, and are not necessarily those of any organisation or group with which the author is or has been affiliated.

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**¹). The previous triennial report (2013) of the **Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objectors (ACCO)**, which hears **CO** appeals, reported only 37 appeals considered between 1970–2010.² 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.
- Changes proposed in the Armed Forces Bill 2026 would make former **Volunteer Reservists** liable for recall until age 55, and reduce the threshold for doing so.³ Whilst the discharge process was smooth in this instance, the point of conflict would be expected to come at the point of refusing such a recall order.
- 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.

¹Stephen 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* (Routledge 2016) p 119.

²Ministry 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.

³Under the current draft of the bill, all former **Volunteer Reservists** will be 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 the threshold of will be reduced from ‘national danger, great emergency or attack on the **UK**’ to mere ‘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>).

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 for the flames to cast some light in these dark times; I fear darker ones are coming.

Version History

Version	Date	Note
1	May 21, 2026	Initial release.
1.1	May 22, 2026	Re-title document. Add additional sources. Include notes and subtitles for all bibliography entries.
1.2	May 23, 2026	Re-title post-script appendices. Add additional sources. Include publication state for all bibliography entries.
1.3	May 26, 2026	Add interview notes to timeline. Line spacing and minor tweaks.
1.4	June 2, 2026	Minor tweaks.
1.5	June 3, 2026	Fix timeline bibliography ordering. Update post-script appendix.

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For more about my position on copyright, see Ben Goldsworthy, 'Copywrong' (*bengoldswor-thynet*, 22 March 2018) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/copywrong/>).

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 55.009–55.014,⁴ and additional guidance is available from the [Peace Pledge Union \(PPU\)](#) and [At Ease](#).⁵

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.⁶ 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

⁴Ministry 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](#)).

⁵Peace 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).

⁶There 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.⁷

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 \(SMSG\)](#), [2nd 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 Army⁸ are virtues worth supporting, repeated experience shows that are not upheld by the most senior leadership.⁹ 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.

⁷This 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.

⁸[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/>).

⁹See footnotes [39](#) and [40](#) and [appendix E](#), ¶¶ [252](#) and [258](#).

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.

John Woolman¹⁰

Over the past ten years, I have served for the equivalent of roughly 500 **Reserve Service Days (RSDs)**.¹¹ 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 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.¹² 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

¹⁰John Woolman, *A Word of Remembrance and Caution to the Rich* (1793)

¹¹See **Ministry of Defence**, *Certificate of Service for Ben Goldsworthy* (2026); Ben Goldsworthy, 'Ministry of Defence CV' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/cv/organisations/hm-government/ministry-of-defence/>), for my full military CV.

¹²See **appendix E**, ¶¶ 28 and 51.

less-invasive) vetting¹³—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 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’¹⁴—I committed to only serve in a role I felt I could justify doing even on behalf of the worst possible regime.¹⁵ I ultimately threw away two years of training to effect this change when I decided to abandon the commissioning process,¹⁶ and ultimately my commitment to this decision served to delay my career by five years; I have no regrets.¹⁷

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.¹⁸

In 2019 I first encountered the writings of Hannah Arendt, which left a lasting impression on me.¹⁹ In particular, her (and others’) accounts²⁰ 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.²¹

So, whilst I ultimately decided to continue with the Army, I also committed to never stop

¹³See [appendix E](#), ¶¶ 145 and 147.

¹⁴This 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.

¹⁵See [appendix E](#), ¶ 77.

¹⁶See [appendix E](#), ¶ 89. 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.

¹⁷See [appendix E](#), ¶ 160.

¹⁸See [appendix E](#), ¶¶ 57, 59 to 62 and 78

¹⁹See [appendix E](#), ¶ 95.

²⁰See [appendix E](#), ¶¶ 45, 95, 109, 122, 123, 128 and 141.

²¹Hannah Arendt, ‘Personal Responsibility Under Dictatorship’ in *Responsibility and Judgement* (first published 1964, 2003).

questioning my decision.

I continued on as a medic—except for a brief spell as a telecoms provider *for medics*²²—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,²³ through volunteering with asylum seekers and refugees in the **UK**²⁴ and through my experiences of the **COVID-19** pandemic.²⁵ 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.²⁶ I struggled to readjust to life in the **UK**:²⁷ the bureaucracy; the alienation; the austerity 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.²⁸

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.²⁹

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.³⁰ 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.³¹ We help it to kill.³² It trains with us.³³ We train with it.³⁴ We change our own laws to protect its crimi-

²²See appendix E, ¶¶ 168, 169, 173 and 195. 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

²³See appendix F.4.1.1 and appendix E, ¶¶ 8, 13, 31, 33, 42, 75, 120, 180, 191, 206, 208, 211, 215, 235 and 250.

²⁴See appendix E, ¶ 137.

²⁵See appendix E, ¶¶ 120 and 121.

²⁶See appendix E, ¶¶ 173, 175, 176, 180, 181 and 185. 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>) forthcoming.

²⁷See appendix E, ¶ 186.

²⁸See appendix E, ¶¶ 191 and 193.

²⁹*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>).

³⁰Alastair 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>).

³¹Mark 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/>).

³²Iain Overton, 'Britain's Gaza Spy Flights Scandal: A *Declassified* documentary' (*Declassified UK [YouTube]*, 11 December 2025) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0fk3t28TiAc>).

³³John 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/>).

³⁴John McEvoy, 'British military trained in Israel amid Gaza genocide' (*Declassified UK*, 26 November

nals,³⁵ and we criminalise the thousands who dare to oppose it.³⁶ We allow our people to serve it as foreign mercenaries,³⁷ and then to reintegrate into our society.³⁸ Our most senior military officers go on to work for it³⁹ and talk about how ‘we all benefit’ from its crimes.⁴⁰ Western leaders commend it for ‘doing the dirty work for all of us’.⁴¹

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,^{42,43}
- 14 Oct 2024: al-Aqsa Hospital massacre;
- 12 Dec 2024: Nuseirat refugee camp massacre;

2025) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/british-military-trained-in-israel-amid-gaza-genocide/>) .

³⁵ **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://pchrgaza.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/>) .

³⁶ Wikipedia, ‘Palestine Action’ (*Wikipedia*) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palestine_Action) , particularly the section titles ‘Arrests’.

³⁷ 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/>) .

³⁸ **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/>) .

³⁹ 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/>) .

⁴⁰ “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/>) .

⁴¹ 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>) .

⁴² 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>) .

⁴³ 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,⁴⁴ and gathering to watch women and children be massacred as entertainment⁴⁵—signs of a society so profoundly sick that I struggle to see how it could possibly be redeemed;
- multiple neonatal ICUs filled with tiny bodies⁴⁶ and the targeted destruction of embryos⁴⁷—a war on Palestinian wombs designed to ‘[suppress] the arrival of new life’.⁴⁸

Near 3,000 people disintegrated with no trace remaining.⁴⁹ Entire branches of family trees obliterated.⁵⁰ Searching for family members with flour sifters.⁵¹ An engineered famine.⁵² WCNSF.⁵³ The use of aid as a death trap; a wholly novel form of perfidy for which we have no name.^{54,55} The use of AI-washing to provide a veneer of legality over indiscriminate slaughter.⁵⁶ The alleged use of babies’ cries to lure victims out to be shot.⁵⁷ A bloodlust so

⁴⁴Wikipedia, ‘Israeli direct action against aid delivery to Gaza’ (*Wikipedia*) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_direct_action_against_aid_delivery_to_Gaza) .

⁴⁵Lucas 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) .

⁴⁶Jomana 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>) .

⁴⁷Nadine 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>) .

⁴⁸Bilal Irfan and others, ‘Is Gaza still a place for newborn life?’ (2025) 406(10505) *The Lancet* 803.

⁴⁹Brad 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>) .

⁵⁰Sarah 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/>) .

⁵¹Abdel 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>) .

⁵²Emir Nader, ‘How Israel’s policies created famine in Gaza’ (*BBC News*, 22 August 2025) (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ckg4p90z1kxo>) .

⁵³Dalia 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>) .

⁵⁴Ahmed 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/>) .

⁵⁵Further 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’ (*Declassified UK [YouTube]*, 22 April 2026) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80Qrcgu_Kq8) .

⁵⁶Yuval 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/>) .

⁵⁷Alex 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 repeatedly⁵⁸ kill⁵⁹ their own⁶⁰ hostages.⁶¹ The targeted assassination of healthcare workers (1,722 by last October, or an average of two per day⁶²), UN personnel (more than 1 in 50 UNRWA staff⁶³) and journalists (over 255,⁶⁴ mostly Gazans tirelessly documenting the destruction of their own people, making it the deadliest 'conflict' for journalists in recorded history⁶⁵).

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,⁶⁶ kinder-cide,⁶⁷ genocide.

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

⁵⁸Hugo 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>) .

⁵⁹Yaniv 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>) .

⁶⁰Natalie 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>) .

⁶¹Bar 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>) .

⁶²Medical 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/>) .

⁶³United 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>) .

⁶⁴United 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>) .

⁶⁵Nick 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>) .

⁶⁶United 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>) .

⁶⁷UNICEF, "'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 1937⁶⁸) 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.⁶⁹

I disagree with the former Defence Secretary: I do not believe we are in a ‘pre-war era’ at all.⁷⁰ I believe that we are in the midst of a Third World War.⁷¹ 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.⁷²

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,⁷³ that the use of armed force can be justified,⁷⁴ 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*,⁷⁵ 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

⁶⁸Other 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 69.

⁶⁹Rahim 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)

⁷⁰Grant 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.>) .

⁷¹I plan write about this in more detail in a future work, see Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Ave, Bellum’ (*bengoldswor-thynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/ave-bellum>) forthcoming.

⁷²See appendix E, ¶¶ 235 and 237.

⁷³Abdullah 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/>) .

⁷⁴Peter van Uhm, ‘Peter van Uhm: Why I chose a gun’ (*TED [YouTube]*, 30 January 2012) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjAsM1vAhW0>) .

⁷⁵Loren 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 fascist⁷⁶ movement.⁷⁷ 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 Colombia⁷⁸ to France;^{79,80} I see nothing but denial from the **UK**, but neither the Atlantic ocean nor appeals to a fictitious 'Special Relationship' will save us.⁸¹

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).⁸² 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

⁷⁶'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>) .

⁷⁷It 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.

⁷⁸Hague Group, 'States announce unprecedented measures to halt the Gaza genocide at Bogotá conference' (16 July 2025) (<https://thehaguegroup.org/meetings-bogota-en/>) .

⁷⁹For 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>) .

⁸⁰For 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/cy4wvp0wx43o>) (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>) .

⁸¹See 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.

⁸²See Operation Paperclip, Operation Gladio, and the rehabilitation of figures like Klaus Barbie, Hans Speidel and Adolf Heusinger.

fourteen governments, comprising three different political parties. I have seen successive 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 previously plundered from the colonies) and the nation asset-stripped.⁸³ I believe that these governments are responsible for the wilful social murder of as many as two million people during the COVID-19 pandemic,⁸⁴ on top of over 300,000 during the preceding years of austerity.⁸⁵

I have seen progressive hostility and scapegoating of immigrants,⁸⁶ with even one of my own family members 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,⁸⁷ perhaps as many as 1,000 in the last month⁸⁸—and suffocate in lorry containers and wash up bloated on the shores of Fortress Europe.⁸⁹ In the face of such 'mountainish inhumanity',⁹⁰ 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'⁹¹ 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.⁹²

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

⁸³I am in the process of writing a detailed article about this, see Ben Goldsworthy, 'Bye-Bye Britain' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/bye-bye-britain>) forthcoming.

⁸⁴Kamran Abbasi, 'Covid-19: Social murder, they wrote—elected, unaccountable, and unrepentant' (2021) 372 *BMJ* (<https://www.bmj.com/content/372/bmj.n314>).

⁸⁵David 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>).

⁸⁶See appendix E, ¶¶ 137 and 217 to 219 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>).

⁸⁷UNHCR, '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>).

⁸⁸Pierfrancesco 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>).

⁸⁹Wikipedia, 'Death of Alan Kurdi' (*Wikipedia*) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Alan_Kurdi).

⁹⁰Ian McKellen, 'Ian McKellen performs speech about immigrants by Shakespeare from Thomas More (23/4/2016)' (*TFotF [YouTube]*) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DceEunnTA3A>).

⁹¹Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Stanford University Press 2012).

⁹²Sven 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) 36–37

the military.⁹³ In truth, for many years I have been trying to maintain an uncomfortable—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 amidst the military. 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.⁹⁴

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.⁹⁵ 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.⁹⁶

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 minimum⁹⁷—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.

⁹³Also, as protected persons under the Geneva Conventions (**Geneva Convention I**, arts 24–25; **JSP 383**, ch. 7, pt. A (particularly paras 7.10–13)) medical personnel are quite unique in accepting 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 (**Geneva Convention III**, art 33; **JSP 383**, ch. 7, pt. A, paras 7.26–27). 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.

⁹⁴See **appendix F.1** and **appendix E**, ¶¶ 158, 171, 210, 212, 223, 224, 230 and 241. I have described my goal to several people, pithily, as being to turn the Armed Forces into an ‘angry Red Cross’.

⁹⁵See **appendix E**, ¶ 172.

⁹⁶I 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.

⁹⁷Though outside the scope of this letter, I would add to this list particularly prominent media propagandists such as Douglas Murray and Melanie Phillips, following the example of RTL M trials in Rwanda. Those military personnel based in Cyprus and elsewhere should also be investigated for participation in crimes against humanity, 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 280-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.⁹⁸ I am currently awaiting a promotion that is blocked by my medical downgrading following eye surgery in September,⁹⁹ 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.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸See **appendix C**.

⁹⁹See **appendix E**, ¶ 254.

¹⁰⁰See **appendix E**, ¶¶ 231 and 243.

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.¹⁰¹

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, the mere fact of being in it grants me an overseas tax advantage worth up to £12,000/yr.¹⁰² 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.¹⁰³ 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.

¹⁰¹See The **Reserve Land Forces Regulations** 2016, amendment number 13 (**RLFR**) 01.03.032.

¹⁰²See <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>.

¹⁰³Georgina 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 2022,¹⁰⁴ 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.

¹⁰⁴I took part in **EX IRON TITAN** in 2023 (see British Army, 'Iron Titan: Army's largest land exercise for twenty years' (*British Army*, 25 September 2023) (<https://www.army.mod.uk/news/iron-titan-army-s-largest-land-exercise-for-twenty-years/>)), where I heard that the **RLC** were practising gravedigging and **SF** playing **OPFOR** stalked and snatched away sentries 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.¹⁰⁵ By getting that recorded now, we need not waste time later.

Second, if conscription does happen, I expect that there will be widespread refusal.¹⁰⁶ 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.¹⁰⁷ In the past two decades there have been only a handful of high-profile objection cases—Ben Griffin in 2005,¹⁰⁸ Joe Glenton in 2010, Michael Lyons in 2011, Ahmed al-Batati in 2021¹⁰⁹—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.¹¹⁰ 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 document to justify why.¹¹¹ 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

¹⁰⁵See footnote 3 for proposed legal changes to this effect.

¹⁰⁶See 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>> .

¹⁰⁷*Peace Pledge Union*, ‘Sentenced to Death’ (*The Men Who Said No: Conscientious Objectors 1915–1919*) <<https://menwhosaidno.org/Sentenced/index.html>> .

¹⁰⁸Ben 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/>> .

¹⁰⁹Areeb 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>> .

¹¹⁰See appendix E, ¶¶ 96, 111, 119, 120, 145, 148, 156, 159, 165, 167, 201, 214, 232, 233, 242 and 257.

¹¹¹Ironically, I probably would have made a *fantastic* intelligence officer.

my shoes on my hands. I may not be able to articulate quite why at that 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.¹¹² 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,¹¹³ 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](#).

