



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Making sense of Ulster's troubles



"Prime Movers" — Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern

It is only as you shine the lamp of God's truth upon the events currently taking place in Northern Ireland that you can bring any order or meaning to what is happening to our land.

In essence, we are travelling back down the road up which our forefathers, during centuries of struggle, laboured. Such a truth needs to be borne in mind as we seek to digest the latest package that has been spawned by the secret tripartite negotiations between London, Dublin and Irish republicanism. Anyone else who may think that he is a part of these conferrings is wrong. Only the interests of London, Dublin and republicanism get to be promoted. The rest, who are basically the unionist people, are simply required to submit and comply.

Modern technology enables us to record on video tape what is taking place around us and then, within minutes, watch that recording. Furthermore, we may play the recording backwards and watch those same events, not unfold, but rather return down the path whence they came! Smoke returns out of the air and disappears down a chimney; water, most marvellously, rises up in a stream out of a glass and re-enters the jug. Familiar figures strut comically backwards and give that peculiar "reverse" wave to the camera. Children love to watch it and in their innocence laugh heartily at it all.

Unfortunately, history in reverse is not so amusing. Nor is there a remote control that can bring the process to a halt and put the whole sequence in forward motion once more!

The deliverance that our land experienced under the grace of God when our forefathers were lifted out of darkness and ignorance and brought under the saving, sanctifying influences of the gospel, is being undone before our eyes. The spiritual and moral currents have been running in reverse for quite some decades now. Our land is returning whence God in mercy led it forth 400 years ago.

If we consider a theological definition of the progress of grace within a soul, apply it to the nation and then look at it in reverse order, you will have both a commentary and an explanation of what is going on in Northern Ireland.

The Shorter Catechism, in answer to the question: "What is effectual calling?" gives the answer: "Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel." That is the positive, upward, elevating path that the grace of God leads the sinner upon. The reverse of that is what is taking place in Northern Ireland! We are turning away from Christ and returning to the darkness, ignorance and the misery of sin.

That is the basic explanation for the horror that is today's society in Northern Ireland.

[Continued in next issue.](#)