



In the House of Lords today Baroness Sheehan asked Her Majesty's Government "what views they have expressed to the government of France about the bulldozing of the south section of the Calais "Jungle" camp." The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, asked a follow up question:

**The Archbishop of Canterbury:** My Lords, while we would all agree that the situation is difficult for the French authorities, I am sure we also feel that it is significantly more difficult for the 300 unaccompanied children. I recently visited the Marsh Academy near Romney Marsh and saw a school and community fostering and caring with the utmost compassion for significant numbers of unaccompanied children. Given that example, does the Minister agree that issues of compassion should easily trump those of administrative efficiency and tidiness, and narrow definitions of family links, and that we should, therefore, take more children very quickly?

**Lord Bates:** Of course that is true but, on compassion, the Prime Minister said in September that we would bring 1,000 people into the country by Christmas, and so far we have 1,200, half of whom are children. The case in Romney Marsh that the most reverend Primate mentions, is in Kent, which has a particular responsibility in this respect, in terms of the numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children arriving there and needing to be cared for. I was very grateful to the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Rochester, who undertook to write to other authorities about taking more of these unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, to share the burden that currently falls too heavily on Kent.

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