¹¹²See '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.

¹¹³I 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>) forthcoming.

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 Camus¹¹⁴



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,¹¹⁵ FAU member and conscientious objector



Wrong life cannot be lived rightly.

Theodor Adorno¹¹⁶

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 Celine¹¹⁷

[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 Camus¹¹⁸

[E]very small act of resistance trains the muscle that's used 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 Akkad¹¹⁹



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,¹²⁰ EZLN

A. Post-Script: What Should We Do Next?

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,¹²² as the head of the **US** military pledged to offer 'no quarter'¹²³ and that there would be 'no stupid rules of engagement'.¹²⁴ The latest Israeli invasion of Lebanon has already seen them specifically target paramedics, often through 'double tap' strikes,¹²⁵ the first ten days of the conflict alone resulted in the deaths of ten classrooms' worth of children.¹²⁶ It is clear that the **US** and Israel

¹¹⁴Albert Camus, 'Letters to a German Friend' in *Lettres à un ami allemand* [Resistance, Rebellion and Death] (first published 1943, 1961)

¹¹⁵Britain Yearly Meeting, *Quaker Faith & Practice* (5th edn, 1 November 2013) (<https://qfp.quaker.org.uk/>) (QFP) ch 24, s 23

¹¹⁶Theodor W Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life* (Dennis Redmond tr, first published 1951, 2005)

¹¹⁷Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson, 'Leviathan' in *Illuminatus!* trilogy (25 June 1987)

¹¹⁸Albert Camus, 'Homage to an Exile' in *Lettres à un ami allemand* [Resistance, Rebellion and Death] (first published 1955, 1961)

¹¹⁹Omar El Akkad, *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (25 February 2025)

¹²⁰Subcomandante Galeano, 'The Crack in the Wall: First Note on Zapatista Method' (Enlace Zapatista, Mexico, 3 May 2015) (<https://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/2015/05/10/the-crack-in-the-wall-first-note-on-zapatista-method/>)

¹²²'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>) .

¹²³Pete Hegseth, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Air Force Gen. Dan Caine Hold a Press Briefing (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/>); Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (signed 17 July 1998, entered into force 1 July 2002) (Rome Statute) art. 8, 2(b)(xii).

¹²⁴Haley 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>) .

¹²⁵Lylla 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>) ; Katrine Dige Houmøller, 'Israel Is on a Killing Spree of Paramedics and Rescue Workers in Lebanon' (*Drop Site News*, 22 May 2026) (<https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/israel-lebanon-paramedics-rescue-workers-hospitals-ambulances>) ; 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>) .

¹²⁶Save 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>) .

intend to repeat their Gaza playbook.¹²⁷

Retaliatory strikes from Iran have hit targets including the neighbouring Gulf states, Cyprus and Turkey. UK involvement has been hazy,¹²⁸ and public statements from government (and across Europe) 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.¹²⁹ 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 application¹³⁰—the US military is massing to assault Cuba,¹³¹ which they have already been starving for months.

In the wider context, the UN is currently looking at financial collapse by this summer.¹³² 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.¹³³ 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 hegemonies and their pliant vassal states use authoritarian means to enrich their shared elite classes¹³⁴) or the 'Hague Group'¹³⁵ camp (in which individually-vulnerable 'middle powers', which nonetheless represent the bulk of humanity, build a coalition and system designed to restrain those same hegemonies).

There is a gun pointed at our collective heads. Whilst my original letter had only one demand to

¹²⁷ Ayoub Khan, 'The Gazafication of Lebanon' [2026] Tribune (<https://tribunemag.co.uk/2026/05/the-gazafication-of-lebanon>).

¹²⁸ 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, 'Starmer's "defensive strikes" on Iran are a "fiction", air force veteran warns' (*Declassified UK*, 7 April 2026) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/starmer-defensive-strikes-on-iran-are-a-fiction-air-force-veteran-warns/>).

¹²⁹ 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/>).

¹³⁰ See footnote 410.

¹³¹ 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>).

¹³² 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>).

¹³³ 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>).

¹³⁴ 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/>).

¹³⁵ Hague Group (n 78).

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,¹³⁶ denying the use of any British military assets in its prosecution and supporting the ICC and UN;¹³⁷
- 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 2025:¹³⁸
 - 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**.

¹³⁶Sam 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 80).

¹³⁷Seyma 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>) .

¹³⁸Hague Group (n 78).

- support South Africa in their case against Israel in the ICJ;¹³⁹
- commit to providing, alongside other European and regional militaries, a naval escort for the Global Sumud Flotilla¹⁴⁰ to Gaza; the most recent effort launched in April and was attacked by Israeli naval forces off the coasts of Crete and Cyprus, with the illegally-detained activists reportedly then tortured in Israeli prisons;¹⁴¹
- 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;¹⁴²
- drop the appeal against the deproscription of Palestine Action, and deproscribe the civil wings of Hezbollah and Hamas (which were only proscribed in 2019¹⁴³ and 2021,¹⁴⁴ 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
- 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 Six¹⁴⁵ 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 16.47¹⁴⁶ and the article linked in footnote 358 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 55¹⁴⁷ and decide whether continued military service is still

¹³⁹ *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip* (n 29).

¹⁴⁰ 'Homepage' (*Global Sumud Flotilla*) (<https://globalsumudflotilla.org/>) .

¹⁴¹ Alexandra Sharp, 'Israeli Minister's Taunting of Detained Flotilla Activists Sparks Foreign Backlash' *Foreign Policy* (21 May 2026) (<https://foreignpolicy.com/2026/05/21/ben-gvir-video-israel-detained-activists-global-sumud-flotilla/>); Global Sumud Flotilla, 'Global Sumud Flotilla Volunteers Recount Abuse on "Torture Boat"' (*Global Sumud Flotilla*, 22 May 2026) (<https://globalsumudflotilla.org/press/global-sumud-flotilla-volunteers-recount-abuse-on-torture-boat/>) .

¹⁴² Clayton Dalton, 'How a New Israeli Policy Cuts Off Humanitarian Aid in Gaza' *The New Yorker* (20 May 2026) (<https://jacobin.com/2026/05/castro-indictment-cuba-us-war>).

¹⁴³ 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/>) .

¹⁴⁴ 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*.

¹⁴⁵ Craig Murray, 'The Morass of Injustice' (*Craig Murray*, 2 May 2026) (<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2026/05/the-morass-of-injustice/>) .

¹⁴⁶ JSP 383, para 16.47.

¹⁴⁷ AGAI 55.

possible given the events of the past few years. Even if it is, identify now your red lines,¹⁴⁸ 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**¹⁴⁹), **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;¹⁵⁰
- for those who have directly witnessed and/or participated in war crimes and crimes against humanity,¹⁵¹ familiarise themselves with the *Ministry of Defence Raising a Concern Policy*,¹⁵² taking special note of:
 - the fact that ‘protected disclosures’ made by **SPs** are protected as per the **PIDA**¹⁵³ despite **SPs** being technically exempt from that Act;¹⁵⁴
 - the first point of contact for raising an internal concern;¹⁵⁵
 - what is considered a valid concern,¹⁵⁶ including ‘failure to comply with legal obligations’¹⁵⁷ (such as the **Genocide Convention**), ‘deceiving, or knowingly misleading Ministers, Parliament, or others’¹⁵⁸ and ‘ignoring inconvenient facts or relevant considerations when providing advice or making decisions’;¹⁵⁹ and
 - when external (or ‘wider’) disclosure is permitted and how to do so.¹⁶⁰

¹⁴⁸For 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**, ¶ 128.

¹⁴⁹Armed 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.

¹⁵⁰See also **Quaker Council for European Affairs**, Connection eV, and *Agir pour la Paix* and **War Resisters’ International**, *Voices of Peace: Stories of Conscientious Objectors from Europe and Beyond* (2026) (<https://www.qcea.org/voices-of-peace-stories-of-conscientious-objectors-from-europe-and-beyond/>).

¹⁵¹See 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. See also Phil Miller and John McEvoy, ‘Israeli attacks on Gaza hospitals “similar to Russia”, internal British army report says’ (*Declassified UK*, 1 August 2025) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/israeli-attacks-on-gaza-hospitals-similar-to-russia-internal-british-army-report-says/>) for evidence that the nature of Israeli military criminality is common knowledge amongst the Armed Forces.

¹⁵²**Ministry of Defence**, *Ministry of Defence Raising a Concern Policy* (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministry-of-defence-raising-a-concern-policy>).

¹⁵³**Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA)**.

¹⁵⁴**Ministry of Defence**, *Ministry of Defence Raising a Concern Policy* (n 152) s 47.

¹⁵⁵*ibid* s 23.

¹⁵⁶*ibid* ss 27–28.

¹⁵⁷*ibid* 28(d).

¹⁵⁸*ibid* 28(i); See also Miller and McEvoy (n 151) for a concrete example.

¹⁵⁹**Ministry of Defence**, *Ministry of Defence Raising a Concern Policy* (n 152) 28(k).

¹⁶⁰*ibid* ss 51 & 130; **PIDA**, ss 43G–43H

- **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 may 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.¹⁶¹

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);¹⁶²
- organise anti-war and antimilitarist efforts and campaigns; and
- plan how to respond effectively in the event of mass conscription, which can bring both opportunities¹⁶³ and perils—whilst it is right and appropriate that the military as a whole should remain an apolitical institution, it is also true that the terrain within must not be ceded without contest to the far right.¹⁶⁴

Lastly, Scottish independence seems to have potential as a means of breaking the **UNSC** stranglehold on world affairs, as proposed by Craig Murray.¹⁶⁵ 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.

¹⁶¹I plan to discuss possible approaches further in a future work, see Ben Goldsworthy, 'Bystanders, Rescuers and *Children of Men*' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/children-of-men>) forthcoming.

¹⁶²I 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>) forthcoming.

¹⁶³Mass conscript resistance during the Vietnam War is probably the closest any political movement has come to posing an existential threat to **US** government, see David Zeiger, *Sir! No Sir!* (19 May 2005) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/39542-sir-no-sir>); David Cortright, *Soldiers in Revolt: GI Resistance During the Vietnam War* with an intro by Howard Zinn (Haymarket Books 1 September 2005).

¹⁶⁴For German historical examples of why this is a fatal error, see **appendix E**, ¶¶ 14 and 123.

¹⁶⁵Craig 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.

Peter Osborne¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶Peter Osborne, *Complicit: Britain's Role in the Destruction of Gaza* (OR Books 30 October 2025)

B. Post-Script: 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 referees¹⁶⁷ 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 some bids in already for some courses in early March, and that gave me time to figure out if I had a place on them 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.¹⁶⁸ 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 emailed the PSAO, PSI and my Tp Comd to inform them that I was leaving and will need to dekit. She referenced 'another email chain', but I was not included in that; the email I

¹⁶⁷See appendix C.

¹⁶⁸As part-timers, Reservists often do not check their MOD mailboxes regularly.

was CC'd into 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:

I have since learned that AGAI 55¹⁶⁹ 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.¹⁷⁰ So, for a conscientious objector they just ask for voluntary discharge using the normal AFE 20037 application.¹⁷¹ 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.'¹⁷² 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, ¶ 161). 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 so 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.

¹⁶⁹AGAI 55.

¹⁷⁰Ministry 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).

¹⁷¹Ministry of Defence, Army Reserve Application for Voluntary Discharge (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministry-of-defence-raising-a-concern-policy>) (AFE 20037); See also SToS, sect 6, para 2.6.4.

¹⁷²See footnote 3.

On Mar 10, I emailed my OC, 1RO and Tp Comd to ask for a personal reference.¹⁷³

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.¹⁷⁴

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 Jun 3, I still have access to my Army email account and the internal MOD social media site.

On May 21 I memorialised my profile on the latter, explaining my reasons for leaving should anyone stumble across it in future and including a link to this document;¹⁷⁵ then I logged out for the final time.

However, I still receive a weekly summary of how my posts are doing. In the May 25 summary, I saw that my discharge application post had already been viewed 5 times (and I saw a bump in traffic on my site). In the Jun 1 summary, the discharge application post as well as the *Wavell Room* articles I had shared a year earlier¹⁷⁶ (and, for some reason, an entirely benign post about flashcard study techniques) were all absent, presumed deleted.

¹⁷³Ministry of Defence, 'Service Leavers' Guide' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/service-leavers-pack>), s 3.14.

¹⁷⁴Ministry of Defence, *Certificate of Service for Ben Goldsworthy* (n 11).

¹⁷⁵Ben Goldsworthy, 'An application for discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection to continued military service (21 May 2026)' (*Defence Connect*, 21 May 2026) Access restricted (<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>).

¹⁷⁶See appendix E, ¶ 241.

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 [redacted] [sic, should read 'before Ben'] [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 7th 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**¹⁷⁷ and **SEPTEMBER SERPENT**,¹⁷⁸ 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**.

¹⁷⁷See footnote 104.

¹⁷⁸See appendix E, ¶ 189.

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**.

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 **Genocide Convention** and **Israele-Gaza WAR**¹⁷⁹ as highlighted to him by **Comd 16 Bde**,¹⁸⁰ attendance to **A Sqn** drill night, and a **2nd** 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 **2nd** top in the unit **Private** cohort.

¹⁷⁹Ben Goldsworthy, 'Israel–Gaza War: The Legal Risk of Complicity' (*Wavell Room*) (<https://wavellroom.com/2024/06/11/the-legal-risk-of-complicity/>) .

¹⁸⁰See footnote 359.

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.

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				<p>I was born to a British father and American 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 both world wars.</p> <p>As a result, nationalism has never had much sway on me, and I have always considered it somewhat absurd.</p>	
(3) 2002–2005		<p>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.</p> <p>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>¹⁸¹ and <i>Bush Shoot-Out</i>.¹⁸²</p>			

¹⁸¹Idleworm, 'Gulf War Game' (*Idleworm*, 2002) (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>.

¹⁸²MiniClip, 'Bush Shoot-Out' (*Newgrounds*, 17 February 2004) (<https://www.newgrounds.com/portal/view/150999>) .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(4) Jan 2002					51 IDF reservists publicly refuse to fight beyond the 1967 borders of the country. ¹⁸³
(5) Sep 2003					27 IDF pilots (both active and reserve) protest the use of targeted assassination in Gaza. ¹⁸⁴
(6) Dec 2003					13 IDF commando reservists refuse to serve in the Occupied Palestinian Territory . ¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³Noam 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/>).

¹⁸⁴Conal Urquhart, 'Israeli pilots refuse to fly assassination missions' *The Guardian* (25 September 2003) (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/sep/25/israel>).

¹⁸⁵Molly 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/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(7) 2010		WikiLeaks release of <i>Collateral Murder</i> ¹⁸⁶ 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 WWI battlefields and cemeteries. This had quite an impact on me; in particular, the contrast between Tyne Cot and the German cemetery at Langemark. ¹⁸⁷	

¹⁸⁶WikiLeaks, 'Collateral Murder' (*WikiLeaks*, 5 April 2010) <<https://collateralmurder.wikileaks.org/>> .

¹⁸⁷See ¶ 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 Occupy movement,¹⁸⁸ 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 CEO talks to protestors in the encampment.¹⁸⁹ 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>				

¹⁸⁸As 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.

¹⁸⁹Peter 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>> .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(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>,¹⁹⁰ detailing the erosion of civil liberties in the UK under Tony Blair; and <i>The Power of Nightmares</i>,¹⁹¹ detailing the role of US neoconservatives in inventing the spectre of radical Islamism for their own purposes.</p>				

¹⁹⁰Chris Atkins, *Taking Liberties* (8 June 2007) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/26273-taking-liberties>).

