

Petitions Committee  
Inquiry into petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools  
Response from Mererid Hopwood

William Powell AM  
Chair of Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff CF99 1NA

4/5/2013

Dear Mr Powell

Thank you for raising the above matter in your committee and for inquiring further into it. As you know, this is a cause of great concern to many of us – both as parents and as citizens.

One feels ashamed on the one hand that a country that prides itself on its humanitarian tradition – and which has practically adopted the phrase ‘chwarae teg/fair play’ as its motto, has allowed such a situation to arise. On the other hand, one feels pity and sympathy towards so many young people whose situation offers them very few employment and career opportunities, as the armed forces thrust themselves on them.

I understand that Britain is the only country within NATO which allows 16 year old children access to the army. This has been condemned by the United Nations. There are very few countries in the world which tolerate such uncivilized behaviour and I understand that Britain, by exercising this policy, is in the company of some of the world’s most oppressive regimes.

We look forward greatly to the day when our children here in Wales won’t even need to consider a career in an industry which alleges that it ‘defends’ by threatening to kill (and doing so). This is totally abhorrent to the concept of a conciliatory society. As has been said many times, any school teacher would be suspended for threatening to ‘keep the peace’ by firing a gun or setting off a bomb.

You will, by now, have received the appalling facts and statistics. I implore you now to lead your committee to make a brave stand and free us from this unacceptable situation.

Thank you for your kind consideration once again

Your sincerely

Mererid Hopwood