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## High School Soldiers TRANSCRIPT

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( Gunfire )

JOHN MERROW: This might look like fun and games, but to the Army it's serious business.

RECRUITER: Check your airspeed. Go ahead and bring it on back. You want to get it to 200 feet on that altitude.

JOHN MERROW: We're inside the Army's aviation van. It's equipped with cutting-edge flight simulators, virtual reality systems, and video war games that take you to the front lines.

RECRUITER: Watch out, watch out, watch out.

JOHN MERROW: Here, you can even take the controls of an Apache helicopter. This \$1.1 million tractor-trailer travels to schools all across America looking for recruits for our nation's all-volunteer Army. On this day, the van is stationed at Hoover High School in an urban section of San Diego. It's career day for the Army.

RECRUITER: I'm here to talk a little bit about what the Army can do for you today as a person. America needs outstanding young men and women that are smart, that are hard-working, like yourselves, to join the Army because we are a nation at war and we need outstanding people like you.

JOHN MERROW: Students get to ask questions and hear stories about life in the Army from a soldier of the year, officers, and recruiters.

RECRUITER: All right, let me see you do between 15 and 20. Let me see.

JOHN MERROW: Some brave students will even get a physical taste of life in the Army.

RECRUITER: All right you're doing good. Good job, man.

## Access to high schoolers

JOHN MERROW: Today the military has access to high school students because of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Schools receiving federal funds must give the military the same access that college and career counselors have or risk losing their federal money. Unless parents specifically request otherwise, schools must give the military personal contact information, addresses and telephone numbers, for their students.

RECRUITER: You know, I joined because I was seeking some adventure, all right? And I've been to a lot of different countries, Athens, Greece, Ireland, Rome. Been to Egypt twice, to the pyramids. All sorts of fun stuff. And that's what it's about.

JOHN MERROW: Why is it necessary to you to go on high school campuses?

LT. COL. DAN DAOUST, U.S. Army: The primary reason is access to young people that don't even have a concept of what military service might be.

JOHN MERROW: Lt. Col. Dan Daoust was recruiting battalion commander in California for the past two years.

LT. COL. DAN DAOUST: There's no substitute for that one-on-one communication of actually talking to a soldier that's wearing that uniform. It would be great if we had all the resources in the world to be able to go out throughout all the neighborhoods and contact them in their homes, but they simply don't. The easiest way to make contact with them is when they are all in one location.

JOHN MERROW: According to Lt. Col. Daoust, access to high schools slows down escalating costs. The U.S. General Accounting Office found that the military's recruiting advertising budget doubled from \$300 million to nearly \$600 million between 1998 and 2003. And the overall recruiting budget last year approached \$4 billion.

RECRUITER: I mean, where else can you get paid to jump out of airplanes, shoot cool guns, blow stuff up, and travel seeing all kinds of different countries? I put on the green Army uniform, and everywhere you go in the world wearing that uniform as a soldier, you're representing every man, woman and child.

JOHN MERROW: Having access to a large pool of potential enlistees is critical because recruiters have yearly goals to meet. During this past year, the goal was increased from 72,500 to 77,000. And the pressure is only going to grow. Congress recently approved increasing the Army's troop strength by 20,000 soldiers.

RECRUITER: How many here are thinking about the military after they get out of high school? Wow. Outstanding.

Student reaction to the recruiters on campus

JOHN MERROW: Are you trying to sign kids up here today?

SGT. HOWARD MISENER, U.S. Army: No, what we're doing here today is giving them a career orientation on... you know, talk to them about different ways that they can learn a career, whether it's through the military or through college.

RECRUITER: The outstanding recruiters out here, they can tell you how much money you're going to get for college, you know, what kinds of options you have. Everything like that.

JOHN MERROW: Some students at Hoover think the Army's visit gives them good exposure to future career options. What do you think about the Army being on the campus, the military being on the campus?

STUDENT: I really don't care.

STUDENT: I mean, they're not here to force us to join. They're just giving us an idea of, like, what you get in the Army.

STUDENT: This is just giving us opportunities and choices to see what our future is in front of us.