¹⁹¹Adam Curtis, *The Power of Nightmares: The Rise of the Politics of Fear* (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>¹⁹² and <i>Restrepo</i>¹⁹³ 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>,¹⁹⁴ which followed the unit's medic, and a small Mormon-backed WWII film called <i>Saints and Soldiers</i>¹⁹⁵ 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>¹⁹⁶ and <i>Waltz with Bashir</i>¹⁹⁷ about the Israel–Palestine conflict (albeit from the Israeli perspective). The 1995 documentary <i>Executions</i>¹⁹⁸ embeds opposition to the death penalty at an early age.</p> <p>I had also seen <i>Stalingrad</i>,¹⁹⁹ a German film about the experience of the <i>Wehrmacht</i> on the Eastern front, and <i>Letters from Iwo Jima</i>²⁰⁰ about the Japanese perspective.</p>

¹⁹²Janus Metz, *Armadillo* (8 April 2011) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/37828-armadillo>>.

¹⁹³Tim Hetherington and Sebastian Junger, *Restrepo* (25 June 2010) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/39312-restrepo>>.

¹⁹⁴David Leland, *Bastogne* (HBO 2 November 2001) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/4613-band-of-brothers/season/1/episode/6>>.

¹⁹⁵Ryan Little, *Saints and Soldiers* (9 October 2006) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/10105-saints-and-soldiers>>.

¹⁹⁶Samual Maoz, *Lebanon* (9 April 2010) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/32084>>.

¹⁹⁷Ari Folman, *Waltz with Bashir* (21 November 2008) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/search?query=waltz%20with%20bashir>>.

¹⁹⁸David Herman, *Executions* (27 October 1995) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/63198-executions>>.

¹⁹⁹Joseph Vilsmaier, *Stalingrad* (15 April 1994) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/11101-stalingrad>>.

²⁰⁰Clint Eastwood, *Letters from Iwo Jima* (20 December 2006) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/1251-letters-from-iwo-jima>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(14)			In GCSE History I study the German Revolution of 1918–19 ²⁰¹ the Sino–Japanese War (including watching <i>City of Life and Death</i> , ²⁰² 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.		
(15) From May 2013	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 US and Five Eyes countries, including the UK, 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.				

²⁰¹Ben 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/>).

²⁰²Chuan 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
(16) May 2014	I wrote about the EU Parliament election ²⁰³ —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. ²⁰⁴				

²⁰³Ben Goldsworthy, 'On the 2014 European Parliament Election: A political clown car' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 12 May 2014) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/on-the-2014-european-parliament-election/>).

²⁰⁴Emma 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 Academic Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security Education (ACE-CSE); many of the faculty had links to, or were involved in projects alongside the Security services, primarily GCHQ.</p> <p>I also publish a blog post about one of my favourite musicians, and touch on my political views.²⁰⁵</p>				<p>43 IDF intelligence reservists publish a letter refusing to participate in actions designed to 'harm the Palestinian population in the West Bank'.²⁰⁶</p>

²⁰⁵Ben Goldsworthy, 'On Pat 'the Bunny' Schneeweis: Absurd anarchism' (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 2 September 2014) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/on-pat-the-bunny-schneeweis/>) ; Patrick Schneeweis, *Music of* (<https://patthebunny.bandcamp.com/music>).

²⁰⁶'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)	<p>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>,²⁰⁷ 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.</p>				

²⁰⁷Sam 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/fai/>>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(19) Nov 2014	I wrote an article for my college paper about recent campus protests against BAE Systems' presence at a careers fair. ²⁰⁸ 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.				
(20) Dec 2014	I first watched <i>Army of Shadows</i> ²⁰⁹ —one of my favourite films to this day—which unromantically depicts the impossible choices and pervasive uncertainty and threat of death under which the French resistance operated.				

²⁰⁸Ben Goldsworthy, 'Big Bad BAE?' *The Witch* (23 November 2014) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/on-bae-systems/>).

²⁰⁹Jean-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
(21) 16 Feb 2016			I joined the Liverpool University Officers' Training Corps (LUOTC) . 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.		
(22) Jul 2016					The comically long-awaited Chilcot Report ²¹⁰ 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.

²¹⁰Iraq Inquiry, *The Report of the Iraq Inquiry* (2016) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-report-of-the-iraq-inquiry>) (Chilcot Report).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(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 ²¹¹ and coming from a multi-national background. ²¹²	
(24) 2016			[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.		

²¹¹ See ¶ 9.

²¹² 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
(25)			<p>At this point, he was a colour sergeant. 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 private 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.²¹³</p>		

²¹³Baha Mousa Public Inquiry, *Baha Mousa Public Inquiry report* (2011) vol III (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 Free Software Foundation (FSF) as an Associate Member, which I maintained until Nov 2024. The FSF 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.				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(27) May 2017			<p>Potential officer (PO) visit to 6 Battalion, Military Intelligence (6 MI). I later emailed my Regimental 2IC (a major in the Int Corps, who had arranged the visit) that 'my plan is to probably apply for [the course required to become an intelligence officer] in summer 2018'.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(28) Jul–Sep 2017	<p>With the direction and support of my faculty, I applied for²¹⁴ and was accepted on a GCHQ-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 GCHQ, and through conversations with them I learnt much more about the Snowden revelations: in particular, I remember being surprised to learn about JTRIG'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.</p> <p>Nonetheless, I passed the interview and moved on to DV security vetting. I decided to be completely honest and listed my early university drug use in detail.</p>				

²¹⁴For 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
(29) Jul 2017–Jun 2018	During this period, I frequently had Parliamentary debates over the EU Withdrawal Bill on in the background. I grew increasingly disillusioned with Parliament, and this marks the high water mark of my liberal, institutionalist period.				
(30) Aug 2018			I was contacted by 6 MI regarding the course to become an intelligence officer. I replied that ‘I’m interested in [the course] next summer’.		
(31) Aug 2017–Jul 2018	I briefly recorded a diary, prompted by having watched <i>The Promise</i> . ²¹⁵ 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.				

²¹⁵Peter 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
(32) 25 Aug 2017	<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>...</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 CDRILS, and you just go with that.</p> <p>Maybe I should join a cult.</p>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(33) 26 Aug 2017	<p>Diary entry:</p> <p>I'm soon to join, all going to plan, the UK 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.²¹⁶ 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 United States [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 [sensical]? 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[<i>sic</i>] fighting on the [right] side of history—does that make us hypocrites when we decry Daesh for blowing up cafés and gunning down civilians?</p>				

²¹⁶I 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
(34)	<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? Daesh 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 Daesh 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>				
(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. Daesh, in seeking control according to guidelines that people are already free to follow of their own volition, are unjust.</p>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(36)	<p>This is the <i>mens rea</i> of terrorism. Now the <i>actus rea[sic]</i>. 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 MP? 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 MPs and such are inviolable. A group must win over the voters and get pro-cause MPs elected in order for those MPs to vote to overthrow themselves. If MPs 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, Daesh 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 & 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>...</p> <p>The UK recently introduced the Investigatory Powers Act²¹⁷ to legalise all of the mass surveillance revealed[sic] in the Snowden leaks a few years ago.</p> <p>...</p> <p>[When I return to Lancaster for my master's] I'll also be readying myself to attempt the Army Officer Selection Board, as well as the selections I'll need to join the Intelligence Corps. . .</p> <p>I have an interview for post-master's employment at GCHQ 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 Open Rights Group (ORG); 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 Free Software Foundation) whilst also preparing for a career in the intelligence services.</p>				

²¹⁷Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (Snoopers' Charter).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(42) 5 Sep 2017	<p>Diary entry:</p> <p>Trump rescinded DACA today. He spited a generation of kids, of people who better represent what the United States 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.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the Rhohingya[<i>sic</i>] are butchered in Burma. The IDF 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>				
(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 in Rojava and against Daesh 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. Britain 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 Tories continue to squeeze the public sector to breaking point. To throttle the NHS. 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.</p> <p>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)	<p>I also watch <i>Generation War</i>,²¹⁸ 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.</p>				<p>At this point I also started to get very drawn into US political theory (because I discovered I was going to have to start filing US tax returns, and figured I might as well learn what the country was all about). Partly this mean reading the Constitution²¹⁹ (and both Federalist and anti-Federalist papers from its drafting²²⁰); mostly this meant listening to <i>Hamilton</i>²²¹ on repeat.</p>

²¹⁸Philipp Kadelbach, *Unsere Mütter, Unsere Väter [Generation War]* (17 March–202013) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/46849-unsere-m-tter-unsere-v-ter>).

²¹⁹Constitution of the United States 1787 (U.S. Const.).

²²⁰Alexander 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/>).

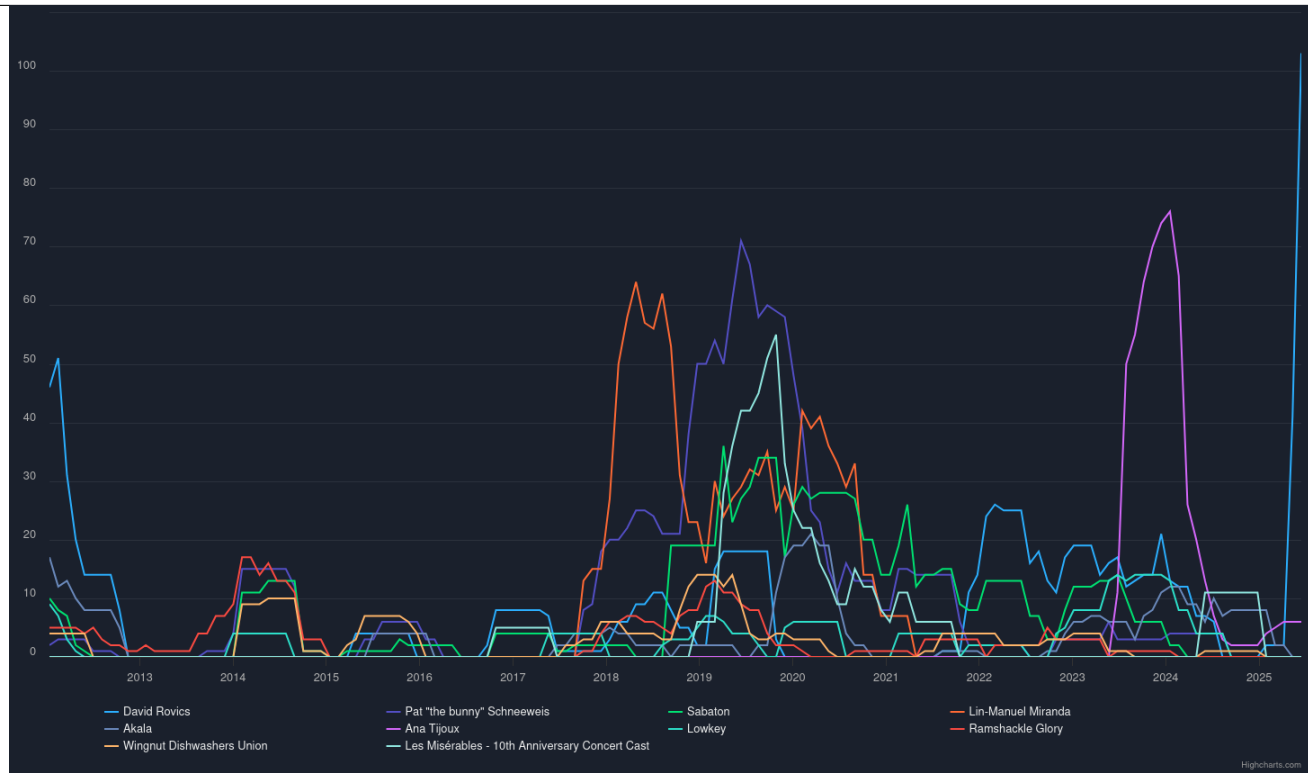
²²¹Lin-Manuel Miranda, *Hamilton: An American Musical* (20 January 2015) (<https://hamiltonmusical.com/>).

(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, ²²² the turbulence of the following periods I will describe (which roughly begins with my short- lived <i>Hamilton</i> obsession) becomes impressively visual:				

²²²Specifically, the music of David Rovics, *Music of* (<https://www.davidrovics.com/>); Ana Tijoux, *Music of* (<https://anatiouxofficial.com/>); Schneeweis (n 205); Akala, *Music of* (<https://akalamusic.com/>); Lowkey, *Music of* ; and the musical Claude-Michel Schönberg, *Les Misérables* (24 September 1980).

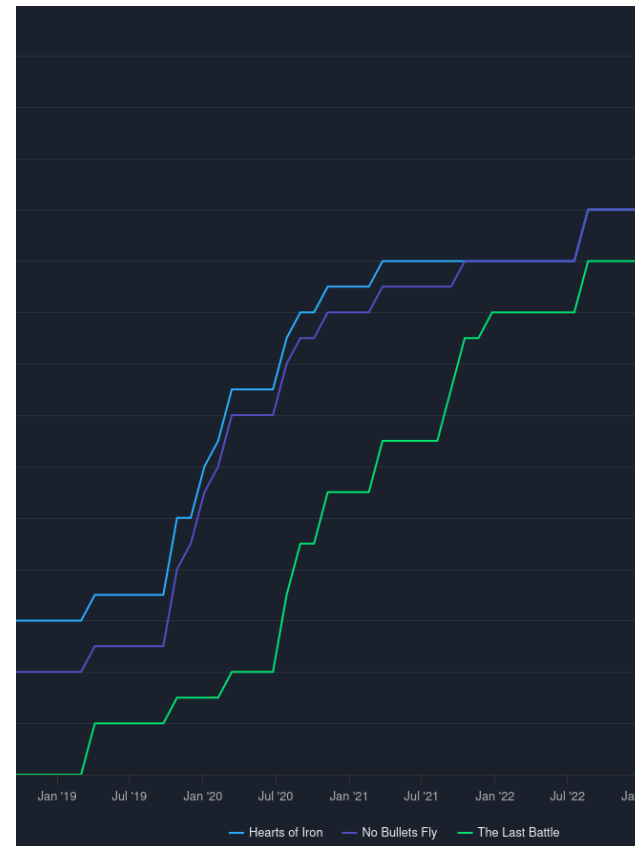
(1) Track 1: Personal Track 2: Britain Track 3: Military Track 4: Antimilitarism Track 5: International

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(48) 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.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(49)			<p>I am later (around 2020) very drawn to three songs on their album <i>Heroes</i>²²³ in particular: all three about chivalry and sacrifice from German forces in WWII, adding shades of gray to the normally black & white conflict:</p>		



²²³Sabaton, *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 St John Ambulance (SJA) , initially as a first aider but eventually as an ambulance crewman (completing my training just in time for COVID-19). 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 GCHQ 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 Technology, Terrorism, and Armed Conflict in the 21st Century (TTAC21) research group, where I remained until Mar 2020.				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(54)			I also watch <i>Hacksaw Ridge</i> , ²²⁴ 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.		
(55) Dec 2017–Jan 2018	I read the <i>Illuminatus! trilogy</i> trilogy of books ²²⁵ —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, ²²⁶ 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.				

²²⁴Mel Gibson, *Hacksaw Ridge* (26 January 2017) (<<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/324786-hacksaw-ridge>>).

²²⁵Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson, *Illuminatus! trilogy* (1975–1984).

²²⁶Quinn Norton, 'Anonymous 101: Introduction to the Lulz' (*WIRED*, 8 November 2011) (<<https://www.wired.com/2011/11/anonymous-101/>> specifically the section titled 'Inevitability').

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(56) Jan 2018	<p>As part of my master's course I take a module on law. This results in two essays:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • r-cat-v-acpo, a case review in which I express concern with the UK Supreme Court's decision regarding the justification of broad police data recording. writing that "worth keeping an eye on at until proven benign" is discomfotingly similar to "guilty until proven innocent" and that 'the mere <i>threat</i> of surveillance is enough to produce a chilling effect on freedom of speech (including freedom to protest)';²²⁷ and • 'A review of Milaj (2015) and Rachovitsa (2016)', a review of two papers each exploring 'non-legislative means of ensuring privacy'.²²⁸ 				

²²⁷Ben Goldsworthy, 'A Case Review of *R (Catt) v Association of Chief Police Officers*' [2018] (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/a-case-review-of-r-catt-v-association-of-chief-police-officers/>).

