

Support for anarchy

A Chairde,

Last week's *AP/RN* saw the editor criticise Senator David Norris for misrepresenting republicanism. Norris was challenged to provide evidence in support for his remarks. And quite right too.

But on the facing page we read that people in Downpatrick suspect that the RUC have taken a policy decision to allow the crime situation on the estate to drift into "mob rule and anarchy". Turning the word "anarchy" on its head to denote chaos and disorder is more usually found in the Tony O'Reilly and Rupert Murdoch press.

Anarchists are socialists who are also anti-authoritarian. We want to get rid of the division into bosses and workers, order-givers and order-takers. We campaign to replace it with a socialism based on workers' control of industry, freedom of the individual, and grass roots democracy.

Or to put it another way, anarchism has no more to do with chaos and mob rule than republicanism has anything to do with flying the Union Jack or having a good knees up to celebrate Elizabeth Windsor's birthday.

**Alan MacSimóin,
National Secretary,
Workers' Solidarity
Movement,
PO Box 1528,
Dublin 8.**

Mála Poist

hypocritical point of view of KJ Coleman ('Mála Poist' 24 October).

In August 1994 the IRA announced a cessation of the armed struggle, this was welcomed by all sides. Now what I find very hard to understand is from August 1994 until February 1996 the British government continued to call for decommissioning and to bombard Sinn Féin with pressure and propaganda.

Sinn Féin's vote increased last May to a record level — this sign of political support should have encouraged the government to enter into political dialogue.

KJ Coleman referred to English people needing to be educated into understanding our position and point of view. The English community must be very naive. For 27 years nationalists have been suppressed and mistreated. The Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four must

spring to the minds of every English citizen. And the cold-blooded murder of Diarmuid O'Neill gunned down in London.

The IRA are prepared to fight another war if they need to. Nobody wants that, but as usual the British are playing mind games. We have suffered enough under their regime. So I think the English have very little to understand: their military force is occupying our soil and what could be more simple. Go home, we've all had enough.

EJ Lynn,
County Derry.

Anti-anarchist

A Chairde,

I was amused by Alan MacSimóin's thinly-disguised advertisement for anarchism contained in a recent *An Phoblacht* letters page (31 October). Characteristically vague and simplistic, it informed us that anarchists are "socialists who are also anti-authoritarian". A user-friendly position to take.

More significantly, no mention is made of the primary issue that concerns all Irish revolutionists; that of the national question. Rather, it seems the pedantic anarchists would prefer to argue over terminology.

It is, of course, quite obvious that anarchy has no more to do with anarchism than socialites

with socialism. This, however, does not make it a progressive or revolutionary ideology. It was James Connolly himself who, in 1893 pointed out that anarchists are "men whose sole philosophy of life is but an exaggerated form of the individualism we are in revolt against".

While it must be admitted that anarchists of imperialist countries can sometimes play a progressive role in opposing their own governments, their counter-parts in oppressed nations are, due to their anti-patriotic nature, reactionary in character. Ireland's anarchists fall into this counter-revolutionary mould, conveniently ignoring the necessity of the anti-imperialist struggle. An issue too controversial for Ireland's opportunistic liberal left.

Genuine revolutionary socialists on the other hand fully realise that it is impossible to achieve socialism without first having a country in which to build it.

In many ways the anarchist is something akin to the cowboy; surrounded by romantic imagery, true, but at the end of the day, like their counterparts, what one becomes when one is unable to do anything else.

Red Action member
Dublin.