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The Drumcree Crisis — the consequence of too much tolerance!



Drumcree Parish Church

An Article by Rev. Ivan Foster from the “Special Articles” section on the web page of “The Burning Bush” This article, written a number of years ago and now slightly updated, has frequently come under attack by republicans for it comes to the very heart of their evil strategy of territorial advancement. There is no need for its analysis to be changed or its conclusions altered. Time has vindicated its observations.

Tolerance of that which is wrong is a sister sin to intolerance of that which is right. So ill-equipped is fallen, sinful man to judge matters of morality that the two are often confused and one is passed off as the other. Tolerance toward evil is deemed virtuous, while intolerance of evil is deemed wicked. In the midst of such confusion of judgment, it is easy today to be persuaded to support fervently that which has the appearance of a good cause, while in fact you are setting your face against righteousness.

Broadly speaking, the objections by Roman Catholics to Protestants marching in commemorative church parades along main roads in areas where they have gained the majority and, in one instance, in a parade to a village war memorial

to lay a wreath marking the end of the two World Wars, are deemed reasonable by most observers outside of Northern Ireland and by all too many Protestants within it. To many observers, the Roman Catholic objections are understandable, while the Protestant's insistence on marching is seen as belligerent and unwarranted and showing no consideration of the sensitivities of his Roman Catholic neighbour.

In truth, the Protestant community in Ulster is suffering the consequences of having shown too much tolerance toward Roman Catholicism in the recent past. In every instance, where there is a dispute about a Protestant parade, the area was once populated largely, if not almost exclusively, by Protestants. The area became Roman Catholic as a result of a policy of deliberate cuckoo-like encroachment. The Protestants made no objection to Roman Catholics moving into homes in their district. Had they done, the encroachment would have been short-lived.

Distress

However, as the numbers of Roman Catholics increased, life was made more and more distressing for the Protestants who remained. Finally, the area was “cleansed” of all Protestants and was declared a nationalist or republican area through which and in which there would be permitted no display of Protestantism. Rome is engaged in a tactic of quiet infiltration of Protestant areas which leads on to a triumphant take-over and loud declarations of: “This is our territory and no Protestant is welcome.” Garvaghy Road in Portadown,



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

which is at the centre of the present dispute, had a Protestant population, until the tactic of infiltration and displacement rendered it Roman Catholic. Once that happened, the route used once a year by Orangemen returning from their annual church service in Drumcree Parish Church was barred to them by those who claim the parade is offensive. If it is so offensive, why did they choose to live on the road down which the parade passed? In truth, they came to live there as part of a strategy to stop that parade. A campaign of objection culminating in street protests and riots has persuaded the Government to ban the Orange parade and so complete Rome's expulsion of Protestants from an area in which they once lived peacefully but made the mistake of welcoming Roman Catholics into their midst.

No evidence

There is no evidence whatsoever of any counter movement of the Protestant population into Roman Catholic areas which would lead on to the expelling of the Roman Catholic residents. Any Protestant trying to do so would be taking his life in his hands to try such a tactic. The tolerance-demanding Romanist is very slow to demonstrate like tolerance toward others. In this they show the same spirit as Muslims and members of other false religions. Few have failed to notice that these are loud in their demands for rights within any country to which they emigrate but no such rights are granted to the non-Muslim in their homeland or in any area they dominate. It ought also to be noted that the Portadown Orange parade at the centre of the present controversy has been rerouted in the past by its organisers because of Roman Catholic objections. Such compromise meets with no like-minded response on the part of Rome but always leads on to a further demand. The present ban on the parade passing down Garvaghy Road is the result of that further demand.

An analogy

It has often been reported in the newspapers that Protestants remember their Roman Catholic neighbours coming out to watch Orange parades. Everyone seems mystified why these same Roman Catholics are now so offended by such a parade. The reason was once understood by Ulster Protestants and clearly they need to learn it again. Our forefathers had an analogy to describe the tactics of Roman Catholicism when seeking to advance itself within a Protestant community. The analogy simply is this: while in the minority, Rome is a lamb — innocent and inoffensive; while in equality, Rome is a fox — sleekit and crafty; when in the majority, Rome is a tiger — vicious and cruel. That metamorphosis of public demeanour has been witnessed in Ulster in many places over the last 30 years. The tiger skulks where once the lamb gambolled!

Control

It must be remembered and understood that Rome demands complete control over all matters in any country where she has a foothold. She will work ceaselessly by all means to accomplish this end. That is her underlying motive in Ulster. Each demand she or those myriad socio-political organisations that do her bidding, make for more tolerance is but the seeking of another step toward complete dominance. So it has always been and so it is seen in Ulster's recent history.

Fifth columnists

The allies of Rome, the fifth columnists who sprang up within the mainline Protestant denominations calling themselves ecumenists, have long been conducting a campaign



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

amongst the rank and file members of their churches, arguing for more tolerance toward Rome and her demands. As part of their pro-Rome campaign, they labelled those, who adhered faithfully to the credal standards of the Reformation regarding Romanism, as “bigots,” “theological dinosaurs” and “fomentors of hatred.” The news media were ever happy to take up these cries and cruelly slander preachers of righteousness as devils incarnate. The combined pressures of Rome’s considerable international lobby; the ambitious politicians, both British and American, who wished to earn Rome’s gratitude for solving “the Irish problem”; the local politicians and clerics blinded by ecumenism and, of course, the Roman Catholic terrorism of the Provisional IRA, have together persuaded the Protestant citizenry of Ulster to retreat before Rome’s demands for “Lebensraum” — more space in Northern Ireland.