JOHN MERROW: Is there pressure? Is this what you call high pressure?

STUDENT: No.

STUDENT: I don't feel any need to go and sign up for the Army. This is just helping us open up our options about what we want to do later in life.

JOHN MERROW: But other students in San Diego don't like the military having this much access.

STUDENT: I've seen a lot more recruiters at my campus since my freshman year.

STUDENT: I get phone calls all the time from the military trying to recruit me, because...

JOHN MERROW: What do they say?

STUDENT: They just say it's a great opportunity and they can provide me with job skills for the future.

JOHN MERROW: These high school seniors attend Patrick Henry High School, located in a wealthy area of San Diego. Unlike the students at Hoover, some

students oppose the military's presence on their campus.

STUDENT: The significant difference between colleges recruiting and even vocational schools recruiting and the military recruitment is the culture that you're setting up. They're trying to bring military presence on to the campus and kind of glorify and make people feel like they can be heroes for being involved in something that is inherently violent. And I think that school is not a place.

Local peace group object

JOHN MERROW: Rick Jahnkow agrees. He's the head of a local San Diego peace group which has serious problems with military recruitment at high schools.

RICK JAHNKOW: A recruiter goes into the school, essentially when you strip it all the way down, that man is there to find people to send to Iraq. That's what it is. And yet he's presenting himself as a college counselor.

RECRUITER: All right. Good morning. Another point of view.

RECRUITER: You can tell your school you want your name off their list, otherwise they'll call you at home.

JOHN MERROW: Your group was outside of the school protesting, handing out leaflets. What did you hope to accomplish?

RICK JAHNKOW: I think what we hoped to do is just to make sure that young people knew that there was another side to what they were going to see and hear.

STUDENT SPOKESMAN: Sophomores? They believe us as being their counselors and that's what we are. We guide them and they're new soldiers to us, whether they've enlisted or not.

JOHN MERROW: But you are recruiting. That's different from counseling. You guys want people in the Army. Is that really counseling?

RECRUITER: No, because you don't want everybody in the Army. It's just like any employer hiring somebody. You go through a process of hiring somebody. Not everybody is qualified for the Army.

JOHN MERROW: In order to qualify for the Army, a student must pass a military administered aptitude exam, a physical and a criminal background check.

RECRUITER: Have you received any other citations?

JOHN MERROW: Afterwards, the applicant takes an oath and is officially enlisted.

RECRUITER: Congratulations. Welcome to the United States military.

RICK JAHNKOW: Kids are very sophisticated and very bright. What they lack is experience. They lack information and they're not going to find out about the realities talking to a recruiter.

Another side of the Army

JOHN MERROW: In that meeting did they mention Iraq or Afghanistan?

STUDENT: They mentioned that we were a nation at war.

JOHN MERROW: Did they say anything about... that you might be sent to Iraq or...

STUDENT: The only mention of Iraq was they were actually recruiting people. They'll be giving us an example of what we'd be going through if we were recruited, but they're not. They're only giving us, like, an explanation of what they do.

JOHN MERROW: Is it fair to talk to high school kids and not tell them about the wars that are going on?

RECRUITER: Well, actually, I was in here all morning, and they did bring a couple of those questions up. But I think it's really not a concern to students anymore because they watch the news, they know what's going on. I'm not CNN, so... they watch the news. They know what's happening and why ask the question if they already know what's going on?

LT. COL. DAN DAOUST: I'm sure that the recruiters that you saw, they wanted to focus on the positive sides of the Army and Army service or military service that the students don't get exposed to 24/7 on TV.

JOHN MERROW: If the United States is committed to having an all-volunteer Army, Lt. Col. Daoust says the military must have access to high school campuses.

LT. COL. DAN DAOUST: We don't have unfettered access any time to just reach in and pluck a student out to give them a spiel about joining the Army. We try to show a partnership with the schools that the Army is a viable partner, not an alternative to education, but a partner in education.

JOHN MERROW: It's difficult to evaluate the success of military recruiting on high school campuses. The military does not track how or where high school students enlist.