

"STEALING AWAY OUR CHILDREN"

A look at the implications of the latest education reforms of Dr. Brian Mawhinney, Minister of Education in Northern Ireland — by Rev. Ivan Foster

No 6 in the series "Parents Beware" leaflets. Published by The Board of Education of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster

The British Government is intent upon 'settling' the Ulster problem not in the forum of regular politics but in the classrooms of Ulster. This was made clear by the Education Minister, Dr Brian Mawhinney, during a news conference to launch the first move in his implementation of the Government's decisions on education reform. He is quoted as saying: "Obviously we are not going to solve the problems of Northern Ireland on the back of a cross-curricular theme introduced in schools, *but it's one element in a whole range of initiatives the Department of Education is taking to help children understand more about themselves, and others and recognising their differences while realising that those differences don't have to lead to division.*" Belfast Telegraph 23/1/89.

INTERPRETATION

How this announcement was interpreted can be seen in the opening sentence of the 'Belfast Telegraph' report. *"Two committees are to examine how Protestant and Roman Catholic schoolchildren in Northern Ireland can better understand each others traditions, culture and history, the Government announced today."* The 'Newsletter' report carried the opening sentence, *"Education Minister Brian Mawhinney is to try to improve relations between Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils."* Newsletter 24/1/89

CHANGE OF TACTIC

The British Government has changed its approach in seeking to change the political thinking of the Unionist people of Ulster from conventional political dialogue to the process of moulding the minds of the rising generation through the classroom. That is tyrannical and a usurpation of the rights of parents.

What Stalin did with monstrous barbarity and what the Khmer Rouge of Kampuchea attempted with sadistic cruelty, the NIO is undertaking with sophistication and guile. The Ulster Protestant is going to have his spiritual, political and ethnical future drastically altered. The minds of the young provide the fields in which the seeds of political innovations may be sown. Whereas the minds of the adult generation in Ulster are filled with well-rooted political opinions amongst which there is little room for the sowing of the seeds of 'power sharing', 'Dublin involvement' or, even less, for a 'united Ireland', the minds of the young can be sown with the seeds of such views successfully, provided they can be isolated from traditional religious and political influences. The successful harvesting of a crop of new political opinions requires a great degree of care and attention. The Family, Church and School are all part of the ripening processes of life. Should they work contrary to Brian Mawhinney's plan it

will fail.

CHURCH

The ethos of Protestant Church life has changed dramatically over the last 40 years. The Ecumenical Movement, with its strivings after reconciliation between Romanism and the Churches of the Reformation, has gained an absolutely dominant position within the Church of Ireland, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. An examination of the statements, sermons and literature of these three denominations clearly shows that they are intent upon a politico-religious reconciliation with Roman Catholic Nationalism. It is a reconciliation at the expense of the Truth of God. There never can be reconciliation with Rome, spiritually or politically, without first abandoning all Bible-based views of faith and practice. The ecumenical churches have been busily casting away Bible truth until an exposition of the pure gospel is rarely found within the mainstream churches.

FAMILY

In direct consequence, the family has ceased to exert the influence it once did. The Bible and family prayer no longer feature in many homes. Liberal theology has promoted a family lifestyle far removed from the days of Bible reading, Sunday school lessons and family prayer.

SCHOOL

Likewise the school has been altered. There



Education Minister Dr Brian Mawhinney (third left), with the five chairmen of the Cross-Curricular committees at the Stormont Press conference (from left), Dr Samuel McGuffin, Mr Seamus O'Neill, Miss Patricia McNally, Mr Tom McMullan and Mr Jonathan Bardon.