²²⁸Ben Goldsworthy, 'A review of Milaj (2015) and Rachovitsa (2016)' [2018] (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/a-review-of-milaj-2016-and-rachovitsa-2016/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(57) 7 Feb 2018	<p>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.²²⁹ 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).</p>				
(58) 14 Feb 2018	<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>				
(59)	<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>				

²²⁹Plan C Rojava Solidarity Cluster, *Revolution in Rojava: Report Back from Civil Volunteers* (See Ben Goldsworthy, 'Revolution in Rojava: Report Back from Civil Volunteers' (*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
(60)	<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 Intelligence Corps 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 Sandhurst 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 MOD money into the Red Crescent.</p>				
(61)	<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 Free Software Foundation and renowned for his incredibly rigid adherence to his ethical positions]</p>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(62)	<p>I also shared my account of the Rojava talk I had been to,²³⁰ adding:</p> <p>Turkey's invasion of Afrin 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 US and the UK—the former weakly suggesting that the Turks 'show restraint' in their aggression, whilst our own foreign secretary (who once wrote a limerick about Erdoğan interfering with a goat) 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>²³¹— because the fact we've thrown our lot in with Franco and his Fascists this time around makes it all far too depressing.</p>				

²³⁰Goldsworthy, 'Revolution in Rojava' (n 229)

²³¹George 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
(63)			<p>I submitted an Army Officer Selection Board (AOSB) CV, which outlined what appealed to my about the Army and what my career plans were:</p> <p>When I joined LUOTC 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
(64)			<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
(65)			<p>To fully demonstrate how wrong I was about the Army marketing not affecting me, I saw the 'This is Belonging' TV spot²³² 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>		
			<p>²³²British Army, 'This Is Belonging: Jungle tea' (<i>Army Jobs [YouTube]</i>, 9 January 2017) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPSWFr9_sJo) .</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(66)			<p>Career-wise, my goal is to initially join an MI battalion, and to go on to experience a range of roles available within 1 ISR Bde. I would be interested in mobilisations, in particular (if possible) a UN peacekeeping deployment.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(67)			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.		
(68) 16 Feb 2018			Royal Signals multi-unit potential officers (POs) showcase event		
(69) 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; ²³³ probably my first exposure to contemporary leftist political and economic analyses.				

²³³See Ben Goldsworthy, "'UCU Teach Out' series' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 3 March–142018) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/series/ucu-teach-out/>> for my write-ups.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(70) 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. ²³⁴ I remember this, because it disgusted me.				
(71) Apr 2018	I watched the documentary <i>Only the Dead</i> ²³⁵ , 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’. It was an example of how mere proximity to militarisation, even for a journalist, can produce a callousing effect.				
(72) 30 Apr–1 May 2018			Completed AOSB Briefing weekend, with a category 2 pass.		

²³⁴Rory 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) Web site no longer available, but article archived at <https://archive.ph/wiXX1> (<https://amityunderground.com/british-ypj-fighter-anna-campbell-executed-by-fighter-jets-and-missiles-manufactured-and-serviced-from-her-hometown-of-bristol-rojava-afrin-turkish-invasion-erdogan-uk-arms-tai-tfx-bae-systems/>).

²³⁵Michael 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
(73) May 2018	<p>As part of my master's, I delivered a presentation titled <i>Stop Waiting for 'Cyber-9/11'</i>²³⁶ 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"> • Post-9/11 NSA spying has just been re- authorised for another 7 years; the <i>Investigatory Powers Act</i>²³⁷ and <i>Digital Economy Act</i>²³⁸ in the UK • War now happens without war happening (c.f. <i>Outplayed</i>,²³⁹ 'hybrid'/'ambiguous'/'non-linear' war) • Have we just sleepwalked through the next big change in geopolitics? • Are we in the post-Ukraine era, or the post-Snowden era, or the post-truth era? . . . • 'Post-9/11 era' is rarely said in a cheery way • Responses to 9/11 include widespread gov't surveillance, lengthy and intractable conflicts in the Middle East, creation of groups like the IS • 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 				

²³⁶Ben Goldsworthy, Stop Waiting for 'Cyber-9/11' (16 May 2018) (<<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/presentations/stop-waiting-for-cyber-9-11/>>).

²³⁷Snoopers' Charter.

²³⁸Digital Economy Act 2017.

²³⁹Nathan 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
(74) Jun 2018	<p>As part of my master's, I wrote an essay titled 'Between the Razors' Edge'.²⁴⁰ 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 11th 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>				

²⁴⁰Ben Goldsworthy, 'Between the Razors' Edge: When might state security practices become counterproductive?' [2018] (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/>)

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(75) Jul 2018			<p>We had a social function on my final LUOTC Annual Camp in Germany. [A senior member of staff] was caught sleeping with an officer cadet (OCdt), 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.</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
(76)			<p>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>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(77)			<p>My master's was ending, and so on return from Germany I would have to move on from the UOTC. 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 Intelligence Corps, 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 NATO 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,²⁴¹ 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>.'</p> <p>And so, I put in for a transfer to 208 (Liverpool) Field Hospital—the most local medical unit—where I intended to continue with the commissioning process and to become a Medical Support Officer (MSO).</p>		

²⁴¹ See 'Franz Schmitz' (*Biographiesnet*) (https://www.biographies.net/people/en/franz_schmitz) .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(78)	<p>In an email to family around the same time, I wrote the following:²⁴²</p> <p>Whilst I was in Germany I read through <i>Revolution in Rojava</i>.²⁴³ The book dives deep into all the facets of the Rojava 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 Rojava: YPG-International, which recruits foreign fighters for the self-defence forces (not my cup of tea), and the Internationalist Commune of Rojava, which deals primarily with civil projects such as Make Rojava Green Again and has just finished building the ‘Internationalist Academy <i>shid</i> Hêlîn Qereçox’² where they run courses on the history of the region, the Kurdish language, etc. for newly-arrived internationalists before setting them loose.</p> <p>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 UK, 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 MP to try and get her to whinge in Parliament. Plan C—the group that the guy who did that talk on Rojava all those months ago was with—also have a Rojava Solidarity Cluster that sounds promising, as well as a general Manchester group.</p>				

²⁴²Hyperlinks and footnotes below are reproduced as per the original text; some linked Web sites are no longer available.

²⁴³Michael 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
(79)	<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 CIA 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 Rojava. 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 learning a baseline level of Kurmanji (the Kurdish dialect spoken in Rojava) a go.</p>				
(80)	<p>After years of seeing the gleam in my Labour/Tory/even that one EDL friends' eyes when they talk politics, it's nice to finally find something I give the same amount of a shit about.</p> <p>¹ Quote from a fellow Officer Cadet and intellectual who read the title: 'that sounds like the most leftie book ever'.</p> <p>² 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>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(81)	<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>.²⁴⁴ a collection of his editorials for the Resistance newspaper <i>Combat</i> both during and after the war. 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.²⁴⁵ In particular, the sequence sometimes collected as ‘Neither Victims nor Executioners’²⁴⁶ had a significant impact on me, from its rejection of the legitimacy of violence to its optimistic aspirations for what would later become the UN.</p>				
(82) Sep 2018	<p>The YouTube series <i>World War Two series</i>, which covers the Second World War one week at a time for six years, begins.²⁴⁷ 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 World War Two looked like what we picture when we think of it. Much of it was waiting, or manoeuvring in other parts of the world.</p>				

²⁴⁴Albert 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).

²⁴⁵Albert Camus, *L’Homme révolté [The Rebel]* (Anthony Bower tr, 1951).

²⁴⁶Albert Camus, ‘Neither Victims nor Executioners’ in *Between Hell and Reason* (first published 1946, 1991).

²⁴⁷TimeGhost History, ‘World War Two series’ (*World War Two [YouTube]*, September 2018–September 2024) (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP1AejCL4DA7jYkZAELRhHQ>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(83) 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
(84) Mar 2019		<p>In a TTAC21 article review,²⁴⁸ 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.</p> <p>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 CIA’s 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 NATO ally Turkey is currently chomping at the bit to finish in Northern Syria. Just a thought.</p>			

²⁴⁸Aurel 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: “Blurred lines: hybrid threats and the politics of international law”’ (**TTAC21**, 1 April 2019) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/sari/>> for my response).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(85)		In another review, ²⁴⁹ I expressed concern over the use of machine learning algorithms in making military targeting decisions.			
(86)		In a third, ²⁵⁰ I expressed concern over the use of autonomous weapon system (AWS) in the ability to produce a 'temporary autonomous zone of slaughter'.			
(87) Apr 2019	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 3 PARA soldiers shooting at a Jeremy Corbyn caused a minor scandal, ²⁵¹ but ultimately they were not discharged.			

²⁴⁹Ben Goldsworthy, 'Should Robots be Allowed to Target People?: Based on combatant status?' (*TTAC21*, 4 March 2019) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/should-robots-be-allowed-to-target-people/>).

²⁵⁰Ian GR Shaw, 'Robot Wars: US Empire and geopolitics in the robotic age' (2017) 48(5) *Security dialogue* 451 (See Ben Goldsworthy, 'Shaw: "Robot Wars: US Empire and geopolitics in the robotic age"' (*TTAC21*, 11 March 2019) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/shaw/>) for my response).

²⁵¹Forces 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
(88) 11 Apr 2019			I emailed my National Recruiting Centre (NRC) Candidate Support Manager (CSM) : 'As for my commissioning plans: I plan to attend a Main Board at some point in Q4 this year'		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(89) Between 11 Apr and 13 May 2019			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 Combat Medical Technicians (CMTs) in 381 Sqn , and I had decided that being other ranks interested me more than being an officer. My plan A was to transfer to the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) and become a CMT myself.		
(90) May 2019		I was interviewed on a podcast about drones, cyberwarfare and the dangers of technologically distancing combatants from the violent consequences of their acts. ²⁵²			

²⁵²Ben 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
(91) 13–17 May 2019			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 & B (e.g., bayonets), and would be reverted to trainee status until I had done so.		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(92) 27 May 2019			<p>I emailed my plans to my Squadron Sergeant Major (SSM) as part of an SJAR 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 CMT if possible, but [Logistics Support Specialist (LSS)] if not. I have a Briefing 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
(93) 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.		
(94) 24–28 Jun 2019					I visited Kyiv and Chernobyl with a friend. ²⁵³ 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.

²⁵³Ben 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
(95) May–Sep 2019	<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"> • Hannah Arendt’s <i>Eichmann in Jerusalem</i>,²⁵⁴ which coined the memorable term ‘banality of evil’, and <i>Responsibility and Judgement</i>,²⁵⁵ which includes the fantastic essay ‘Personal Responsibility Under Dictatorship’²⁵⁶ • <i>Letters of Insurgents</i>,²⁵⁷ 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) • <i>The Political Thought of Abdullah Öcalan</i>,²⁵⁸ a collection of essays by the imprisoned founder and leader of the Kurdish Freedom Movement 				
(96) Jul 2019	I attended ORGCon, the Open Rights Group’s 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.		

²⁵⁴Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963).

²⁵⁵Hannah Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgement* (2003).

²⁵⁶Hannah Arendt, ‘Personal Responsibility Under Dictatorship’ in *Responsibility and Judgement* (first published 1964, 2003).

²⁵⁷Fredy Perlman, *Letters of Insurgents* (1976).

²⁵⁸Abdullah 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
(97) 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. ²⁵⁹		

²⁵⁹See ¶ 58.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(98) 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. ²⁶⁰


²⁶⁰Ben Goldsworthy, 'Explorer Belt 2019: Serbia' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 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
(99)					<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>

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(100) 14 Aug 2019			Attended Specialist Selection day with 6 MI in Manchester.		
(101) 29 Aug 2019			I contacted 6 MI to inform them that I was withdrawing my application to join as 'I've decided to go for CMT after all'.		
(102) Sep 2019	I read <i>Anarchy Works</i> , ²⁶¹ which introduced me to several case studies of (more or less) successful non-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian societies and political projects. ²⁶²				

²⁶¹Peter Gelderloos, *Anarchy Works* (2010).

²⁶²See ¶ 99 for a then-fresh-in-my-mind example.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(103) 11 Nov 2019				<p>I take part in the Remembrance Day wreath-laying on behalf of St John Ambulance. I choose to wear a white poppy, both in recognition of the red poppy's nationalistic focus (which doesn't feel appropriate to me nor the organisation) and in tribute to the Friends' Ambulance Unit and similar groups:</p>	
(104)			<p>I run into some staff and OCdts from my former UOTC 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
(105) Nov 2019	I watched <i>Official Secrets</i> , about GCHQ whistleblower Katherine Gun.		<p>I don't recall why, but I started researching Nationally Recruited Units (NRUs) 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"> • 500 Communications Troop, 2 Operational Support Group RLC (providing comms for the Army Medical Services) • 335 Medical Evacuation Regiment 		I also attended a talk of the Discourse and Text Analysis (DisTex) 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. ²⁶³

²⁶³Ben Goldsworthy, "'28 Palestinians Died": A Cognitive Grammar analysis of mystification in press coverage of state violence on the Gaza Border' (*bengoldswor-thynet*, 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
(106)			<p>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.</p>		
(107)		<p>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 '<i>Wehrmacht</i> test' might have unseen limitations of its own).²⁶⁴</p>			

²⁶⁴Ben 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
(108) 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’.²⁶⁵ I also remember Fiona Hill’s testimony as particularly compelling. But, ultimately, it achieves nothing.</p>

²⁶⁵Alexander 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
(109) Jan 2020	I read <i>Konrad Morgen</i> , ²⁶⁶ 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.				
(110) Jan 2020	I watched <i>A Hidden Life</i> , ²⁶⁷ about the true story of a man who refused to an oath to Hitler and was imprisoned and executed.				

²⁶⁶Herlinde Pauer-Studer and JDavid Velleman, *Konrad Morgen: Conscience of a Nazi Judge* (2015).

²⁶⁷Terence Malick, *A Hidden Life* (17 January 2020) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/403300-a-hidden-life>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(111) Mar–Apr 2020				I finally get around to my Quaker info pack, reading <i>Living Our Beliefs</i> and <i>Being a Quaker</i> . ²⁶⁸	
(112) Apr–May 2020	I read ‘ <i>Exterminate All the Brutes</i> ’, ²⁶⁹ which introduces me to decolonial arguments for the first time.				
(113) Mar–Jun 2020	The COVID-19 pandemic. By March I was out volunteering on ambulances with <i>St John Ambulance (SJA)</i> ; 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 <i>British</i> history, for which nobody has been held accountable.				

²⁶⁸Graham 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).

²⁶⁹Sven Lindqvist, ‘*Exterminate All the Brutes*’ (1 April 1996).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(114) Jun–Nov 2020	<p>My time with SJA 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 CQC and Charity Commission, as well as sharing my report publicly.²⁷⁰ 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.</p>				
(115) 9 Mar 2020			I transferred to the RAMC on this date.		
(116) Mar 2020			I also requested a transfer to 335 MER .		

²⁷⁰Ben 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
(117) 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.				
(118) May 2020			I re-watched <i>Hacksaw Ridge</i> , ²⁷¹ 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. ²⁷²		
(119)				I complete an online course about the Quakers (the first of many), a MOOC titled <i>Radical Spirituality</i> . ²⁷³	

²⁷¹Gibson (n 224) . See also ¶ 54.

²⁷²Ben 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>) .

