

FROM DRUMCREEE TO DERRY

Drumcree was a victory for the orange mob. It demonstrated their "right" to freely indulge in sectarian intimidation. It showed that the North remains a sectarian hell-hole and the RUC a bigoted Orange force. It showed that when it comes to the crunch Britain will not confront the Orange mob that remains the base of its occupation in Ireland. It showed that despite all the treaties and diplomacy Dublin and Irish capitalism are junior partners of British imperialism and can be openly treated with contempt.

What had changed by Derry? Nothing at all.

Despite all the negotiations The Apprentice boys conceded nothing at all.

The British "ban" included allowing the loyalist unto the walls above the Bogside to flaunt their sectarian emblems.

Dublin, the SDLP, and the Catholic church were carrying out the one job they are really good at - defusing and demobilising resistance in the face of Orange and British provocation.

There was one significant change. the Sinn Fein leadership, faced with a choice between diplomacy and mass action, chose diplomacy. As a result they have given a whole series of hostages to fortune. The principle of "consent" will prove a much more powerful tool in suppressing dissent than in curbing Orangeism. Recognising the right of the sectarians to march and elevating sectarianism to one of two "traditions" is a profound mistake.

Let's be clear. Our opposition to Orange sectarianism should be total. We should not recognise a "right" to march in order to propagate sectarian hatred. We should avoid like the plague any formulations which imply that our future is as one of two apartheid tribes recognised as equal traditions. Instead we should fight for a new identity in our common membership of the Irish working class.

The best way to fight for these issues is in an open and democratic united front fighting Orange sectarianism.

As a first step we should demand:

RUC out of Nationalist areas!
Disband the Orange RUC!
SDLP out of Stormont talks!
Dublin: Scrap the framework deal!

Socialist Democracy, PO Box 40, Belfast.