Parent, can you trust your child to an education system which is being radically overhauled by Dr. Brian Mawhinney and his hand picked team???

are few born-again believers in the teaching profession. The training of teachers at Stranmillis College follows an ecumenical curriculum, with joint classes with the Roman Catholic Training colleges. There is an ever increasingly bold attack upon the moral values of Bible Protestantism in the text books used in primary and secondary schools. The reality of what I am saying is evidenced by the concern of those who are not Free Presbyterian. Parents and teachers from many churches have voiced their concern about these things for some time. Recently, the Orange Order in East Belfast responded to the concerns expressed by its members about the activities of an organisation called 'Community Relations in Schools'. A delegation from the Order met with the organisation and questioned them on cross-community contacts between Strand Primary School and Holy Rosary School. The CRIS representatives assured the members of the Orange Order meeting with them that parental permission for such activities was always sought.

Sadly, that is just not so. Such contacts were established between Queen Elizabeth II School in Kilskeery and Magheralough Roman Catholic School near Trillick. I am aware of at least one family that did not know all that their child was involved in. They did not know the child attended Magheralough School. I am sure that there are similar cases in other parts of Ulster.

BREAK PROTESTANTISM'S GRIP

Thus the scene is set for Dr Brian Mawhinney to sow the seeds of change that will alter the future of Ulster. He intends seeing to it that tomorrow's adults do not grow up with the values and aspirations of today's. If Ulster's grip on Protestantism is to be broken then the Government has decided it is best to concentrate upon the weaker fingers of the rising generation.

KEEPING THE ADULTS OCCUPIED

Of course, they will not cease to target today's generation. Government ministers and their ecumenical disciples will continue to howl and lament at the 'wailing wall' of community relations. They will continue to publish the lie that terrorism, unemployment and every other social ill is a direct consequence of Protestants looking on Romanism as anti-Christian. They will keep up the barrage because it will stop Protestants observing too closely what the Government is doing with their children. After all, those whose gaze is directed toward the latest action on the security front or who are watching helicopters ferrying Dubliners back and forth to Stormont Castle or are finely combing the latest London/Dublin communique, are not inclined to observe very closely what is happening in that most mundane of places - the classroom.

MUCH HAPPENING IN THE CLASSROOM

But much is happening in the classroom and happening fast.

For some time the Department of Education has been pursuing a programme called, "Education for Mutual Understanding", within the maintained and controlled schools. The British Government has been persuaded by the clerics of the Roman Catholic Church and their ecumenical counterparts in the Protestant denominations that the 'Ulster Problem' stems, not from the religious or political beliefs of either community, but from a 'misunderstanding' of each other. If the school children can be brought together they will soon see that there is nothing to fear from the religion of the other.

The clear inference of the constantly repeated calls for understanding is that the whole political/religious controversy in Ulster is based upon one big misunderstanding .

BUT WHAT HAS BEEN MISUNDERSTOOD AND WHO HAS BEEN GUILTY OF MISUNDERSTANDING?

The controversy with Roman Catholic Nationalism goes back a long time. Are Protestant children going to be told that the slaughter of their forefathers in 1641 was a 'misunderstanding'? Was there no need for Protestants to shut the gates of Londonderry in 1688? Did our forefathers get the 'Home rule' matter all wrong? Were the founders of Northern Ireland wrong in refusing to align themselves with the 'Free Stater' Michael Collins and the IRA? The Government undoubtedly would answer, Yes. They believe the Protestants have been wrong and are now intent on brain-washing our children so that they do not grow up with the same wrong ideas.

PROOF

Proof that the Government believes the Protestant people have been wrong in their view of Romanism and the political threat it poses to the State can be seen in the legislative measures introduced since the early 1970s when London first took a direct hand in Ulster affairs. The whole machinery of administration, security measures and employment practices within Ulster has been broken to pieces and replaced by something with '*Made in Dublin*' stamped upon it. Because the Government sees the Ulster Protestant as the one doing all the misunderstanding they do not take the measures against the IRA that are taken in England. Also, they allow the SDLP to politically dominate us here even though they are a minority party with less than 20% of electoral support (3 out of 17 MPs at Westminster). It is clear that the Government believes that the violence stemming from the

Republican community has some justification — hence the oft-repeated claim that the terrorist will not be defeated until there are major political concessions by Protestants. The Government gives the IRA enough breathing space in order to maintain a campaign of murder.

