

Consultation on petition P-03-262 Wales Peace Institute
Response from Wales Green Party



Committee Clerk,
Petition Committee,
National Assembly for Wales,
Cardiff Bay,
CF99 1NA

10th December 2011

Dear Sir/Madam,

P-03-262 Academi Heddwch Cymru / Wales Peace Institute

Wales is involved in dual use arms testing in Aberporth, is likely to have a renewed nuclear facility in Anglesey, and the Wales Government campaigns to attract military training facilities at St Athan, among other sites.

To date government has not concerned itself with the wider implications of the decisions taken in this respect, and a Wales Peace Institute would be invaluable in opening eyes to the whole proposition of war and conflict emanating from our soil.

The past two wars – Iraq and Afghanistan – were not properly researched, indeed were conducted on a whim, and cost millions of lives. The UK has neither reflected, nor learnt, and ploughs blindly on with careless threats against other countries, notably Iran.

With the formation of a Wales Peace Institute, Wales would have the opportunity to stand above the rhetoric and propaganda surrounding any proposed conflict, and offer sound research to support or question high level decision-making. It would also provide a platform for awareness and open debate within society.

We believe that the Wales Peace Institute should be an autonomous body with academic independence, funded by government, independent of political parties and accountable to the people of Wales. It should be transparent and open to international scrutiny, with the freedom to seek independent finance and commissions.

The following list is not exhaustive, but we feel that a Wales Peace Institute should have a remit to:

- halt and prevent the outbreak of direct violence within a society
- address the root causes of conflicts
- reflect on the outcomes of past conflicts
- highlight the possible sources of violence and their likely causes

- inform government of social processes that promote and are conducive to the conditions for peace and security both locally and internationally.
- examine legislation and policy concerning the international arms trade
- promote conflict avoidance, justice and human rights
- observe situations at risk
- encourage conflict resolution
- provide continuous reflection on the social, political, economic, and cultural context of peace and conflict
- monitor the arms production and arms support trade within Wales including dual use and end use of weapons
- research into factors which constitute a sustainable peace

The risk factors for such an Institute are negligible, and the restraints likely to be purely financial at the stage of inception. Uncountable billions are poured into war – but what price do we put on peace?

On November 13th, the Deputy Leader of the Wales Green Party was honoured to lay the first White Poppy wreath at an official remembrance ceremony in Newport South Wales. Citizens are questioning conflict, yet have no means to promote conflict avoidance. It seems a remarkable omission not to have a body which can evaluate war and peace, and indeed foster a culture for the promotion of peace, security and human rights.

Yours sincerely,



Pippa Bartolotti, on behalf of the Wales Green Party

Deputy Leader, Wales Green Party