Propaganda

The first generation of Northern Ireland Protestants was more successful at resisting and rejecting Rome’s pleas for tolerance. But then they lived prior to the full impact of the propaganda barrage, aimed by the ecumenists of the World Council of Churches at the members of the Northern Ireland churches which were in it from its inauguration — the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland. The onslaught of anti-Reformation dogma within Northern Ireland, which followed the formation of the World Council of Churches in 1948, encouraged Roman Catholic political activists to seize upon the breach in the ranks of Protestantism created by that onslaught. Those within the ecumenical churches who were persuaded to see Roman Catholicism in a different light from that of their Protestant forefathers, were also persuaded to support the social and political demands of Rome. The new tolerance of Rome spawned a whole raft of political concessions to her. Over a period of time, a new voting method, different from that used in the rest of the United Kingdom, was introduced because her activists deemed that it would favour them. New legislation on public housing made it possible for Rome to begin her campaign of encroachment into, and ultimate taking over of Protestant areas. At the same time, legislation requiring positive discrimination against Protestants in the workplace gave Romanists power in factories and industries. Soon legislation outlawing the displaying of the national flag, the Union Jack, in any place of employment or even on private property if it was deemed offensive by a Romanist, was also on the statute book. It is presently illegal to display a portrait of Her Majesty the Queen in some circumstances. Even police stations are considering not flying the national flag! Such is the import of Roman Catholic inspired legislation. But Rome’s demands were not so easily exhausted. On the security front, demands for the disbanding of the Ulster Special Constabulary, a most effective anti-terrorist force, were made and complied with. Soon the “evil genie was out of the bottle.” This tolerance toward Rome’s political demands directly promoted the terrorism of the Provisional IRA and the slaughter and mayhem that it spawned.

In the face of the further demands of Rome, now set against the background of its terror campaign, yet further concessions were made. These concessions, Rome said, were essential if the terrorism was to end. But each concession did not end the terror. Rather, it only spurred the terrorist on and added to the lists of Rome’s demands. It must be said that it also encouraged loyalists to use terrorism as they watched the success enjoyed by the IRA and concluded wrongly that the way to political success was through the barrel of the terrorist’s gun.



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Security tactics controlled

Tolerance toward evil helped only to strengthen its malevolent influence. Indeed, this tolerance permitted Rome to dictate the security measures used against the IRA. While publicly Rome had to call murder, "murder," behind the scenes, she did all she could to give what protection and cover she could to "her boys" engaged in the fight for a Roman Catholic united Ireland. While some commanders of the security forces pushed beyond the boundaries which had been laid down very much at Rome's insistence and, on rarer occasions, political leaders did the same, by and large, terrorism was fought within the parameters dictated by the Roman Catholic Church. When IRA murderers, encountered by the security forces, were shot or injured, the first voice raised in bitter protest was that of the Roman Catholic Cardinal or of a Bishop.

Consent

All this Ulster Protestants watched and often complained about but a majority of them effectively continued to tolerate. Concession followed concession until we arrived at our present position where some 70% of Ulster voted for a "peace" settlement that finalises the legitimising process so desired by Sinn Fein, the IRA's political face. The "Belfast Agreement," as the infamous Good Friday political arrangement between Roman Catholic Nationalism and ecumenical Unionism is called, puts the representatives of the still-armed Roman Catholic terrorists into positions of political power over the community they have terrorised. Sinn Fein/IRA's demands for the disbandment of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the early release of prisoners have been met by the same capitulatory response as that which gave in to the demands for the destruction of the Ulster Special Constabulary in the late 1970s. It is not hard to work out where this road of tolerance is taking us — on a backward march into a united Ireland!

A look back

Look back down the road of tolerance we were urged by ecumenists to travel. It is a road of capitulation, concession and surrender. It is not just abandoned principles and broken promises that litter that road but the broken corpses and shattered lives of thousands of Ulster people, the majority of whom are Protestants. There is also the wreckage of the peace and prosperity once enjoyed by this land. Ulster lies under a curse because it has tolerated evil and acceded to the demands of antichristianity. We are a by-word and a reproach across the world and this is epitomised by being reduced to pleading annually for permission to walk down the half mile of the Garvaghy Road that our fathers walked for two centuries!

The answer

What is the answer? It is not in deceitful, self-seeking politicians or in loyalist terrorists. Rather it lies with the One Who made the following promise to His ancient people Israel. "The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured," Isaiah 62:8. When Israel offended God, He withdrew His favour and they were overrun by their enemies. The recovery of God's favour at the return of Christ will bring an end to the humiliations and abuses heaped upon that people by their enemies.



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Learn

We can learn from this truth. Ulster once did know the favour of God. Our land walked in the light of God's blessing. We enjoyed peace and prosperity. Ecumenism, the new theology, changed all. Ulster, at the bidding of ecumenism, substituted a god of man's imagination for the God of the Bible. Contrary to the example of our forefathers, we embraced that upon which God has pronounced a curse. Our idolatry cost us the favour of the Lord and we became a prey to our enemies. That, let all learn, is the price of false tolerance. The recovery of God's favour is the key to our deliverance in our present dilemma. Hear God's Word. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land," 2 Chronicles 7:14.

Folly

Our folly lies in believing Rome's claims and tolerating her evil and unjust demands. We insist that her adherents must be given every liberty to pursue their own religious practices. But such rights and freedoms are not to be confused with granting Rome the opportunity to create a situation whereby she can take away all our liberties. This has been our folly in the past 30 years.

Give freedom to evil and you only forge chains by which it will imprison you.