Is this to teach the Protestant he has been wrong in his treatment of Romanism?

Most political parties in Northern Ireland have called for more action against the IRA. It is a clear indication that it is widely believed that the Government is not doing all it can to defeat the IRA. The only explanation for this lack of action is the one just suggested.

A SECOND FRONT

But the Government will not rely upon their own propaganda and the terrorism of the IRA alone to change the thinking of the Ulster Protestant. If both measures fail or are too slow the Government's education reformers will provide the perfect 'safety net'. What the propaganda machine and the terror campaign may fail to do Dr Brian Mawhinney's education programme will accomplish.

NO FEAR OF EXAMINATION

Protestants do not fear a thorough study of their history and culture. Such an investigation will justify every fear of Rome felt by the Ulsterman.

In the last century the Presbyterian historian, Rev. Thomas Hamilton, said, "The massacre of 1641 was really an Irish Saint Bartholomew, only more terrible and inhuman, and it is no wonder that, though more than 200 years have passed since the scenes we have described, their memory has left behind in Ulster a dread, amounting almost to terror, of being ever again placed in the power of Rome." *History of Presbyterianism in Ulster*, Page 59.

Another hundred years of Rome's terrorism have not given us cause to revise our forefathers' views. We have every reason to fear Rome and every defensive attitude and measure, adopted by our forefathers and by us their children, will be fully vindicated by history.

PROPAGANDA NOT HISTORY

A study of the history of Rome will not be welcomed by her. History has never been gentle or complimentary to Popery! Dr Brian Mawhinney may say, "The point is that this theme will be introduced in both sectors, so all children will be exposed to it." He said there were indications that there is a great degree of ignorance in the community, which included schoolchildren, about their own history and traditions, and the

culture of the opposite community. Part of the work would be to de-mythologise some beliefs among children."

'Belfast Telegraph' 23/1/89.

This is so much cant and hypocrisy. He will not be allowed to touch Rome's treatment of history. That is why she has separate schools in the first place!

'HANDS OFF'

The very day Dr. Mawhinney was announcing his plans, his boss, Tom King, was having a meeting with the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, Cardinal Thomas O'Fee. He was assuring the Cardinal that nothing would be done without the approval of Rome. Tom King said in a statement afterwards, "*Dr. Mawhinney and I welcome the opportunity to explain Government thinking on the matter and to clarify any points which may be causing concern.*"

'Newsletter' 24/1/89.

MISTRESS OF CONCEALMENT

Rome's treatment of history is a matter of public record. Her ability to submerge and conceal the truth about her iniquities during the atrocious Spanish Inquisition, the Marian persecutions in England, the St. Bartholomew's Massacre in France, the 1641 Rebellion in Ireland and her involvements in other atrocities that occupy the front rank of the history of man's inhumanity to man, surpasses all other exponents of the black art of the suppression of truth.

RECENT HISTORY

Her iniquities have stained the present century. What of the Pope's blessing on the 1916 rebellion in Dublin? What about her involvement with and support for the fascists Franco, Hitler and Mussolini?

A NAME FOR LIES

One of her most prominent religious orders, active mostly in ecumenism and education, has given to the English language the word "Jesuitry", meaning the "*deceitful and prevaricating use of words*". It is just such wizardry with words that the Ulster Protestant child will face in these studies that are supposedly designed to remove Protestant misunderstandings.

The Roman Catholic youth have not been taught history. Rather they have been inculcated with anti-Protestant, Republican propaganda. Rome has been able to maintain this two-faced image of the affronted and injured party (the Cathal Daly face) and the bitter opponent of Protestant Britain (the Gerry Adams face). One face is up-front for world-wide observation. The other is kept for back street ceilidhs and the Gaelic Athletic Association gatherings and of course the meetings of the 'bold fenian men', the Provisional IRA.