²⁷³Lancaster University and Woodbrooke, *Radical Spirituality: The Early History of the Quakers* (<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/quakers>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(120) Jun 2020	I published an article about my disillusionment with the British government following its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. ²⁷⁴ 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 Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) , ²⁷⁵ including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Testimonies in action: opportunities and leadings” • “Quakers and the peace movement: opportunities and challenges today” • “Working for peace and justice in Palestine and Israel with the team at EAPPI” • “Can you teach Peace?” I also read the book <i>Dining with Diplomats, Praying with Gunmen</i> , ²⁷⁶ about Quaker peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts around the world. Prior to this, my awareness had been limited to peacekeeping (i.e., through UN deployments).			
(121) Jul 2020	I was interviewed on a local podcast about my COVID-19 article. ²⁷⁷ In the interview, I proposed the commune system of Rojava as a desirable alternative to the present British state structure.			From this point on, I get involved in Kurdish solidarity activity and educational courses.	

²⁷⁴Ben Goldsworthy, ‘**COVID** and Complicity’ (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 28 June 2020) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/covid-and-complicity/>) .

²⁷⁵**Quaker Peace & Social Witness, QPSW Summer Series: Where our witness is** (<https://www.quaker.org.uk/events/summerseries>).

²⁷⁶Anne Bennett, *Dining with Diplomats, Praying with Gunmen: Experiences of international conciliation for a new generation of peacemakers* (Quaker Books 10 March 2020).

²⁷⁷Ben 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) See **COVID** and Complicity for original article. (<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
(122) Jul–Aug 2020	I read <i>Ordinary Men</i> , ²⁷⁸ about a German police reservist unit and their gradual degradation from apolitical older men to responsible for some of the worst atrocities of the Second World War				
(123) Jul 2020–ongoing	I watch <i>Babylon Berlin</i> , ²⁷⁹ a German TV series set in Weimar Germany in which the gradual rise of the Nazis is a running throughline.				

²⁷⁸Christopher R Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1992).

²⁷⁹Tom Tykwer, Achim von Borries, and Hendrik Handloegten, *Babylon Berlin* (13 October 2017–2026) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/66980-babylon-berlin>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(124) Aug 2020	<p>After learning about them through a documentary about internationalists fighting ISIS in Syria and listening to a podcast with the founder,²⁸⁰ I contact Shadows of Hope—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 & 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 SoH 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>				

²⁸⁰Emile Ghessen, *Robin Hood Complex: The Fight Against Islamic State* (Sandbag Media 9 December 2017) (<<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/528992-robin-hood-complex>> 19:40–28:25, 50:55–53:25; (Emile Ghessen, ‘The Humanitarian Mercenary - Don’t Argue With Stupid People Podcast - Emile Ghessen’ (*Emile Ghessen [YouTube]*, 11 July 2020) (<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nijmgWCKatY&t=4>>)

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(125) Sep 2020		<p>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.</p>			

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

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(127) 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>²⁸¹ (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>				

²⁸¹ 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
(128) Nov–Dec 2020	<p>I read <i>They Thought They Were Free</i>,²⁸² 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,²⁸³ part of which I will reproduce at length 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>...</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>				

²⁸²Milton Mayer, *They Thought They Were Free: The Germans, 1933–45* (University of Chicago Press 1955).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(129)	<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.</p> <p>‘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>				
(130) 9 Dec 2020	<p>I attend a seminar as part of the Security Lancaster research group at Lancaster University on ‘necro-geopolitics’.²⁸⁴ 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>.²⁸⁵</p>				

²⁸³Milton Mayer, ‘An excerpt from *They Thought They Were Free: The Germans, 1933–45*’ (University of Chicago Press, University of Chicago Press 1955) (<https://press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/511928.html>) .

²⁸⁴Ben Goldsworthy, ‘The Necro-Geopolitics of American Insecurity’ (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 9 December 2020) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/the-necro-geopolitics-of-american-insecurity/>) .

²⁸⁵Achille 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
(131) 19 Dec 2020			My transfer to 335 MER finally went through.		
(132) Jan–Feb 2021					I again watch the livestreams of the second impeachment trial of Donald Trump. Again, it achieves nothing
(133) Feb 2021			I attended another DisTex talk about the 2010 Uruzgan helicopter attack, in which 27–33 men, women and children were misidentified as combatants and killed. ²⁸⁶		
(134)		I also attend an online talk titled <i>UK Military Spending and its Alternatives</i> . ²⁸⁷ From this point on, I consider myself an opponent of nuclear weapons.			

²⁸⁶Ben Goldsworthy, 'Language, Cognition and Drone Warfare' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 8 February 2021) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/language-cognition-and-drone-warfare/>) .

²⁸⁷Ben 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
(135) Feb–Mar 2021			<p>I watch <i>Battlestar Galactica</i>,²⁸⁸ 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.</p>		

²⁸⁸Glen A Larson and Ronald D Moore, *Battlestar Galactica* (8 December 2003–4 April 2008) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/1972-battlestar-galactica>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(136) Mar 2021		The UK government releases its Integrated Review . 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. ²⁸⁹ I have thought often about the TA , with its lack of pretensions to overseas warfighting, with some fondness.			
(137) Mar 2021–Mar 2022	I volunteer with my local City of Sanctuary chapter, working to support refugees and asylum seekers. I learn about the UK 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. ²⁹⁰ I saw first-hand how government incompetence (or intentional cruelty; it's immaterial) results in real harm to real people.				

²⁸⁹UK Cabinet Office, *Global Britain in a Competitive Age: The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy* (, HM Stationery Office 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.

²⁹⁰Diane 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>) .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(138) Apr 2021	I watch <i>La Commune (Paris, 1871)</i> , ²⁹¹ a radical mockumentary about the Paris Commune and one of the most politically powerful films I have ever seen before or since.				
(139) Apr–May 2021	I read <i>The Wretched of the Earth</i> , ²⁹² Franz Fanon's collection of essays about colonial and decolonial violence.				
(140) 17 Jul 2021	I meet with a couple of friends in London: ██████ (see appendix C); and our mutual university friend who now works for a Tory think-tank. At one point, we debate the repatriation of foreign ISIS 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.				

²⁹¹ Peter Watkins, *La Commune (Paris, 1871)* (26 May 2000) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/tv/128061-la-commune-de-paris>).

²⁹² 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
(141) Sep–Oct 2021	<p>I read some more influential books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Eichmann: His Life and Crimes</i>²⁹³ (via the ALIS system, ironically enough), a far more historically robust account of the primary architect of the Holocaust; • <i>Why We Fight</i>,²⁹⁴ about contemporary antifascism; and • <i>Every Man Dies Alone</i>,²⁹⁵ about a husband and wife who ‘acting alone, became part of the German 		<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 British military personnel²⁹⁶ (though must less limited for me as a Reservist²⁹⁷).</p> <p>I join the British Armed Forces Federation (BAFF), of which I remain a member until Oct 2022.</p>		
	<p>²⁹³David Cesarani, <i>Eichmann: His Life and Crimes</i> (6 October 2005). Resistance by leaving anti-Nazi postcards in public places</p>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(142) 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> . ²⁹⁸ This is perhaps my first introduction to conscientious objection in a modern (UK) context, rather than just something from WWI.			
(143) 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.</p> <p>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 & Wales), but I also personally support the cause of peacefully abolishing the monarchy, as championed by groups like Republic.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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>				

²⁹⁴Shane Burley, *Why We Fight: Essays on Fascism, Resistance, and Surviving the Apocalypse* (AK Press 13 April 2021).

²⁹⁵Hans Fallada, *Jeder stirbt für sich allein [Every Man Dies Alone]* (first published 1947, 2009).

²⁹⁶For example, see The **Queen's Regulations** for the Army 1975, AC 13206, amendment number 37 (**King's Regs**) pt 14 (and equivalents for other Services).

²⁹⁷See The **Reserve Land Forces Regulations** 2016, amendment number 13 (**RLFR**) pt 1, ch 3, s 7.

²⁹⁸Conscience: Taxes for Peace Not War, *Exploring the history of conscientious objection to military taxation* (19 April 2021) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eym2iFLjbZY>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(144) 15 May 2021					Intrigued by the previous month's event, I attended the online ceremony event for International Conscientious Objectors' Day , ²⁹⁹ which introduced me to the struggles of COs all around the world, including Turkey, Cyprus and Israel.

²⁹⁹Peace 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
(145) 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).</p> <p>Shortly before I submitted my application for discharge, I also submitted a subject access request for the notes made by my interviewer. Under the section of 'Politics, Religious & Other Beliefs', he wrote the following:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Subject stated that he follows politics closely. He stated that he has read <i>Private Eye</i> for about five years and is a subscriber, and that he regularly reads a variety of national and local newspapers and considers himself 'better informed than most'. The Subject stated that he has written to his MP twice, most recently about 'the NHS data grab' towards end of this month. He stated that in communicating to his MP, he shared an article from <i>The Register</i>,³⁰⁰ in which concerns were raised that this constitutes a potential infringement of civil liberties and it has not been sufficiently explained to the public. The other communication with his MP was after a comment attributed to the Home Secretary, referring to 'putting asylum seekers on Ascension Island'.³⁰¹</p>				

³⁰⁰Lindsay Clark, "Biggest data grab" in NHS history stuffs GP records in a central store for "research" – and the time to opt out is now' (*The Register*, 13 May 2021) (<https://www.theregister.com/software/2021/05/13/biggest-data-grab-in-nhs-history-stuffs-gp-records-in-a-central-store-for-research-and-the-time-to-opt-out-is-now/1474429>).

³⁰¹George Parker and others, 'Priti Patel looked at shipping UK asylum seekers to south Atlantic' *Financial Times* (29 September 2020) (<https://www.ft.com/content/ff1dc189-5531-4d81-8d17-7f332596f2cd>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(146)	<p>The Subject was asked what he thinks of the democratic process as it stands in the UK today and he responded that in the time he has been following politics, he has not seen a very strong opposition, and that he is concerned that there are creeping constraints on democracy (such as the move to require photo identification at the ballot box) that are not being challenged effectively. He stated that he is also concerned about the polarisation of UK politics, and that he looks across to the USA to see the ‘dark possible future’, where ‘the opposition just tries to suppress votes’.</p> <p>The Subject was asked what he thinks the priorities of any UK government should be. He responded that he thinks the government should ‘act as a release valve on public tension’, ‘unite people’ and ‘reduce partisanship’. He stated that he thinks the government needs to distribute services in a fair and equitable way, regardless of constituency boundaries. He was asked if his political beliefs have changed much over the years and he stated that they have ‘shifted leftwards’ somewhat over the last five or six years. He described himself as ‘broadly libertarian’ but stated that he is also for the sharing of wealth and privilege for a more equitable society.</p> <p>The Subject gave an assurance that he has no strong moral or political objections to the way the UK and our allies conduct intelligence and security operations.³⁰² He added the caveat that he is ‘slightly concerned’ about bulk surveillance, as he read that there was a recent [ECtHR] ruling that stated that some of the UK’s activities breached privacy rights.³⁰³ The Subject stated that he would always hope that activities by the security services of Five Eyes countries are ‘suitably run’ and ‘subject to oversight’, and he is ‘concerned’ if there have been breaches in the law.</p> <p>The Subject stated that if he was asked to do something illegal by an employer or supervisor, he would refuse. He stated that if he was unsure as to its legality, he would raise the issue with his manager and, if necessary, through internal grievance procedures. . .</p> <p>. . . The Subject was asked for his opinions on the UK’s nuclear deterrent and he responded that he is not convinced that it is ‘good value for money’.³⁰⁴ He stated that he does not take a moral stance on the issue, but that he is simply ‘not convinced of the strategic value’ of nuclear weapons when placed against ‘the soaring costs’.</p>				

³⁰²I suspect that this framing is inaccurate, and I actually said that I had no *a priori* objection to a state or organisation conducting covert operations to protect their security.

³⁰³*Big Brother Watch and others v UK* App no 58170/13, 62322/14 and 24960/15 (ECtHR, 25 May 2021).

³⁰⁴See ¶ 134.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(147) 13 Jul 2021	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. ³⁰⁵				
(148) Jul 2021–Apr 2022				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.	
(149) 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>				
(150) Oct 2021–Jul 2022	<p>I work at my new consulting job, but not on any MOD or intelligence agency 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>				

³⁰⁵However, see ¶ 161 for the darker side to this.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(151) Oct 2021	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.				
(152)		I also watch <i>War School</i> , ³⁰⁶ a documentary about the increased militarisation of British society (particularly targeting children).			
(153) Sep 2021		One project I work on in my consulting job is a IT security tabletop training exercise (TTX) . Between this and previous TTX/simulation projects I have worked on, I develop an interest in professional wargaming, and so join the newly-launched UK Fight Club (UKFC) . ³⁰⁷ I also complete the Centre for Military Ethics' MOOC ³⁰⁸ featuring modules such as 'Introduction to the Just War Tradition' and 'Armouring Against Atrocity', and attend an Army Inclusion Conference.			

³⁰⁶Mic Dixon, *War School: The Battle for Britain's Children* (25 April 2020) <<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/892275-war-school-the-battle-for-britain-s-children>>.

³⁰⁷Oli Elliott, 'UK Fight Club: Iron Sharpens Iron' (*Wavell Room*, 27 July 2020) <<https://wavellroom.com/2020/08/27/uk-fight-club-iron-sharpens-iron/>> .

³⁰⁸Centre for Military Ethics, *Centre for Military Ethics MOOC* <<https://militaryethics.uk/en/>>.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(154) 9 Sep 2021		<p>At a ³³⁵ conference, I get in to a debate with a lieutenant colonel 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, leaving them 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'.</p>			
(155)		<p>The lieutenant colonel, learning about my IT background, says I should consider getting into medical intelligence (MEDINT)—something I've never heard of before. He introduces me to one guest: an officer with the UKSF MSU. I speak to him about my IT 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 & Webb Look 'Are We the Baddies?'</i> sketch.³⁰⁹</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 UKSF. 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>			

³⁰⁹David Mitchell and Robert Webb, *'Are We the Baddies?'* (That Mitchell and Webb Look, 2006) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h242eDB84zY>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(156) Dec 2021	<p>Another Quaker course: <i>Jesus Against Empire</i>.³¹⁰</p> <p>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 warmly describe him 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>				

³¹⁰Woodbrooke, *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
(157) Most of 2022	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. ³¹¹ 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.				

³¹¹ 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
(158) Jan 2022	<p>I publish my first two articles in <i>Wavell Room</i>, under a pseudonym, heavily inspired by the conversations at the recent 335 conference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lead Us Not into Temptation</i>,³¹² 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 Integrated Review) • <i>A New Model Army for a Miserable Century</i>,³¹³ 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). <p>The first article triggered some discussion on the ARRSE forums³¹⁴ and some positive responses on social media.³¹⁵ Later that month, I am contacted by an RLC lieutenant who wanted to discuss some things brought up in the second article. I also discover the Rethinking Security project³¹⁶ 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 Integrated Review with a more human security-focussed approach.³¹⁷</p>				

³¹²Ben Goldsworthy, 'Lead Us Not into Temptation' (*Wavell Room*, 5 January 2022) (<https://wavellroom.com/2022/01/05/moral-failure-and-the-integrated-review/>) .

³¹³Ben 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/>) .

³¹⁴'Stonker' and others, 'Changing the army - how?' (**ARRSE**) (<https://www.arrse.co.uk/community/threads/changing-the-army-how.305390/page-258#post-11222270>) .

³¹⁵Nigel Jordan-Barber, 'Tweet thread in response to "Lead Us Not into Temptation"' (*Twitter*) (<https://x.com/NigelJB/status/1480528854850719744>) ; Gareth Sutton, 'Tweet in response to "Lead Us Not into Temptation"' (*Twitter*) (<https://x.com/RugbyMan1865/status/1480687019084980228>) (ex-Royal Navy); Ollie Kingsbury, 'Tweets in response to "Lead Us Not into Temptation"' (*Twitter*) Original tweets no longer available, but archived at https://web.archive.org/web/20220113234822/https://twitter.com/kingsbury_ollie/status/1481773862660583431 (https://x.com/kingsbury_ollie/status/1481773862660583431) (now a **Maj Gen**, and **Col Comdt PARA**); 'SO2 Plausible Deniability', 'Tweets in response to "Lead Us Not into Temptation"' (*Twitter*) (<https://x.com/B4ck1n/status/1481899645152505859#m>)

³¹⁶'Homepage' (*Rethinking Security*) (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/>) .

