

General Election 2017 – Letter of Bishop Draine to the Secretary of State for Defence

Bishop Terry recently sent a letter to Sir Michael Fallon expressing his great concern that the UK have not been taking part in the Vienna talks regarding the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It read as follows:

To the Rt. Hon. Sir Michael Fallon, Secretary of State for Defence:

Talks have been going on in Vienna, and will resume in June, between the parties to the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The United Kingdom is a party to this treaty, but has not been taking part in these talks.

Since nuclear weapons are one of the most serious threats to the survival of the human race, and even of all life on our planet, it is regrettable that our government is not using its best efforts to prevent their spread.

The head of the Holy See's delegation to the Vienna talks, Monsignor Janusz Urbaszewski, said that the Holy See was participating in the process *'to work for a world free of nuclear weapons, in full application of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, in letter and spirit, with the goal of a complete prohibition of these weapons'*. He continued: *'The Holy See cannot but lament the fact that the potential devastation caused by the use of nuclear weapons so clearly identified over 40 years ago has not been relegated to history.'*

Pope Francis, in his 2017 message for World Peace Day, said: *'I plead for disarmament and for the prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons.'*

Personally, I think the use of nuclear weapons is immoral, but the failure of our government to take part in the Vienna non-proliferation talks is simply a scandal.

+ T P Draine

Bishop of Middlesbrough