INVOLVEMENT WITH TERROR

Rome has successfully 'married' these two images in Ireland. She can maintain inti-

mate links with the terrorist underworld through her network of priests, monks, nuns, and religious establishments and yet maintain an air of "unsullied purity". A long list of priests, of whom Patrick Ryan is only the most recent, have had links with the IRA. Priests have been involved in arranging truces during internecine shooting feuds within the Republican murder gangs. Roman Catholic premises, churches and schools, have been used by terrorists to launch attacks, escape detection and store terrorist weaponry.

Unconcealed support for terrorism has been demonstrated by priests at certain IRA funerals. Again let it be borne in mind that the Roman Catholic Church refuses to excommunicate the murderers that they would



A Russian flame-thrower, part of an IRA arms haul found in the Roman Catholic run Our Lady's Old Folks Home in West Belfast.

have us believe they utterly repudiate. On the very weekend of the murder at Sion Mills of Constable Stephen Montgomery, when a mob of Roman Catholics attacked those seeking to render aid at the scene of the attack, an interview with Cardinal Thomas O'Fee was printed in a Dublin newspaper. In answer to the question: "*Would the excommunicating of the IRA not have at least a symbolic effect?*" he replied, "*I'm doubtful even if it would have a symbolic effect or value. You must balance the pros and cons. I'm always mindful of the influence or effect it would have on relatives, friends and families. That must be taken into consideration.*" The Cardinal clearly was more concerned with the possible offence given the families of IRA members, were he to excommunicate them than he was with murderers being given the blessing of his church! Yet despite all this, Rome is credited by the press and media as being opposed to violence and anxious for peace. The Ulster Protestant has learned to his cost the utter sham of such a 'pacific image'.

DEPRIVED OF VITAL LESSONS

Protestant school children are not going to

be given the opportunity of hearing the lessons learned by their forefathers. Instead they are going to be subjected to subtle propaganda day and daily within the classroom.

How our children will fare under such propaganda may be seen in how the present Protestant church leaders have fared under the propaganda campaign of the Ecumenical Movement.

VICTIMS

They who are now its proponents were first of all its victims. Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist ministers were persuaded to abandon their respective historical view of Romanism and adopt Rome's definition of herself. Protestant creeds denounce Rome as unchristian and anti-christian, but having abandoned their creeds the Church leaders now hold Rome to be a "sweet gentle sister in Christ" Some sweetness! Some sister! They also accept the other definitions that Rome proffers, such as her thesis on the cause and cure of the Ulster troubles.

HOOK, LINE AND SINKER

An article on education in the ecumenical magazine, 'The Irish Christian Digest', contains a letter written to Dr. Gordon Gray. The letter is headed, **Significant but disturbing!** The letter reads;

"Dear Rev. Gray,

I am writing to you on behalf of myself and two friends (names). I would be really happy if places could be kept for us in the weekend being held at Corrymeela in February. If it is not possible for three places to be kept I would be willing to go alone.

...Unfortunately since the CEM Weekend I have to call on and think over again what we discussed that weekend. Since then the army are in front of our home twenty-four hours a day and unprovoked attacks on members of the Catholic community by the army are increasing in occurrence. Some of these I have witnessed myself and one was outside our front door.

Despite this I still do not feel prejudiced and constantly tell my friends of Corrymeela and what we discussed. Many of them are very keen to try it out. I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Gordon Gray is Secretary of the Christian Education Movement in Northern Ireland. To see such republican propaganda printed in an article dealing with the aims of the Christian Education Movement is significant indeed. The article contains a definition of CEM. "The Northern Ireland Council of CEM can accordingly define its specific role within the wider purposes of CEM as a whole, as aiming to promote: — An ecumenical education,

concerned to explore how Christians, of varying traditions, understand both their common faith and calling and their distinctive and separate witness. It is concerned therefore to enable young people



Dr. Gordon Gray, a leading ecumenical educator

to appreciate how the differing perceptions of Protestant and Roman Catholic communities can increase conflict but yet hold great potential for enriching our understanding of the content and calling of Christian faith."

