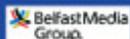


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20 August 2007

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Lá Nua

Conrad Atkinson
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Headlines

Order remain silent on Ardoyne UVF banner

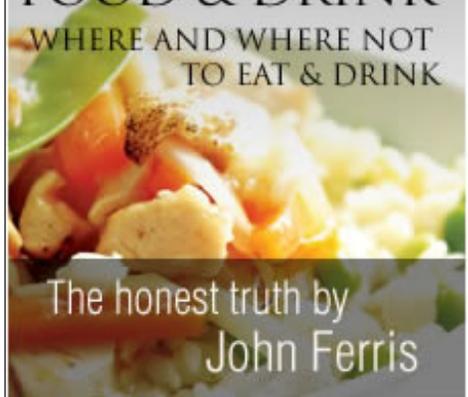
From the Balcony



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by Alana Fearon

More than four weeks later, the Orange Order is still refusing to discuss why a banner honouring UVF men Sam Rocket and William Hanna was allowed to be carried along the Crumlin Road during an Orange Order march.

The Pride of Ardoyne Flute Band carried the bannerette during the July 12 parade down the Crumlin Road despite an Orange Order policy that "paramilitary trappings should not be seen at any parade".

But Mervyn Gibson, a leading member of the Belfast County Orange Order, has said that the Order is "not yet ready" to tell the North Belfast News why the band got away with carrying the bannerette down the Crumlin Road.

He said: "We will reply when we have looked into all aspects of the issue.

"We have a few weeks break after the twelfth then we will have further meetings.

"It could be a month or two, or maybe a bit longer, then we will reply."

Residents were outraged by loyalist bands brandishing paramilitary flags and banners during parades through nationalist areas this marching season. Many families of loyalist paramilitary victims called for public apologies from the Orange Order.

Rocket, was shot dead at his north Belfast home almost seven years ago by the UFF.

UVF man William Hanna was shot dead by the SAS in June 1978 when they opened fire on three IRA men.

A spokesman for the Orange Order said that the Order was "working towards" removing paramilitary trappings from loyalist parades.

He said: "Our policy is that paramilitary trappings should not be seen at any parade and we are working towards removing them. We would like to see the time when there are no paramilitary trappings at any parade."

17/08/2007