

Dear Edwin Poots,

Peace, you know, is not just the absence of violence or war: although, of course, these are necessary before peace can exist. But true peace depends on more than the absence of violence: it rests on the existence of a viable civilisation. And the arts, as much as anything else, helps to create that civilisation. Think again about the cutbacks in funding to the arts.

Yours sincerely, Hugh McFadden (Northern Ireland-born poet & literary critic).