The purpose of this organisation is to sell Roman Catholicism to Protestant children as a branch of the Christian Church. Such a view of Romanism is not Biblical. Such teaching is a betrayal of both Protestant and Roman Catholic youngsters in that it encourages the one to accept as Christian that which is decidedly not and strengthens the faith of the other in a system of idolatry. What unforgivable deception. The outcome will be eternally tragic!

Dr. Gordon Gray will not be offended if I call him an out and out ecumenist who accepts Roman Catholicism as a Christian Church despite his signature on a document calling her anti-christian. He is also the sort of person who has been offering guidance to Dr. Mawhinney. Little wonder the Government has taken the road it has.

The question is, WHAT ARE PARENTS TO DO??

Quite frankly I believe there is little the parent can do to stop this plan within the State school going into operation. They are as helpless as the politicians were to stop the signing and implementation of the Anglo/Irish Agreement. They can and must fight a rear guard action to slow down the implementing of this ecumenical venture. They must, however, use whatever time they have to begin to make alternative arrangements for the education of their children according to Scriptural standards.

The only hope is Independent Christian Schools.

Over the last ten years God has shown that with dedication and sacrifice it is possible to educate our children outside the state school system, something many Christians did not think possible. Thankfully the number of 'unbelievers' has greatly diminished.

Free Presbyterians have given a lead in Christian Education and they have also been at the forefront of the battle to preserve the heritage of Protestant children of all denominations. The Bible makes clear just what is the bedrock of a true education.

"Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength and his wonderful works that he hath done.

For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known unto their children:

That the generation to come might know them, even the children that should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children:

That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and a rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

Psalm 78:1—8.

The Truth of God is the Foundation of all Education.

Nothing should be taught to children that is contrary to the Scriptures. That is a principle that holds good in scholastics as well as theology. The psalmist says that part of a child's education must be the lessons of God's word and His providential dealings with our forefathers. Our forefathers discovered that what the Bible said was true. Their testimony is important and today's generation must hear it. What Brian Mawhinney and the ecumenical churches are intent on doing is depriving today's youth of the testimony of past generations. Why? Because yesterday's generation would witness against the aims of ecumenism! Ecumenism can only succeed when the Bible and history have been silenced. The Bible teaches that popery is erroneous. Consequently the Bible has been dispensed with in the churches. The voice of history must now be silenced. That is to be done by 'correcting' the misunderstandings that Protestants have of the actions of Rome in the past. The way is being cleared for the unopposed

advance of Roman Catholicism. Remove the restraint of the Bible and the record of Rome's acts in Ulster and Roman Catholicism will flourish. Ecumenism has undertaken that task in the Protestant Churches and now it is seeking to do the same in the schools.

The Purpose of True Education is to Teach a Child to Set its Hope in God.

To what hope will the educators in the 'reformed' school system point children? Children are constantly being told that *they are the hope* of the future. That is humanistic nonsense. It is a subtle attack on the interpretation of God's word by former generations. *They got it all wrong but you youngsters, under our guidance, will get it right!* That is what ecumenists are saying to today's youth. They have been saying it in ecumenical churches and places like Corrymeela and now they are going to say it in the schools with the help of Brian Mawhinney and the Department of Education. Such a campaign will result in thousands of young people, of all denominations including the Free Presbyterian church, forsaking the faith of the Scriptures, carried away by the *'the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.'*

Ephesians 4:14

God Expects Fathers to Secure a Proper Education for Their Children

God has commanded fathers to teach their children the truth of God. No man can feel himself to be doing that while he places his children under the care of an ecumenist who is determined to set the child on a different path from the one trodden by its parents. The exhortation of God's word is *'Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.'* Ephesians 6:4. That is but an echo of the verse 5 of the psalm already quoted. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of true wisdom. Where there is no fear of God, irrespective of what certificates may be obtained or accolades earned, there is no true wisdom. True wisdom leads us to Christ. Parent, what Brian Mawhinney plans for your child will not bring it to Christ. It will leave it rather in the care of those determined to rid its mind of all you as a Bible-believer hold dear.

Failure to obey these fundamental principles of Scripture can only bring dreadful consequences upon our children.