



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Justice and Truth — Magherafelt style!



Rev. William McCrea

There has been some reports, I understand, in the local press in Northern Ireland regarding the suspension of a Free Presbyterian elder, Mr. Raymond Linton, in Rev William McCrea's Magherafelt Free Presbyterian congregation. Being on holiday and having no access to printed editions of the local press, I am relying on the reports of others taken from the local press.

I have no details of the charges against Mr. Linton but this I do know: he has been a man of unswerving loyalty to the founding principles and witness of the Free Presbyterian Church, a man who whole-heartedly supported his minister, Rev McCrea, and Dr Paisley, the Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church for many many years. Evidence of his character may be seen in the fact that he was elected as an elder by his fellow members in Magherafelt.

The fact that his suspension from his position as elder has been publicly linked with his opposition to Dr Paisley's and his minister, William McCrea's involvement with Sinn Fein/IRA in a power-sharing government in Stormont must alarm many lovers of truth concerning the actions of both his minister and the session of Magherafelt Free Presbyterian Church.

The following is, I believe, an accurate account of what Mr. Raymond Linton said to the "Belfast Newsletter" of July 18th, 2007.

"Dr Paisley and others are acting as if nothing is going on but there is a big split inside the Free Presbyterian Church and a lot of families are very much against him and William McCrea.

"It comes down to politics and the Church and they cannot do both. As it says in Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

"Dr Paisley and Mr McCrea must choose between politics and Church. It is terrible and an outrage what they have done. A lot of ministers are opposed to what has happened, and I know that personally.

"I have followed Dr Paisley for years. I do not intend to listen to him in future."

Mr Linton also claimed that McCrea "told me out of his own mouth that he did not agree with Dr Paisley" and went on:

"I want to see the whole Presbytery take a decision that you cannot be a minister in our denomination and also hold a position as a politician".

As I have said already, I do not know the basis of the suspension imposed upon Mr. Linton, but if it was because of the statements that are quoted above then, I and others can ex-



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

pect to be up on charges and suspended by Presbytery since we have said as much and more regarding the involvement of Dr Paisley in the coalition with Sinn Fein/IRA!

But back to Magherafelt. That William McCrea's session can suspend a man who has given many years of loyal support and labour to the work of God in Magherafelt and that for actions which do not involve any immorality or breach of the moral law of God, is all the more amazing in that William McCrea is in partnership with a political party which has gained its present position by espousing murder, robbery, terror and criminality of all forms and that for many years. Indeed, William McCrea's present political partners are guilty of the murder of members of his family as he so often, in the past, informed the public.

William McCrea is on record as opposing the St Andrews Agreement from the time of its inception right up until the time of March 27th when in the House of Commons he said the following:

"My hon. Friend the Member for Belfast, East (Mr. Robinson) and my right hon. Friend the Member for North Antrim (Rev. Ian Paisley) acknowledged the difficulties for hon. Members of having to meet Sinn Fein, and the fact that no one was jumping up and down about it. As far as I am concerned, the idea of Sinn Fein in a Government is obnoxious. It makes me sick to the pit of my stomach. My thoughts are with the innocent victims, Protestant and Roman Catholic, throughout the community, who have been slaughtered by the IRA and so-called loyalist terrorist organisations. Neither have a place in a democratic society.

Many people will find it difficult to forgive those who brutally and callously murdered their loved ones. Last week, I believed that Martin McGuinness was a terrorist with blood on his hands. I believed that he had been a murderer. I have to tell the House that I believe that this week, because he is the same person. Irrespective of a person's position, in a democratic society, everyone is equal under the law, equally subject to the law and must, therefore, face justice. I do not believe that I have a right to ask for that for the republican community if I do not ask for the same for the Unionist community. If there is failure to meet justice under any political climate, those guilty will never evade the justice of Almighty God, who knows the murders that have been committed. Until the wrong is acknowledged, there cannot be healing.