³¹⁷Rethinking Security, 'Alternate Security Review' (*Rethinking Security*, 2025) (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/alternative-security-review/>) .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(159)			I also attend a webinar delivered by the Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) titled <i>Is COP26 enough?</i> ³¹⁸		
(160) Feb 2022			Six years since joining the Reserves, 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).		

³¹⁸ **Quaker Council for European Affairs**, *Is COP26 enough?: Peace, Militarism, and the Climate Crisis: a missing piece* .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(161)			<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 HMP 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
(162)			<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.³¹⁹</p>		

³¹⁹ 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	
(163) Feb–Mar 2022	<p>I attended an online course organised by Rethinking Security titled “Rethinking Security: Steps to sustainable peace with justice”.³²⁰</p> <p>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 Royal Army Medical Corps, 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>...</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 IR shows are still so dominant.</p>					
(164) 24 Feb 2022					Russia launches its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.	

³²⁰Woodbrooke, *Rethinking Security: Steps to Sustainable Peace with Justice* (See Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Rethinking Security: Steps to Sustainable Peace with Justice’ (*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
(165) Mar 2022	I attend a workshop with my civilian union, titled "Communications: Presenting an Argument". ³²¹		Just after I completed my CMT3(R) course, it was announced that the CMT2(R) courses would be suspended indefinitely pending a review. Reasoning that training of Reservist CMTs was probably not a priority (and with 335 MER announcing that they were refocussing away from non-vocational CMTs), I decided to try and find a way to use my primary specialist skillset— IT —to support the AMS . I got back in touch with 500 Comms Tp , 2 OSG RLC .	Rethinking Security publish <i>To the victor go the spoils... a heap of ashes</i> , ³²² 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 and nonviolent resistance in a concrete, modern context, and I find the arguments quite compelling.	

³²¹Prospect, *Communications: Presenting an Argument* (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/communications-presenting-an-argument-7-tickets-288537372047>).

³²²Diana 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
(166) Apr–Jun 2022	<p>I deliver internal training at work on the <i>Tallinn Manual</i> (a legal analysis around cyberwarfare).³²³ 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"> • recruiting child soldiers³²⁴ • infringing on the rights of disabled people • illegal treatment of asylum seekers and refugees 				

³²³Ben 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/>) .

³²⁴Jim Patrick Wyke, 'Minor Problems: The benefits of an all-adult recruitment model for the British Armed Forces' (*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
(167)				<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"> • <i>Why Attend Meeting for Worship if You Don't Believe in God?</i> • <i>Are Quakers Christian?</i> • <i>Nontheist Approaches to Religious Language</i> 	

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(168) Apr 2022	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 500 Comms Tp and start my transfer paperwork.		
(169) May 2022			I end up as the radio operator during a mass casualty scenario, and am later commended my the DS for my performance. My ongoing transfer to 500 Comms Tp bodes well for my ability to make a real contribution to the work of the AMS .		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(170) Jun 2022			I participate in the AMS Tactical Training Exercise (AMSTTE) competition with a joint NRU 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.		
(171) Jul 2022	I publish an article for Rethinking Security titled <i>The MOD's Accidental Roadmap to Peace</i> , ³²⁵ proposing a radical reverse reading of the <i>Integrated Operating Concept</i> and exploring the perspectives of non-state actors like the Kurdish Freedom Movement in arguing that we are already in a 'Third World War', as well as specific calls to internationalist people-to-people solidarity, prosecuting senior UK war criminals (such as Tony Blair) and a rejection of nuclear weapons.				
(172)			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. ³²⁶		

³²⁵Ben Goldsworthy, 'The **MOD's** Accidental Roadmap to Peace: A radical reading of the Integrated Operating Framework' (*Rethinking Security*, 12 July 2022) (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2022/07/12/the-mods-accidental-roadmap-to-peace/>) .

³²⁶Paul 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
(173)	<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>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(174) Oct 2022–Jan 2023	<p>I am in discussions with Rojava University about a potential role helping to develop their IT master's programme.</p> <p>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
(175) Oct 2022–Aug 2023	I spend ten months in Central America, travelling from Darién, Panama all the way to southern Mexico. ³²⁷ 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> , ³²⁸ 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. ³²⁹ 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. ³³⁰ 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 .	

³²⁷ Ben Goldsworthy, “Bentral American Diaries” series’ (*bengoldsworthynet*, 14 January–23 August 2023) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/series/bentral-american->

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(176)	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. ³³¹				

diaries/).

³²⁸Nathaniel Flakin, *Martin Monath: A Jewish Resistance Fighter Among Nazi Soldiers* (Pluto Press October 2019).

³²⁹Ben Goldsworthy, 'Costa Rica' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 5 March 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/costa-rica/>), particularly the section titled '*Día de la Abolición del Ejército*'.

³³⁰Ben Goldsworthy, 'Panama' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 9 May 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/panama/>), particularly the section titled '*There be Dragons*'.

³³¹Ben Goldsworthy, 'Nicaragua: feat. a bit more Costa Rica' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 22 May 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/nicaragua/>), section titled '*Nicaragua, According to the Nicaraguans*'.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(177)	<p>In Honduras I saw the lasting scars of American imperialism first-hand³³² and toured local healthcare facilities (with a Cuban doctor on staff, unsurprisingly).³³³ In Guatemala I found a city that had kicked out the government (and which seemed no worse for having done so).³³⁴</p>				
(178)	<p>By far, though, the most impactful times were those I spent in Cuba and Mexico.</p>				

³³²Ben Goldsworthy, 'Honduras & Guatemala: *feat.* yet more Costa Rica' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 17 July 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/honduras-guatemala/>), section titled 'Fruity Business'.

³³³*ibid*, section titled '*Hospitalito Atitlán*'.

³³⁴*ibid*, section titled '*Atitlán*'.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(179) 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. ³³⁵

³³⁵'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
(180) Apr–May 2023	<p>In Cuba I joined a delegation of UK trade unionists on an international solidarity brigade.³³⁶ 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 Soviet Union.</p>			<p>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 UK I'd say we barely think about it; in the US 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 COVID-19 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'.</p>	

³³⁶Ben Goldsworthy, 'Cuba' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 29 June 2023) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/cuba/>> .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(181)					<p>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.</p>
(182) 8 Dec 2022					<p>I published an article titled <i>Of Kurds and Quakers</i>,³³⁷ comparing the values and structures of the two movements.</p>

³³⁷ Ben Goldsworthy, 'Of Kurds and Quakers' (*Kurdistan Solidarity Network*, 8 December 2022) (<https://kurdistansolidarity.net/2022/12/08/of-kurds-and-quakers/>) .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(183) 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,³³⁸ following allegations made in <i>BBC Panorama</i>.</p>		
(184) 19 Dec 2022		<p>The UK government publishes its post-<i>Integrated Review Government Resilience Framework</i>.³³⁹</p>			

³³⁸‘Homepage’ (*IIA*) (<https://www.ia.independent-inquiry.uk/>) .

³³⁹UK 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
(185) Jun–Jul 2023	<p>In Chiapas (southern Mexico) I spent time learning Spanish amongst the radical Zapatista communities, learning about how they have lived outside of (and in resistance of) the state since 1994.³⁴⁰</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’.³⁴¹</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.³⁴²</p>	<p>Again, I studied and worked alongside activists from several countries during these activities, massively broadening my own horizons.</p>	

³⁴⁰Ben Goldsworthy, ‘Mexico’ (*bengoldsworthynet*, 9 August 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/mexico/>) , section titled ‘Chiapas’.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(186) Jul–Dec 2023	When I return home, I find myself depressed and struggling to readjust to life in Britain . ³⁴³ I sign up for Universal Credit, and experience the pointless cruelty of the UK benefits system first-hand when they demand I either attend a meeting at a time I am already attending Reserves training (i.e., working) or forfeit my payments. However, whilst I await a new job the Reserves does serve to keep me occupied, and I am grateful to it for providing me with a way out of both my post-trip funk and financial shakiness.				
(187) Aug 2023				My article <i>Of Kurds and Quakers</i> was republished in a 'zine. ³⁴⁴	

³⁴¹ Goldsworthy, 'Cuba' (n 336), section titled 'Ben, the Anarcho-Trotskyist CIA Agent'.

³⁴² Goldsworthy, 'Mexico' (n 340), section titled 'BriCO Boys'.

³⁴³ Ben Goldsworthy, 'Back to the UK' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 9 August 2023) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/back-to-the-uk/>), section titled 'Homecoming'.

³⁴⁴ Ben Goldsworthy, 'Of Kurds and Quakers' *Bad Apple* (22 August 2023) (Abridged from Goldsworthy, 'Of Kurds and Quakers' [n 337]) (<https://badapplemagazine.org/2023/08/22/of-kurds-and-quakers/>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(188) Sep–Dec 2023	I read <i>Everyday Stalinism</i> , ³⁴⁵ a book about everyday life in the Soviet Union . 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.				
(189) 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.		
(190) 5 Oct 2023	I apply for what will eventually become my new job, in France.				

³⁴⁵Sheila 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
<p>(191) 7 Oct 2023</p>					<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 style="padding-left: 40px;">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.³⁴⁶</p> <p>I am visiting Ellie that weekend. We worry about what will come next.</p>

³⁴⁶ Hamas Media Office, ‘Our Narrative... Al-Aqsa Flood: Two Years of Steadfastness and the Will for Liberation’ (5 June 2025) (<https://palinfo.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/OurNarrative.pdf>) p 8; note that this should not be considered an indication of my support for any of those groups, nor the very real atrocities com-

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(192) Since Oct 2023			<p>As she mentioned in appendix C, Ellie and I have gone on to have many conversations about the ethics of military service.</p> <p>Whilst I am soon once again considering leaving the Reserves, 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).</p>		
(193) 11 Oct 2023		Keir Starmer, then still in Opposition, declares that Israel 'has the right' to withhold power and water from Gaza.			

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(194) 14 Oct 2023			I am awarded the King's Coronation Medal.		
(195) Nov 2023			<p>Whilst on a mountaineering weekend in Pen y Fan with 2 OSG RLC 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 major, saying that whilst he may be used to a certain historic conformity of opinion within the Armed Forces 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 MOD in her day job, who disillusions 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 500 Comms Tp, it is also a far more right-leaning environment than 335 MER. 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
(196)			<p>Also, around a decade after she first introduced me to anarchism,³⁴⁷ I finally get around to reading Emma Goldman's autobiography, <i>Living My Life</i>.</p> <p>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.³⁴⁸</p>		

³⁴⁷See ¶ 16.

³⁴⁸Emma 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
(197) 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 500 Comms Tp 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.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(198)			<p>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. 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.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(199) 10 Dec 2023		Whilst I am no longer following a fully vegan diet, ³⁴⁹ 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. ³⁵⁰			
(200) 29 Dec 2023					South Africa launches its ICJ case against Israel for breach of the Genocide Convention. ³⁵¹

³⁴⁹ See ¶ 157.

³⁵⁰ 'MOD Vegan & Vegetarian Network' (Facebook) (<https://www.facebook.com/modvegnetwork/>).

³⁵¹ *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>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(201) Jan 2024	I start my new job in France.		I look at how the review of the CMT2(R) courses is going, and am surprised to find that they are due to restart soon. I contact 335 MER again and if they are still taking non- vocational CMTs . They are, and I am starting to get fed up with 500 Comms Tp (both the environment and the role), so I request to transfer back.	I take a course in Nonviolent Communication (NVC) , through the Quakers.	The ICJ's initial ruling deems the case plausible and orders Israel to take provisional measures (which Israel ignores). ³⁵²
(202)		The UK government takes no meaningful action following the ICJ ruling. Instead, based on unevidenced Israeli allegations, they withhold funding for UNRWA , a vital lifeline for the besieged Gazans.			

³⁵² *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
(203) 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 Lib Dems (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 US.</p>				
(204) 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.³⁵³ Unusually, there is no information provided about the author. However, from looking online he appears to serving British Army officer. In a subsequent post on LinkedIn, however, he does admit that 'the actual conduct of the war has perhaps overtaken [his] initial thinking'.</p>		
(205) 13 Feb 2024			<p><i>BBC Panorama</i> reveals that British Special Forces have vetoed resettlement requests from 2,000 Afghan Special Forces troops with whom they fought, effectively sentencing them to death.³⁵⁴ The most obvious motive appears to be to prevent them from being able to testify to the ongoing War Crimes Inquiry.</p>		

³⁵³James Cowen, 'Just War in Gaza' (*Wavell Room*, 6 February 2024) (<https://wavellroom.com/2024/02/06/just-war-in-gaza/>) .

³⁵⁴Hannah 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
(206) 25 Feb 2024					US Airman Aaron Bushnell self-immolates in front of the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C., shouting 'Free Palestine!' as he burns to death.
(207) 1 Mar 2024			I transfer back to 335 MER, the RAMC, and my old role as a CMT. I am very happy to be back.		
(208) 30 Mar 2024	I attend the 11 th 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. ³⁵⁵				
(209) May–Jun 2024	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). ³⁵⁶ This is probably the first time I learn about the existence of AGAI 55, and in the back of my mind I probably know that one day that will inevitably be the way I go out.				

³⁵⁵Ben Goldsworthy, 'Thousands of Protestors Marched: How the Media Represented a Protest March' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 2 April 2024) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/thousands-of-protestors-marched/>).

³⁵⁶Andrea 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.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(210) May 2024		<p>I pitch another article for the <i>Wavell Room</i>, writing:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>First, I'd like to explore what constitutes (or could constitute) an illegal order in the context of genocide. . .</p> <p>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 (AGAI 55, 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.</p>			
(211) 1 May 2024		<p>I take part in a demonstration organised by Workers for a Free Palestine (WFFP), blockading the Department for Business & Trade.³⁵⁷</p>			

³⁵⁷Workers 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
(212) 11 Jun 2024		<p>My article <i>Israel–Gaza War</i> is published by the <i>Wavell Room</i>, under the same pseudonym as before.³⁵⁸ In it, I attempt to warn service personnel (thinking, primarily, of the RAF 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 16 Bde brought up the article in conversation.³⁵⁹</p>			
(213) 24 Jun 2024	Julian Assange is, at long last, released after twelve years of Hell, for the crime of exposing the dishonesty of governments around the world.				
(214) Jul 2024				I attend a course as part of the celebrations of the quartercentenary of birth of the founder of Quakerism: <i>George Fox</i>	

³⁵⁸Ben Goldsworthy, 'Israel–Gaza War: The Legal Risk of Complicity' (*Wavell Room*) (<https://wavellroom.com/2024/06/11/the-legal-risk-of-complicity/>)

³⁵⁹I 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 footnote 315. Apparently, I have a fan.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(215) 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. ³⁶⁰
(216)		The UK government does nothing.			
(217) Jul–Aug 2024		Violent race riots break out across the UK. Fuelled by racism and online misinformation, large groups of thugs attempt to set fire to budget hotels housing asylum seekers.			

