

Inkululeko Anarchist Collective (IAC)*

**a ZACF project*
www.zabalaza.net

SKILLS DAY # 2 KIT

Wits University, Johannesburg, August 2012

On organising

- 1. Basic group work**
- 2. Role of the anarchist organisation (general)**
- 3. Publications & Campaigns**

Basic group work

Source: <http://struggle.ws/ap/organise.html>

- [Contributing to an anarchist group](#)
- [Setting up an anarchist group](#) (the basics -people, politics, money, commitment.)

Internal organisation (basics)

- [Organisation policy](#)
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- [Finance](#)
- Education
- Communication

External activity

- [Publications](#)
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Setting up an anarchist group

There are four simple requirements for an effective organisation

- people
- politics
- money
- commitment.

People

People is pretty self-explanatory. To have a group you need more than one person and really at least five before it becomes sustainable. In most places anarchists are not very hard to come across, in most countries at least 1 in a 1,000 to 1 in 10,000 people might consider themselves an anarchist. So even in fairly small towns there are likely to be at least a dozen or so 'anarchists'.

Unfortunately the next step most groups take is to try and set up a group which includes just about everyone that adopts the label. This may seem like the logical thing but problems arise when we look at the next two requirements.

Politics

For a group to be effective it has to have a clear idea of what it is fighting for, not simply what it is fighting against. And it must agree what the best tactics are to use and that everyone in the group will use follow the agreed tactics. This will be discussed at length later

Money

In order to function an organisation needs a paper, leaflets, rooms to meet in, money for mailouts and a dozen other items that require lots of the green stuff. Ways of tackling this requirement include

- **Ignoring it.**
Which means things only take place if someone is willing to fund them out of their own pocket. This is pretty common but of course results in things not getting done. It also gives the funder undue influence.
- **Use 'criminal' means to raise money.**
This sometimes happens but is generally not a good move as sooner or later people get caught and end up in prison or worse. What's more if you come under any sort of police investigation it will rapidly become apparent that your getting funds from some dodgy source which will in itself attract further investigation. It also gives the state a good excuse for a 'non-political' clamp down.
- **Organise fund raisers**
Although I think this can work well for special purchases, like say a printing press if its used for regular bills (printing, rent etc.) it soon turns into a massive drag and waste of resources. You can spend half of the time was discussing jumble sales and disco's which is off-putting.
- **Membership levy/subs.**
This is what the WSM uses, members contribute 5% of their gross income on a weekly or monthly basis. A percentage system is fairer then a flat rate as an unemployed member (on 100 dollars a week, the state welfare) pays 5 dollars where as someone working and earning 500 dollars a week pays at least 25 dollars. This gives us an income to pay for our paper, magazine, leaflets, rooms and even to subsidise travel to demos for unemployed members. Of course it also has a negative effect on the first requirement, people, as some people may be unwilling to loose the equivalent of a couple of beers a week. Which brings me to the fourth requirement, commitment.

Commitment

The amount of work you do and the amount of money your willing to put in depends on you feeling good about the organisation. It is adversely affected if you feel you are being used, or that other people are not willing to contribute their share. That much is obvious. However its also true that your commitment will be dependant on how much you agree with what the group is doing/saying and whether the groups seems to be going somewhere or just treading water. It's easy to keep people around when lots of stuff is happening, the difficult thing is the periods in between bursts of activity.

I favour a high commitment oriented group over a 'as many people as possible' one. With time I think the high commitment one can come to involve a lot of people where as I don't think the reverse can be true. Enough background, here's some concrete ideas.

Find another four or five people that are willing to do something serious. You may know this many already if not get an address you can put on leaflets and start leafleting demo's etc. with anarchist stuff. Get a flag or a banner together. Maybe call a public meeting on anarchism and see who turns up.

Once you get your four or five people be prepared to spend a couple of years getting your act together before you start to expand. Agree on a membership levy and conditions of membership. Write down agreed perspectives and strategy for promoting anarchism and getting involved in activity. Start publishing a regular paper arguing these ideas. Sell it through bookshops, campaign meetings and demos. Get involved around struggles and develop respect for your group as good activists and people with good ideas. Don't concentrate on talking to anarchists, concentrate on talking to activists. Find out about the national groups and travel to nearby demos/conferences. Make a banner you can bring on marches. I know all of this is possible with as few as five people because I spent the period from 1989-91 doing just that here.

Above all you need to be patient. A big problem is the 'revolution next year' syndrome where you hype yourself up to expecting a lot and then get disappointed when it does not materialise. Work out where you are going but be prepared to go there slowly, as I said above its likely to be two years before you get any serious return on your work.

Contributing to an anarchist group

Now your a member of an anarchist group it's time to start thinking about what sort of contribution you can make to the group. Don't allow yourself to sit back and blindly follow what others suggest, respect the experience of other activists but recognise that you have a contribution to make in all aspects of the group and also a unique perspective on its functioning.

