

Lord Jay of Ewelme to ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to give effect to the United Nations doctrine of Responsibility to Protect.

MAIDEN SPEECH BY THE BISHOP OF WAKEFIELD

My Lords, I am very grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Jay of Ewelme for making this debate possible. For five and a half years in the 1980s, I was the Archbishop of Canterbury's Ecumenical Secretary so international relations remain one of my key interests. For me, it has been an exciting ten days. Introduced during the hustings and election for *the Speaker in the other place*, may I thank all who have helped my introduction into the house be painless – so far!

Wakefield diocese is shaped like a slim flying saucer – for those who believe in such things. Nevertheless, despite our odd shape, we've made ourselves impossible to miss on your journeys between South and North. We've put landmarks on the main routes: Ferrybridge power station on the A1, and Emley Moor mast – the tallest free-standing concrete structure in Britain – alongside both the M1 and the Leeds main line. So it's difficult to miss us with our former industrial base, in wool and coal: Halifax, Huddersfield, Dewsbury, Barnsley and Pontefract are just some of our well-known towns. Wakefield was the county town of the old West Riding.

My predecessors have had varied interests. The first Bishop of Wakefield, William Walsham How, called for Yorkshire libraries to banish Thomas Hardy from their shelves – and to burn all copies of *Jude the Obscure*! Eric Treacy in the 1960s was the best railway photographer of the century. I share Treacy's passion for trains – but differ from Walsham How in being an avid reader of Hardy.

Despite being land-locked and part of God's own country, Wakefield diocese has strong international links with Sweden, Australia, Pakistan, Tanzania and Georgia. The significant Asian populations in Huddersfield, Halifax and Dewsbury mean that a proper internationalism and a care for security issues are *de rigueur* for us.

For that reason alone, my Lords, I am enthusiastic to speak in this particular debate. Since the time of St Augustine of Hippo, Christian ethicists have participated in public debates and private reflection to help refine and clarify what constitutes the appropriate use of military force in statecraft. Participants within this dialogue – jurists, ethicists, politicians and Generals, have sought to shape and develop the *just war tradition* so that its relevance is retained even when applied to entirely new security challenges.

Amongst the bishops, the as the noble and right reverend Lord, Lord Harries, has contributed seminally to these issues in this House. The development of *Responsibility to Protect* as an emerging norm in international relations is evidence of the traction that the just war criteria have in setting out an understanding of international and domestic politics. This sets the political within a context of moral concerns and considerations.

After having taken the initial step, namely the conceptualisation and fundamental recognition of the responsibility to protect, the challenge now is to look at ways in which we can move towards a clearer definition and operation of the Responsibility to Protect. A number of Noble Lords have already touched on areas of ongoing dispute and contention, not least the question of where authority should be located for the use of force. Only by working through these issues will the international community be successful in preventing cases of crimes against humanity or at the very least, ending them at an early stage. If it can do that then the international community might yet fulfil its responsibility for the preservation of peace in the twenty-first century.

There is risk, however, that in all this we might become too state-centric, so to speak. Responsibility to Protect breaks once and for all with the state-centric concept of humanitarian intervention, with its

overt reliance on military action. In its place stands a three pillar concept of security involving a *responsibility to prevent*, a *responsibility to react* and a *responsibility to rebuild*. This understanding of human security has been part of the core of the Responsibility to Protect norm from the Canadian sponsored report in 2001 through to the publication of the report, *Implementing the Responsibility to Protect*, by the UN Secretary General in January 2009.

In a 24/7 media culture the focus is invariably on our *responsibility to react*, but our priority must be on a *responsibility to prevent*. There is a specific role here for civil society and churches.

As I noted, Wakefield diocese has formal links with two Anglican dioceses in other countries – the Diocese of Mara in Tanzania and the Diocese of Faisalabad in Pakistan. It also has vital links with the churches in Georgia. Last summer, I was able to issue a statement on behalf of the Church of England urging Georgian restraint and condemning the disproportionate use of force by Russia in the tragic war there.

Our relationship with Mara in Tanzania goes back more than 20 years and has as its motto in Swahili, 'Bega kwa Bega', which translated means 'Shoulder to Shoulder'. This motto, which is particularly apt given today's debate, has been practiced through the many conversations, visits and joint projects by the people of both Dioceses which continue to enrich the link. I was there last October. It is the myriad of relationships like this that underpin and give meaning to our understanding of Responsibility to Protect. I very much hope that in thinking about what steps need to be taken to give effect to the United Nations doctrine of Responsibility to Protect that Her Majesty's Government recognizes that there are those on this bench who believe that human rights and security are indivisible and that the responsibility to protect is therefore a matter of direct concern for everyone and not just governments.