³⁶⁰ *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
(218)		<p>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.</p> <p>In the end, that particular protest (and several others) is easily outnumbered by antifascist counter-protestors. I take the piss that his friends 'lost their bottle'.</p>			
(219) Sep 2024		<p>In the 500 Comms Tp 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 SP</p> <p>It is Live firing, house clearance CQB. 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 HM Courts & Tribunals Service 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>			

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(220)			<p>I also attend a training exercise with 335 MER in which we are joined by some US Army medical reservists from Georgia.</p> <p>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>		
(221)			<p>By chance, I also end up spending most of the EX phase in EXCON with several seniors, and we have quite a few interesting and candid discussions.</p> <p>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>		
(222) 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
(223) 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.³⁶¹</p> <p>We have a very interesting conversation, and my article ends up cited in his essay.³⁶²</p>		

³⁶¹ Goldsworthy, 'Lead Us Not into Temptation' (n 312).

³⁶² [REDACTED], '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
(224)			<p>Following the conversation, I sent the following:³⁶³</p> <p>Here are a few follow-on notes and links you might find interesting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I talked about Freedom to Speak Up within the NHS, which all stems from the 2015 Francis Report into whistleblowing within the NHS. 		<p>The International Criminal Court (ICC) issues arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Minister of Defence Gallant.³⁶⁴</p>

³⁶³Hyperlinks and footnotes below are reproduced as per the original text.

³⁶⁴**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>) .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(225)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 uninclined to challenge have a scaffold within which to do so. There's probably more tools and techniques under the heading of crew resource management but I'm no pilot so that's all I can say about that • I daresay the CDC's principles of risk communication would be applicable to any attempt to explain the purpose of operations to subordinates as well as explaining ethical risks to those new in theatre • Regarding medical rules of eligibility (particularly in the military context) I found this article³⁶⁵ which gives a good summary and this one³⁶⁶ which specifically looks and discrimination between allies and enemies 	

³⁶⁵Michael L Gross, 'Saving life, limb, and eyesight: assessing the medical rules of eligibility during armed conflict' (2017) 17(10) The American Journal of Bioethics

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(226)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The US Borden Institute have two volumes on medical military ethics (Vol 1;³⁶⁷ Vol 2³⁶⁸). Mostly not too pertinent to your topic, but this chapter³⁶⁹ talks about how to resolve conflicts between a physician's medical and military ethical responsibilities, this chapter³⁷⁰ talks about the unique challenges posed by the battlefield to standard medical ethics and this chapter³⁷¹ looks at the influence of public opinion in a civilian-controlled military (pertinent to what we said about the positive influence reservists may have) 		

40.

³⁶⁶Michael L Gross, 'Comradery, community, and care in military medical ethics' (2011) 32(5) Theoretical medicine and bioethics 337.³⁶⁷Thomas 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>).³⁶⁸Thomas 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>).³⁶⁹Edmund G Howe, 'Mixed agency in military medicine: Ethical roles in conflict' in (Department of the Army 2003) vol 1.³⁷⁰Thomas E Beam, 'Medical Ethics on the Battlefield: The Crucible of the Military' in (Department of the Army 2003).³⁷¹Jay Stanley, 'Societal Influences and the Ethics of Military Healthcare' in (Department of the Army 2003).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(227)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I mentioned that LOAC training should highlight instances in which a unit's collective moral drift (and individual lapses within such a context) resulted in effectively a corporate death penalty for the whole unit, giving the example of the publication of the Brereton Report³⁷² and subsequent disbanding of the 2nd squadron of the Australian SAS. Another example might be the Foreign Legion Parachute units disbanded following the 1961 general's putsch in Algiers. Excessive loyalty to unit seems to be a recurring theme in cases where people look the other way or otherwise cover up criminality, and I could see these examples as helping to directly counteract that tendency by showing that allowing such behaviour to spread can actually endanger the unit more than exposing it. 	

³⁷²Inspector-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).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(228)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lastly, I think one of the trains of thought that got away from me was to suggest the idea of treating criminogenic (i.e., liable to produce criminality) conditions in military operation planning similarly to how environmental health is considered when choosing to (for example) site a camp. An underdeveloped idea at the moment but I think it could have legs. 		
(229)	<p>I also complete a CMT2(R) 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.³⁷³</p>				
(230) Dec 2024	<p>I decide that it's finally time to 'legitimise my bastards': I request the <i>Wavell Room</i> editors to remove my byline pseudonym and declare them to my CoC as part of my annual reporting process.</p>				

³⁷³See ¶ 165.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(231) Jan 2025		The CHACR launch their <i>Facing Coming Storms</i> podcast. ³⁷⁴ 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.			
(232) Feb–Mar 2025	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.	

³⁷⁴Peter Apps, 'Facing Coming Storms podcast' (**CHACR**, 27 January 2025) .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(233) Feb 2025				I attend my first Quaker meeting in Congènies, near where I now live in France.	
(234) 17 Feb 2025				I watch <i>Innocence</i> , ³⁷⁵ 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> . ³⁷⁶	
(235) 20 Feb 2025	<p>In my traditional annual review of the previous year,³⁷⁷ 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 1st to December 31st (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 US, UK and many other Western states have fallen over themselves to defend, excuse, bald-facedly lie about and materially facilitate this genocide. This remains one of the most evil things I have ever witnessed, and whatever residual liberal sentiments left over from my comfortable middle class upbringing have now been thoroughly scoured away.</p>				

³⁷⁵Guy Davidi, *Innocence* (28 September 2023) (<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/1005290-innocence>).

³⁷⁶Dixon (n 306).

³⁷⁷Ben Goldsworthy, 'Review of 2024' (*bengoldsworthy.net*, 20 February 2025) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/review-of-2024/>), section titled 'Values & Purpose'; links as per the original.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(236)	<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 power grows out of the barrel of a gun, 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 dismantling the present world order 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 future we all face sooner or later. This is a brief summary of my political disillusionment, though there were of course many other cont[r]ibuting factors: the UK 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 US decided to launch itself whole-heartedly into fascism, nukes and all; annual conflict-related deaths are the highest they've been in over a quarter-century; income and wealth inequality 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 Rojava revolution (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,³⁷⁸ 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>				

³⁷⁸This 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
(237)	<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: now is the time of monsters, 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 UK, the us, 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 hegemons.</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: Which side are you on, boy?</p> <p>I can only truthfully answer where the heart lies: below and to the left.</p>				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
<p>(238) 23 Feb 2025</p>	<p>I write the following in an email to family:</p> <p>On Current Affairs</p> <p>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 US. 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: it's exactly what they want.³⁷⁹</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 TV 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 purposes they serve and when reform is not enough and we need to tear down and start again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • Drop Site News - 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. Drop Site News 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., this really interesting article³⁸⁰). 				

³⁷⁹Isaac 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>).

³⁸⁰Ryan 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
(239) Mar 2025			I complete a CMT1(R) course. I also get involved in playtesting for MEDEVAC , ³⁸¹ a new tabletop game being developed in partnership between Fight Club International and the AMSTC .		
(240) Mar–May 2025	I read two powerful books: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This</i> • <i>The World After Gaza</i> 				
(241)			I also share my <i>Wavell Room</i> articles publicly on the internal MOD social media ³⁸²		

³⁸¹Ian Robinson, 'MEDEVAC' (, forthcoming, **Fight Club International**).

³⁸²Ben Goldsworthy, "Lead Us Not into Temptation" (*Wavell Room*, 5 Jan 2022)' (*Defence Connect*, 9 April 2025) Access restricted, see Goldsworthy, 'Lead Us Not into Temptation' (n 312) for article (<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) Access restricted, see Goldsworthy, 'A New Model Army for a Miserable Century' (n 313) for article (<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: The Legal Risk of Complicity" (*Wavell Room*, 11 Jun 2024): The Legal Risk of Complicity' (*Defence Connect*, 9 April 2025) Access restricted, see Goldsworthy, 'Israel–Gaza War' (n 358) for article (<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
(242) May 2025				Another Quaker course: <i>Challenging Traditional Quaker Histories</i>	
(243) 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, 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>				
(244) 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>		
(245)			<p>I also deliver a presentation to my Sqn promoting the use of wargaming for medical training.</p>		

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(246) 2 Jun 2025		<p>The UK government publishes its 2025 Strategic Defence Review (SDR).³⁸³ 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.³⁸⁴</p> <p>The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) launch an Alternative Defence Review (ADR) shortly beforehand.³⁸⁵</p>			
(247) 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.³⁸⁶</p>

³⁸³Ministry 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>).

³⁸⁴Richard Reeve, ‘SDR 2025: America First, Last and Everything’ (*Rethinking Security*, 4 June 2025) (<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/2025/06/04/sdr-2025-america-first-last-and-everything/>).

³⁸⁵Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, *Alternative Defence Review* (, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament 2025) (<https://cnduk.org/adr/>).

³⁸⁶Francesca Albanese, *From economy of occupation to economy of genocide: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967* (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
(248) Jul 2025	<p>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.</p>				<p>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).</p>

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(249)	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.				Israeli human rights organisation B'Tselem publishes its report <i>Our Genocide</i> , recognising what is happening in Gaza as such. ³⁸⁷ Israeli genocide scholar Omer Bartov, previously reluctant to do so, announces that Israel's actions amount to genocide. ³⁸⁸

³⁸⁷B'Tselem, *Our Genocide* (2025) (https://www.btselem.org/publications/202507_our_genocide).

³⁸⁸Omer 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>).

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(250) 5 Jul 2025		<p>The UK government proscribes Palestine Action as a terrorist group³⁸⁹ under very dubious circumstances.³⁹⁰ 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 & Wales found that the proscription was unlawful (though the group remains proscribed).³⁹¹ A judicial review of the decision is ongoing in Scotland.³⁹²</p>			
<p>³⁸⁹The Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2025, SI 2025/803.</p>					

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(251) 28 Jul 2025	The Army publish an internal interview acknowledging that Israeli forces are systematically committing war crimes, and comparing them unfavourably to both Russian forces in Ukraine and the <i>Nazis</i> . ³⁹³				
(252) Aug 2025		Maj Gen (Retd) Charlie Herbert begins giving interviews calling out the UK government for its support of Israeli war crimes. ³⁹⁴ 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.			

³⁹⁰ John McEvoy, 'Revealed: How Palestine Action was banned' (*Declassified UK*, 24 July 2025) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/revealed-how-palestine-action-was-banned/>) .

³⁹¹ *R (Huda Ammori) v Secretary of State for the Home Department* Press Summary [2026] EWHC 292 (Admin).

³⁹² *Craig Murray for judicial review of the Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2025* P1017/25.

³⁹³ Derek Tedder and ██████████, '5MW - 5 Minutes with the Army's Command Doctor' (*Defence Connect*, 28 July 2025) Access restricted (<https://jive.defencegateway.mod.uk/videos/49829>) ; See also Phil Miller and John McEvoy, 'Israeli attacks on Gaza hospitals "similar to Russia", internal British army report says' (*Declassified UK*, 1 August 2025) (<https://www.declassifieduk.org/israeli-attacks-on-gaza-hospitals-similar-to-russia-internal-british-army-report-says/>) .

³⁹⁴ 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>) .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(253) 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. ³⁹⁵	
(254) 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, ³⁹⁶ as does a UN Commission of Inquiry. ³⁹⁷

³⁹⁵Cyril Pearce, *Comrades in Conscience: The story of an English community’s opposition to the Great War* (2nd edn, Francis Boutle Publishers 2015).

³⁹⁶IAGS, ‘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>).

³⁹⁷Legal analysis of the conduct of Israel in Gaza pursuant to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide Conference room paper (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
(255) 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.			
(256) 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.				

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(257)					<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) how they have been 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 World War II 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 WWII was fought on moral grounds.³⁹⁸ I also have interesting conversations with someone who works in NHS 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 EX phase and doing my best Desmond Doss impression. I am later recognised by the DS for my 'compassion under fire'.</p>

³⁹⁸Ted Grimsrud, 'The Long Shadow: **World War II's** Moral Legacy' (*Peace Theology*, 29 September 2010) See Ted Grimsrud, *The Good War That Wasn't—and Why It Matters: **World War II's** Moral Legacy* (Cascade Books 2014) for subsequent book-length treatment of the topic (<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
(258) 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’.</p> <p>The officer is quoted as stating:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">It’s not loyalty to your organisation to stand by and to watch it go down the sewer.³⁹⁹</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.⁴⁰⁰</p>		
(259) Dec 2025		<p>Four senior Army officers, including Maj Gen Charlie Herbert, write to the Prime Minister to call for a full arms embargo on Israel.⁴⁰¹</p>			

³⁹⁹Richard 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/>) .

⁴⁰⁰Joel 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>) .

⁴⁰¹David 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>) .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(260)				I attend an online meeting with several Russian and Ukrainian conscientious objectors and deserters. ⁴⁰² 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.	
(261)				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. ⁴⁰³ 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.	
(262) 9 Feb 2026		The UK Health Secretary releases his private text messages in response to another scandal, revealing that he had recognised as early as mid-2025 that Israel was ‘committing war crimes before our eyes’. ⁴⁰⁴			

⁴⁰²Peace 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>) .

⁴⁰³Faisal 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>) .

⁴⁰⁴Imran Mulla, ‘Wes Streeting privately said Israel committing war crimes, backed sanctions on “rogue state”’ (*Middle East Eye*, 9 February 2026) (<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/wes-streeting-privately-said-israel-was-committing-war-crimes-backed-sanctions>) .

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(263) Feb 2026	<p>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.⁴⁰⁵</p>				

⁴⁰⁵Rojava Information Center, 'Attacks, Escapes and Withdrawals: A timeline of events at al-Hol camp on January 20' (*Rojava Information Center*, 25 January 2026) (<https://rojvainformationcenter.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 ¶ 140.

(1)	Track 1: Personal	Track 2: Britain	Track 3: Military	Track 4: Antimilitarism	Track 5: International
(264)	<p>US 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 international⁴⁰⁶ concentration camp system that holds over 68,000 people, the majority of whom have no criminal records.⁴⁰⁷ Deaths in detention are rising.⁴⁰⁸ Hundreds are unaccounted for.⁴⁰⁹</p> <p>The US is routinely murdering civilians in the Caribbean and Pacific. They attack Venezuela and kidnap its president. The US 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 US 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.⁴¹⁰</p> <p>Despite a so-called ‘ceasefire’, the Gaza genocide continues. Eleven were killed yesterday.⁴¹¹</p>				

⁴⁰⁶Valentina Oropeza and others, “‘The cemetery of living men’: Trump deportees tell of abuse in secretive mega-jail” (*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/>) .

⁴⁰⁷José Olivares and Will Craft, ‘Immigrants with no criminal record now largest group in Ice detention’ (*The Guardian*, 26 September 2025) (<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/sep/26/immigrants-criminal-record-ice-detention>) .

⁴⁰⁸Maanvi 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>) .

⁴⁰⁹Ben 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>) .

⁴¹⁰Phil 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/>) .

⁴¹¹Joel 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

F.1 My Works

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

F.1.1 My Articles

- Goldsworthy B, 'Revolution in Rojava: Report Back from Civil Volunteers' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 8 February 2018) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/revolution-in-rojava/>>.
- 'Copywrong' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 22 March 2018) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/copywrong/>>.
- 'Shaw: "Robot Wars: US Empire and geopolitics in the robotic age"' (*TTAC21*, 11 March 2019) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/shaw/>>.
- 'Sari: "Blurred lines: hybrid threats and the politics of international law"' (*TTAC21*, 1 April 2019) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/sari/>>.
- 'COVID and Complicity' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 28 June 2020) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/covid-and-complicity/>>.
- 'Jesus Against Empire' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 5 April 2022) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/jesus-against-empire/>>.
- 'Rethinking Security: Steps to Sustainable Peace with Justice' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 6 April 2022) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/rethinking-security/>>.
- 'Of Kurds and Quakers' (*Kurdistan Solidarity Network*, 8 December 2022) <<https://kurdistansolidarity.net/2022/12/08/of-kurds-and-quakers/>>.
- 'A Militant in the Military' (*bengoldsworthynet*) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/a-militant-in-the-military>> forthcoming.
- 'A Political Trajectory' (*bengoldsworthynet*) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/political-trajectory>> forthcoming.
- 'Ave, Bellum' (*bengoldsworthynet*) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/ave-bellum>> forthcoming.
- 'Bye-Bye Britain' (*bengoldsworthynet*) <<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/bye-bye-britain>> forthcoming.

