



Paul Boateng and the IRA

A Chairde,

Regarding the Wembley incident and the wave of media hype and hysteria against Irish people in England; MP Paul Boateng made a statement during a television interview which we regard as one that does not represent the oppressed people of African Caribbean descent. We have witnessed the barbaric maiming of Cheri Groce and remember Mr Boateng's cop-out after the verdict which left the Black community in a state of shock.

Cynthia Jarett and many other innocent Black people are brutalised by the British state daily, occasionally we are killed in police custody. We also recognise their hypocritical support for the heinous apartheid regime in South Africa.

We do not rejoice in any act that takes human life, but we recognise the arm of the state and its role in world state terrorism. Historically we know of colonialism and slavery by the same settler regime.

It is our opinion that Mr Boateng's utterances were ill-considered and racist. We wish and hope that in the future Mr Boateng will be as vehement in his reproach when quick response units invade our estates and brutalise our children and mothers. We would also like to ask Mr Boateng to call for an inquiry into the drug culture blossoming in the Caribbean Islands where the queen is head of state, and allegations that heavy weaponry is smuggled via such islands to the cartels in Colombia, en route from Israel.

Tiocfaidh ár lá.

Adowa Amlak,
Sahara Kumasi.

Anarchism

A Chairde,

In his review of Antoin O Muircheartaigh's *Squaring with Reality* in the May 17th *AP/IRN*, Tom O'Dwyer rightly rejects the association of the IRA with "terrorist anarchists". However, he accepts the communist slander of anarchist violence as "terrorist".

Not all resistance move-

ments in fascist-occupied Europe were "communist-led", indeed, the communists only took up arms against Nazi occupiers after the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, having previously compiled with the Nazi-Soviet Pact in 1939. The communist parties had long been instruments of Soviet foreign policy, not of working-class revolution, and their opposition to fascism was dictated by the Kremlin's needs, not by principle.

Anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists began armed resistance to fascism in Italy when the fascists first began to attack the working class after 1918. This resistance was mostly of a collective type, rather than individual, and continued on a lesser scale after Mussolini was installed in power. In 1926 anarchist Gino Lucreti unsuccessfully tried to kill Mussolini, an act as much to do with "terrorism" as the Brighton bomb.

In 1936 many Italian anarchists went to the aid of their comrades in the National Confederation of Labour (CNT-AIT) to fight for the social revolution against fascism in Spain. In 1937 many were assassinated in the communist-led counter revolution, including Camillo Berneri, along with thousands of other workers who believed the Civil War to be inseparable from the revolution. The actions of the communists and their petit bourgeois allies were a significant contribution to the defeat of the revolution and Franco's victory in 1939.

Thousands of anarchists ended up as refugees in France, including the former Durruti Column which crossed the border with its fighting spirit intact. War between France and Germany was taken by those workers as an opportunity to continue the fight against fascism, and whole units of the French Foreign Legion in North Africa and Western Europe in 1944-'45 were composed of Spanish anarchists.

Others started the first armed resistance groups and sabotage of war industries after France fell to the Nazis in 1940, and the Italians returned home to fight in the resistance in the north of their country after the allied invasion of 1943. When

the World War was over, and the 'Free World' had made its peace with surviving fascist regimes like Franco's, anarcho-syndicalists returned to Spain as a field of resistance, including guerilla warfare.

The era of fascism is the period of the most widespread use of violence by anarchists. The reason for this is that the victories of fascism, aided by the political somersaults of the communists, repressed the mass working-class organisations — anarcho-syndicalist labour unions — upon which anarchism has historically been based. That violence hardly fits the Marxist slander of "individual terrorism", nor are our organisations "petit bourgeois".

There are, of course, vast political differences between the Republican Movement and anarchists, but this does not prevent the anarcho-syndicalist federation in Britain — DAM — from supporting the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland out of principle. What Irish republicans and anarchists the world over have in common is we are freely slandered by those who refuse to recognise that terrorism is carried out by states against the poor, not by the poor against states.

Neill Roberts.

A Chairde,

It is one thing to reprint the Communist Party's prejudices against the principles and activities of anarchists. It is quite another to further such misinformation.

Firstly, your reviewer, Tom O'Dwyer, uses the smear tactic so widely employed against the Republican Movement, of describing violent resistance as terrorist, in order to smear anarchists. Secondly, his lack of awareness concerning the involvement of anarchists in the anti-fascist resistance in Europe from the '30s to the '50s, leads him to make the false claim that they were not active participants in the resistance to the regimes of Hitler, Mussolini and Franco. Revisionism of the European anti-fascist struggle is no less reprehensible than revisionism of Irish history. We are used to the CP as 'creative' historians. Must we now add *AP/Phoblacht/Republican News*? Cahal McLaughlin, London.

Tom O'Dwyer replies:

My review did not comment one way or the other on anarchism. I merely pointed out that it showed a basic misunderstanding to describe Irish republicans as "terrorists, rooted in the anarchistic tradition". Anarchists of course, along with many other political strands, took part in the anti-fascist resistance movements of the

Second World War. But that did not make those movements anarchistic as such; the issue was the self-determination of subject peoples and the political tendencies united on that basis.



Cardinal Tomás O Fiaich

A Chairde,

I would like to say a few words about the late Cardinal Tomás O Fiaich. Having written to him many times over the years I had the honour to meet him in person when he visited Irish prisoners in England in the company of Fr Raymond Murray several months ago.

I found the cardinal a very caring man, humorous, sincere and a man of profound humility.

I must say he did not have any problems explaining himself. No problems at all in fact, so you can appreciate my surprise that though Father Tomás was not yet buried, commentators, high churchmen, and politicians were queuing up to tell the world how much he was misunderstood and how, above all else, he was against violence in furtherance of a united Ireland.

One could hardly expect a cardinal of such piety to be provocative. So what were these commentators, high churchmen, and politicians trying to achieve? Perhaps trying to dilute his desire for a united Ireland? One wonders at their silence whilst he was alive.

Yes the cardinal was against violence, all violence, but let us look at what the cardinal was for: he was for justice, he was for reconciliation, he was for peace, he was for an end to British political and military interference in Ireland, yes he was for a united Ireland so what's to misunderstand? Is there some-