

# Ellis in Draftland

Ellis D. Mandala

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The best advice I can give anyone about the ARMY and the U.S. GOV'T in general is not to get involved with these maniacs in the first place. This however is becoming increasingly difficult to do unless you leave the country altogether.

Chances are that you'll get a letter as I did saying "Y'all come on down for a physical." This was particularly traumatic for me as I had successfully avoided these people for 27 years.

OK—you got the letter—it's kind of late at this point but if you have anything wrong with you-mental or physical—get letters from doctors and psychiatrists. Hopefully these will be enough for a 4-F or 1-Y classification.

If not it may provide a basis for a cop out later on.

It's 7:00 a.m. and it's dark and cold and here I am down at the Ft. Wayne Induction Center and thank goodness I'm stoned—it helps keep out bad karma. Me and three other guys (a lot younger) ask a guard where Building 105-B is. He shouts and points vaguely where—we all get about 25 steps away and a "HALT" shatters the relative quiet. It's the guard—What now? So we trudge back. All he wants is a cigarette. He doesn't understand his blustering bravado isn't necessary—all he had to do was ask. Very depressing.

The next phase is to pick up your forms and papers. You then go upstairs for testing and to fill out your medical history. At this point you really start to find out where the Army is at. Someone will talk at you in a loud raucous voice telling you what you WILL do and what you won't do. The test is multiple choice—about 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade level. If you flunk the test they'll give it to you again and again until you pass it or it might not make any difference to them. If they think you're goofing they'll take you anyway.

After the test a corpsman will come in and start to holler at you again and will tell you how to fill out the forms. On the health forms check as many items as you think you qualify for—especially drugs, homosexuality, suicide, headaches, bad dreams, etc. It may get you in to see the psychiatrist.

There will also be a LOYALTY OATH and a POLICE HISTORY to fill out. YOU ARE NOT LEGALLY OBLIGATED TO FILL OUT THESE FORMS. If you refuse to fill these forms out you may or may not have an interview with a security officer—at least it opens a possibility for the future. Now that the forms are done you file down to a room to undress and go thru the physical. This is your first chance to take some action.

I saw one fellow come in (after I had finished, unfortunately) refuse to undress. He was asked if he had any "defects" or homosexual tendencies and he replied "no." He just said he didn't want to take his clothes off. I honestly don't know what would happen if you did this. It might be worth a chance tho.

The rest of the physical is mostly standing in line and waiting. Oh yeah, when they give the hearing test this may be a good time to develop some hearing problems. They put you in a box and give you a control button—press the button when you hear the tone, release it when you don't. Figure it out.

Your next chance comes when you see the psychiatrist IF you see him. If you run a lot of neurotic shit to him he may ask if you finished school and if you are working (I was asked this twice by two doctors). If you finished school and are working your chances of getting out will probably drop to nil—as mine did.

That's about it. The psychiatrist is usually the last step and you may or may not talk to the security people. If you don't sign their papers they may hassle you but legally they can't bust you. And it may give them second thoughts as to your desirability. If you are willing to go thru the changes it may not do any good and it will take a lot of time.

I was there until 3:30 p.m. the first day (everyone else left about 12:30). I had to come back the following week to see the psychiatrist again and the security people for another five hours. It's not easy and it's difficult being around those people for any length of time. I had a splitting headache each time I finally got out.

If it doesn't or might not work why go thru all this bullshit? It slows them down, produces more paperwork and generally hangs them up. If you and 40 or 50 people do this every time a batch goes through—every day—they would soon be years behind. They might even have to recall the troops from Vietnam to help fight the mounting paperwork. That's it—GOOD LUCK.

love,

Ellis D. Mandala

P.S. If the above fails, you may consider applying for a deferment as a Conscientious Objector. Contrary to popular misconceptions to qualify as a CO-you do NOT have to believe in God or belong to a formal religion. Just filing for CO status may delay your induction two years while you go thru all the appeal procedures.

Literature on how to file for CO is available for 10 cents at the FIFTH ESTATE Bookstore on Plum St.

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