- Goldsworthy B, 'Bystanders, Rescuers and *Children of Men*' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/children-of-men>) forthcoming.
- 'Israel–Gaza War: The Legal Risk of Complicity' (*Wavell Room*) (<https://wavellroom.com/2024/06/11/the-legal-risk-of-complicity/>).
- 'The First Thirty Years' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/the-first-thirty-years>) forthcoming.

F.1.1.1 My Academic Articles

- Goldsworthy B, 'Shaw: "Robot Wars: US Empire and geopolitics in the robotic age"' (*TTAC21*, 11 March 2019) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/shaw/>).
- 'Sari: "Blurred lines: hybrid threats and the politics of international law"' (*TTAC21*, 1 April 2019) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/sari/>).

F.1.1.2 My Blog Posts

- Goldsworthy B, 'Revolution in Rojava: Report Back from Civil Volunteers' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 8 February 2018) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/revolution-in-rojava/>).
- 'Copywrong' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 22 March 2018) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/copywrong/>).
- 'Shaw: "Robot Wars: US Empire and geopolitics in the robotic age"' (*TTAC21*, 11 March 2019) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/shaw/>).
- 'Sari: "Blurred lines: hybrid threats and the politics of international law"' (*TTAC21*, 1 April 2019) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/portfolio/writings/sari/>).
- 'COVID and Complicity' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 28 June 2020) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/covid-and-complicity/>).
- 'Jesus Against Empire' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 5 April 2022) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/jesus-against-empire/>).
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- 'A Militant in the Military' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/a-militant-in-the-military>) forthcoming.
- 'A Political Trajectory' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/political-trajectory>) forthcoming.
- 'Ave, Bellum' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/ave-bellum>) forthcoming.
- 'Bye-Bye Britain' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/bye-bye-britain>) forthcoming.

- Goldsworthy B, 'Bystanders, Rescuers and *Children of Men*' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/children-of-men>) forthcoming.
- 'Israel–Gaza War: The Legal Risk of Complicity' (*Wavell Room*) (<https://wavellroom.com/2024/06/11/the-legal-risk-of-complicity/>).
- 'The First Thirty Years' (*bengoldsworthynet*) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/the-first-thirty-years>) forthcoming.

F.1.1.3 My Course Writeups

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- 'Jesus Against Empire' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 5 April 2022) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/jesus-against-empire/>).
- 'Rethinking Security: Steps to Sustainable Peace with Justice' (*bengoldsworthynet*, 6 April 2022) (<https://bengoldsworthy.net/blog/posts/rethinking-security/>).

F.1.2 My Other Things

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F.2 Timeline Track Bibliographies

These bibliographies collect together all of the works referenced in [appendix E](#), in order of reference and grouped by thematic track (including duplicates).

F.2.1 Track 1: Personal

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F.5.3.2 Cases

Application for the Removal from the List of Proscribed Organisations under Section 4 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

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>).

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UKSF MSU UKSF Medical Support Unit 129

11 Bde 11th Brigade 104, 181

156 Regt RLC 156 Regiment RLC 89

16 Bde 16 Air Assault Brigade Combat Team 38, 165

1RO first reporting officer 32, 36–39

1 ISR Bde 1st Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Brigade 78

208 Fd Hosp 208 (Liverpool) Field Hospital 85, 89

2IC second-in-command 6, 38, 56

2RO second reporting officer 36–39

2 Med Gp 2nd Medical Group 5

2 OSG RLC 2 Operational Support Group RLC 36, 37, 103, 137, 156

335 MER 335 Medical Evacuation Regiment 4, 5, 8, 15, 31, 38, 39, 103, 104, 108, 118, 129, 132, 137, 153, 156, 161, 163, 168, 189, 281

381 Sqn 381 (Lancaster) Squadron 89, 93

3 PARA 3rd Battalion, Parachute Regiment 91

500 Comms Tp 500 Communications Troop 36, 37, 103, 104, 137, 140, 142, 156, 158, 161, 167

6 MI 6 Battalion, Military Intelligence 56, 58, 78, 98, 101

ABC American Broadcasting Company 10, 233, 247, 265, 267, 275

ABN Army Briefing Note 1, 237, 254, 259

ACCO Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objectors 1, 239, 248, 256, 277

ACE-CSE Academic Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security Education 49

ACM Air Chief Marshal 15, 26

ADE Annual Deployment Exercise 38, 83, 153

Adj adjutant 31

Adm admiral 15, 26

ADR Alternative Defence Review 182, 207, 214, 220

AGAI Army General and Administrative Instruction 4, 26, 31, 163, 164, 248, 256, 259, 278

AI artificial intelligence 10, 230, 242, 260, 268, 271, 294

ALIS Army Library and Information Service 122

AMS Army Medical Services 103, 137, 140, 281

AMSTC AMS Training Centre 180

AMSTTE AMS Tactical Training Exercise 141

AOSB Army Officer Selection Board 63, 75, 80, 92, 95

AP Associated Press 10, 230, 243, 261, 272

APC Army Personnel Centre 31

ARRC NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps 8

ARRSE Army Rumour Service 132

AWS autonomous weapon system 91

A Sqn A Squadron, 335 MER 38, 181

BAFF British Armed Forces Federation 122

BBC British Broadcasting Corporation 10, 11, 13, 24, 26, 150, 162, 190, 193, 202, 208, 213, 215, 220–222, 225, 227, 230–233, 238, 241–244, 246, 251–253, 257, 259, 260, 262–265, 267, 271–275

BMJ *British Medical Journal* 14, 236, 250, 253, 266, 269

Brig brigadier 31

BSAC British Sub-Aqua Club 37

CC carbon copy 31

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CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 171

CDRILS British Army Values & Standards 59

CECOT *Centro de Confinamiento del Terrorismo* [Terrorism Confinement Center] 193, 208, 215, 221, 227

CEO Chief Executive Officer 44

CGS Chief of the General Staff 190

CHACR Centre for Historical Research 175, 207, 214

CIA Central Intelligence Agency 87, 90, 152

CM career management 31

CMT Combat Medical Technician 16, 39, 46, 93, 95, 101, 104, 133, 137, 161, 163

CMT1(R) Combat Medical Technician (Reserves), class 1 38, 180

CMT2(R) Combat Medical Technician (Reserves), class 2 38, 137, 161, 174

CMT3(R) Combat Medical Technician (Reserves), class 3 133, 137

CND Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament 182, 207, 214, 220

CNN Cable News Network 10, 105, 224, 231, 244, 262, 267, 273

CO Commanding Officer 4, 5, 17, 25

CO conscientious objector 1, 4, 19, 22, 30, 31, 124, 187, 191, 221, 226, 236, 240, 248, 249, 257

CoC chain-of-command 27, 30, 31, 174

CoE Certificate of Efficiency 17, 32, 36, 37

Col Comdt colonel-commandant 132, 165

Comd Commandant 38

Comd commander 38, 286

COP26 2021 UN Climate Change Conference 133, 213, 219

CoS City of Sanctuary 120

COVID-19 coronavirus disease 2019 8, 14, 18, 69, 107, 110, 113, 142, 148, 194, 195, 199, 205, 236, 237, 250, 251, 253, 266, 267, 269, 270

CQB close-quarters battle 167

CQC Care Quality Commission 108

CSgt colour sergeant 54

CSM Candidate Support Manager 92

CV curriculum vitae 6, 75, 196, 237, 255

D&I Diversity & Inclusion 114

DAANES Democratic Autonomous Administration of North & East Syria. More commonly known as 'Rojava' 7, 64, 72, 74, 86, 87, 90, 110, 143, 177, 192

DACA Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals 64

DBT Department for Business & Trade 164, 207, 213, 220, 225

DisTex Discourse and Text Analysis 103, 118

DPHC Defence Primary Healthcare 16

DS Directing Staff 140, 189

DSTL Defence Science and Technology Laboratory 81

DV Developed Vetting 57, 135

EAPPI Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel 110

ECtHR European Court of Human Rights 126

EDL English Defence League 87

EU European Union 13, 25, 48, 58, 230, 240, 248, 250, 259, 261, 271, 272

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EXCON Exercise Control 168

EZLN *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* [Zapatista Army of National Liberation] 22, 23, 151, 253, 254

FAU Friends' Ambulance Unit 22, 102

FCI Fight Club International 180, 214

FSF Free Software Foundation 50, 55, 63, 73, 197

GB Great Britain 17, 237, 251, 254, 272

GCHQ Government Communications Headquarters 6, 49, 57, 63, 69, 103, 125

GCSE General Certificate of Secondary Education 44, 47

Hamas *Ḥarakat al-Muqāwamah al-'Islāmiyyah* [Islamic Resistance Movement] 11, 26, 154, 231, 238, 243, 244, 252, 259, 262, 272, 273

HM His Majesty's 120, 150, 167, 182, 201, 205, 207, 212–214, 219, 220, 225, 283

HMP HM Prison 134

HQ headquarters 31

IAGS International Association of Genocide Scholars 187

ICC International Criminal Court 23, 25, 26, 147, 170, 226, 230, 248, 257, 259–261, 265, 272, 278

ICE Immigration and Customs Enforcement 13, 193, 202, 208, 215, 221, 222, 227, 241, 252, 258, 273

ICJ International Court of Justice 8, 26, 160, 161, 166

ICU Intensive Care Unit 10, 231, 244, 262, 267, 273

IDF Israel Defense Forces 10, 11, 42, 49, 64, 230, 231, 243, 244, 260, 262, 268, 271, 273

IIA Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan 150

Int Corps Intelligence Corps 6, 56, 63, 73, 85, 181

IR Integrated Review 120, 132, 136, 150

IS *al-Dawla al-'Islāmiyya fī al-'Irāq wa al-Shām* [Islamic State] 60, 61, 63, 64, 80, 81, 112, 121, 192

ISCS(L) Intermediate Command and Staff Course (Land) 169

IT information technology 7, 104, 127–129, 137, 143

ITR Individual Training Requirement 16, 38

ITT Initial Trade Training 38

IVF in vitro fertilisation 10, 233, 247, 265, 267, 275

JNCO junior non-commissioned officer 37, 38

JSP Joint Service Publication 15, 26

JTRIG Joint Threat Research Intelligence Group 57

KFM Kurdish Freedom Movement 7, 8, 97, 141, 268

KR King's Regulations [formerly Queen's Regulations] 27, 123, 240, 257, 260, 278

Labour Labour Party 82, 87

LCpl lance corporal 7, 32, 36, 38

Lib Dems Liberal Democrats 162

LoAC law of armed conflict 169, 173, 256, 259, 267, 278

LSS Logistics Support Specialist 95

Lt lieutenant 132

Lt Col lieutenant colonel 4, 129

LUOTC Liverpool University Officers' Training Corps 52, 75, 83, 89

MAGA Make America Great Again 13, 241, 251, 272

Maj major 6, 31, 56, 156, 169

Maj Gen major general 132, 186, 190, 208, 214, 221

MAP Medical Aid for Palestinians 11, 232, 244, 263, 267, 273

MASCAL mass casualty incident 38

MEDINT medical intelligence 129

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Mod. B RMAS Reserves Commissioning Course, Module B 94

MOOC Massive Open Online Course 109, 128

MP Member of Parliament 28, 62, 86, 125

MSO Medical Support Officer 85, 89, 181

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation 2, 13, 17, 24, 25, 85, 90, 99, 235, 242, 246, 252, 264, 275, 281

NHS National Health Service 64, 125, 170, 189, 200, 206, 212

NRC National Recruiting Centre 92

NRU Nationally Recruited Unit 17, 103, 141

NSA National Security Agency 81

NVC Nonviolent Communication 161

NWOTR North West Officers' Training Regiment 56

OBR Overseas Based Reservist 38

OC Officer Commanding 30–32, 38, 94, 181

OCdt officer cadet 83, 87, 96, 102

OF officer 1, 6

OPFOR opposing force 18

OPMI Operator Military Intelligence 7

OPT Occupied Palestinian Territory 11, 25, 42, 166, 234, 247, 265, 267, 276

OPTI Operator Technical Intelligence 7

OR other ranks 1, 6, 93, 237, 254, 259

ORG Open Rights Group 63, 97

OSCOLA Oxford University Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities 294

OWS Occupy Wall Street 44, 197, 202

PACE probe, assert, challenge, emergency 171

PARA the Parachute Regiment 132

PBS Public Broadcasting Service 11, 232, 245, 263, 274

PCHR Palestinian Centre for Human Rights 9, 233, 239, 246, 257, 260, 264, 275

PIDA Public Interest Disclosure Act 27, 239, 249, 257, 260, 278

PILC Public Interest Law Centre 9, 233, 239, 246, 260, 265, 275

PO potential officer 56, 79

PPU Peace Pledge Union 4, 19, 124, 191, 218, 221, 224, 226, 236, 240, 249, 257

PSAO Permanent Staff Administration Officer 30, 31

PSI Permanent Staff Instructor 30, 31, 89

PT physical training 36

Pte private 16, 21, 31, 32, 36–39, 54, 96

Q&A question & answer 104

QCEA Quaker Council for European Affairs 27, 133, 213, 219, 235, 247, 249, 250, 258, 277

QFP Quaker Faith & Practice 23, 249, 277

QPSW Quaker Peace & Social Witness 110, 211, 218, 224

R SIGNALS Royal Corps of Signals 6, 79, 181

RAF Royal Air Force 26, 165

RAMC Royal Army Medical Corps. Superseded by **RAMS** in 2024 93, 108, 136, 163

RAMS Royal Army Medical Services 5, 21, 31, 285

RIP rest in peace 80

RLC Royal Logistics Corps 18, 132, 280

RLFR Reserve Land Forces Regulations 17, 27, 123, 240, 257, 260, 278

RMAS Royal Military Academy Sandhurst 73, 284

RoE rules of engagement 23, 234, 241, 243, 261, 269

ROSO Regimental Operational Support Officer 94, 114

RSD Reserve Service Day 6, 31

RSM Regimental Sergeant Major 31

RT Russia Today 135

SAS Special Air Service 173, 190, 215, 221

SC Security Check 125

SDR Strategic Defence Review 182, 207, 214, 220

SJA St John Ambulance 69, 102, 107, 108, 199, 205

SJAR *Service personnel*' Joint Appraisal Report 36, 95

SMSG Specialist Medical Support Group 5, 17

SNCO senior non-commissioned officer 6

SO2 staff officer, grade 2 31, 132

SoH Shadows of Hope 112

SP service person 26–28, 167, 286

SS *Schutzstaffel* 106

SSM Squadron Sergeant Major 95

SToS Soldier Terms of Service 31, 239, 256, 278

TA Territorial Army 120

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Tory Conservative Party 64, 82, 87, 121

Tp troop 280, 286

Tp Comd *troop commander* 30, 32

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TY training year 32, 36–38

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UKSF UK Special Forces 18, 129, 150, 162, 190, 213, 220, 225, 280

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USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a.k.a. the Soviet Union 13, 148, 153

VR Volunteer Reserves 1, 21, 31

WCNSF wounded child, no surviving family 10, 231, 243, 262

WEF World Economic Forum 13, 240, 250, 272

WFFP Workers for a Free Palestine 164, 207, 213, 220, 225

WRI War Resisters’ International 27, 235, 247, 249, 250, 258, 277

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WWII World War II 12, 13, 22, 46, 65, 68, 70, 88, 97, 106, 111, 115, 116, 144, 189, 214, 221, 226, 236

YPG *Yekîneyên Parastina Gel* [People’s Protection Units] 86

YPJ *Yekîneyên Parastina Jin* [Women’s Protection Units] 80, 198, 203, 210, 216, 223

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