

PET(4) SAR 12

Petitions Committee

Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the
Army Recruiting in Schools

Response from Llandrindod & Pales Quaker Meeting



Llandrindod & Pales Quaker Meeting
Peter Hussey

National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA
2013

8th April

Dear Sirs

I write with reference to the Petition:

“We call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to recommend that the armed forces should not go into schools to recruit.” etc.

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has a 350 year history of pacifism. As part of our testimony of peace we are against use of children in the Armed Forces and therefore we are against representatives of the Armed Forces going into schools to recruit. The Quaker United Nations Office have been campaigning worldwide on the issue of child soldiers for many years.

As the petition points out, Britain is the only country in the European Union that allows a military presence in its schools. Britain is also the only one of the 27 European Union countries to recruit 16-year-old children to the armed forces.

It is our view that school children are vulnerable and too young to make decisions as radical as joining the services. We particularly feel that it is totally wrong for the Armed Forces recruitment personnel to target their schools recruitment at the most deprived areas of the country.

We appreciate that service in the Armed Forces is a way in which young adults can achieve transportable skills that may otherwise be difficult for them to achieve. This is a further indictment of Welsh society that such training is difficult for young people to access other than through the military route.

We note that your mailing list on this topic does not include Quakers, and would ask you to include our Meeting and also Meeting of Friends in Wales.

Yours sincerely

Peter Hussey, Clerk,
Llandrindod & Pales Local Quaker Meeting