I know what it is for my children to look over their shoulder every day and for my wife to look under her car every day. I have known what it is for many years to stand with my constituents and look into coffins nearly daily. Many of those coffins did not hold bodies, but only pieces of them when terrorists had finished with them. We cannot live in the past. We have to build a future—but a future that is just, honourable, democratic and has a solid sound foundation."

William McCrea has got over his revulsion regards joining with Sinn Fein/IRA murderers in government. There are those who believe that the salary he receives for the position as



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Chairman of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development, reportedly in the region of £60,000 to £70,000 per annum, has been very influential in curing his revulsion at the thought of working with murderers and criminals.

Mr. McCrea has made no attempt to expel or resist the Sinn Fein/IRA's presence and influence in the Northern Ireland Assembly. He has been delighted at the relationship which exists between Dr Paisley and the man Mr. McCrea quite correctly calls a murderer, Martin McGuinness, and which has been repeatedly displayed in the news media to the grief and heartache of thousands of sincere Christians in Ulster and much further afield.

None of this bothers Mr McCrea any more but the opinions of a man who has spent many years supporting him when he was the opponent of the IRA is now so offensive that he must be removed from the eldership in Magherafelt!

Neither Mr. McCrea nor his children have had to look over their shoulders in fear of anything Raymond Linton would do as they did regarding Martin McGuinness and his fellow terrorists, yet he sits comfortably in McGuinness' presence in Stormont while Mr. Linton is suspended from the eldership of Magherafelt church and is no longer permitted to sit with Mr. McCrea and his fellow elders and his character impuned before all. This cannot be right nor pleasing to the Lord, the Judge of all the earth, Who ever does what is right.

Can anyone explain this without using the word "hypocrisy"?

Mr. McCrea recently authored an article in the "Belfast Newsletter" (July 13th), in which he claimed that unionists should "celebrate victory over the IRA" and that "every time republican representatives pass through the gates of Stormont, they acknowledge their United Ireland ideas have gone up in smoke."

The statement has been met by derision both within and without his own party, the DUP. Mel Lucas, chairman of Willie McCrea's Westminster constituency, has criticised Mr. McCrea's statement in the "Belfast Newsletter" of July 21st, saying, that the whole statement was "rubbish". Sinn Fein/IRA treated his comments with contempt, recognising the lack of credibility Mr. McCrea has in loyalist circles.

Mr. Linton has the option of appealing his case to Presbytery. Indeed, should there be any communicant members in the Magherafelt congregation who believe Mr. Linton has been unfairly treated, they have the liberty of appealing to Presbytery by the means of a petition signed by them, requesting that Presbytery investigate the treatment Mr. Linton has received at the hands of his session.

Others have equalled Mr. McCrea's folly in their efforts to justify Dr Paisley's somersault. One unnamed Free Presbyterian minister was alleged to have said that it was wrong to call McGuinness a murderer since he was never convicted of that crime! (Portadown News, July 13th, 2007).

Of course, the man who said that is condemning Dr. Paisley and Mr. McCrea and a host others (including himself) since McGuinness has repeatedly been called a murderer.



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

If it is wrong to call McGuinness a murderer on the basis that he has never been convicted of such a crime, then it is equally wrong to call Judas a traitor since he was never convicted in a court of such a crime. Indeed, he, like McGuinness, was rewarded for his wickedness. The only difference is that shortly afterwards, Judas had the common grace to feel a sense of shame and guilt. In his despair he took his own life.

McGuinness and his fellow terrorists have openly admitted their IRA membership, and thereby their complicity in the horrendous crimes of that organisation, while refusing to offer one word of remorse for their crimes.

The DUP gave a solemn oath to the loyalist people of Ulster that they would never enter a government with Sinn Fein/IRA until they had “repented in sackcloth and ashes”. No such repentance has ever been forthcoming. Yet Willie McCrea sits in political fellowship with such, and that in utter defiance of the teaching of the Word of God in Romans 13: 1-4, while removing a Christian man such as Raymond Linton from his session.

No wonder many of us are at a total loss to comprehend the depths of the backsliding that has overtaken many in the Free Presbyterian Church!

Ivan Foster
(23rd July 2007).