Is there a theoretical area the group is weak on? If this is the case then perhaps you could research this and explain it to the others through internal educational talks or articles. It's generally impossible for everyone to know everything so its a good idea for people to specialise a little providing they also explain what they discover to everyone.

Is there a practical skill (e.g. Desk Top Publishing) the group is lacking that you could learn or already know? Can you teach this to others?

Is there a struggle you can get involved in that no-one else is currently involved in? Perhaps help is needed in particular struggles the group is already involved in. Perhaps you should get involved in a particular area of struggle to confront your own prejudices or just to find out how things function.

You should start slowly, volunteer for simple stuff first and as you understand how things work (and how much you can sustain) take more things on.

These are practical contributions you can make to building the group and really you should be looking for ways to do one of each. A lot of them are things you can do right from the start.

The policy of an anarchist organisation

There have been and are large disagreements within the anarchist movement over how anarchist organisations should formulate policy and whether or not agreed policy should be binding on the members of the organisation. I come from a tradition within anarchism sometimes called 'platformism'. Central to this tradition is the idea that to be effective the anarchist organisation must debate and agree organisational positions and that the members of the organisation should then put this into practise.

It is obvious that if you are going to be involved in struggles as an anarchist organisation (rather than a loose collection of individuals), and you want to have an influence on them that you will then need to all together. To do this you need to agree what it is you are fighting for within the struggle and what tactics you think that struggle or movement should be using.

We find the best way of doing this is to start by a process of education and discussion around the issue and then move onto creating written policy that can be debated, amended and if necessary voted on point by point. If you have a look at our 'Position papers' you will get an idea of the sort of policy this method generates.

The big advantage of this method is that once things are written down in this way it becomes very clear what exactly has been decided. But it should be understood that these positions should never be seen as 'the end' of a particular debate. They don't represent perfection but rather the best collective understanding and tactics the organisation could generate at that particular time. They should always be open to further debate and amendment as circumstances and knowledge changes. Although it is a good idea to limit major modifications to national conferences so when there is a lot of disagreement you don't end up doing nothing but amending position papers!

As well as deciding tactics for particular struggles this way it is also a very good idea to have agreed position papers on the organisations approach to key political/social issues like racism and sexism. Agreeing these general positions will make it far, far easier to rapidly reach agreement about how the organisation should involve itself around specific struggles that arise from these issues.

Finally and perhaps most importantly it's a good idea to have a constitution that lies down how these positions are drawn up. A general set of perspectives that seeks to describe what the organisation thinks it can do over the next period and how in general it expects a revolutionary transformation of society to occur is also a good idea.

You'll also want to work out how much agreement you will expect new members to have with the position papers before they join. After some experimentation we have drawn up a brief document that outlines some core points that we think new members must agree with and then we say that they must be willing to implement the strategy in the position papers. This allows for healthy disagreement and debate to exist within the organisation.

Internal meetings in an anarchist group

One thing central to any functional anarchist group is regular internal meetings. In a healthy organisation almost all decisions will be made at these meetings and there will be a sufficient level of discussion to ensure all those attending have a good idea of the activity and arguments in the different struggles the organisation is involved in. Internal meetings should also have some time given over to education.

Frequency and location

A new group or one engaged in a lot of activity should meet at least once a week, at the same time and day. As soon as possible you should try and find a regular venue for meeting that is not someone's home. You'll want a space that's private enough for you to have strong disagreements in and where only the members of the group will be while you are using it. In Ireland this means most groups use private rooms in quiet pubs that are glad for the additional customers on quiet nights!

Decision making

Arguments about how best to reach decisions are fundamental to anarchism. What I have found works best is to allow plenty of time for discussion in the hope of being able to reach a consensus. Only when it becomes obvious that this is not possible should you move to a vote. If time permits it may make sense to postpone making a contentious decision to the next meeting to give people a chance to think things over (and calm down!).

Conduct of discussion

Even with a small group its normally a very good idea to have someone to chair the meeting. Being able to chair a meeting well is quite difficult , in particular you need to be very careful not to abuse your position in a strong argument. But its also important that the same person does not chair every meeting. Perhaps the best way is to have a list of everyone willing to chair and each week take the next person on the list.

Basically a chair should

- try and arrange the room so that everyone sits in a circle and make sure you are seated where you can see everyone
- if there are new people there start off by going around the circle and getting everyone to say their name
- at the start of the meeting ask people for items for an agenda and then stick to that agenda. If people start speaking on topics rather than the one under discussion interrupt them politely and tell them you are adding that item to the agenda
- ensure everyone has an equal opportunity to speak
 - generally it's a good idea to ask people to put up their hand when they want to speak and then to take a list of people waiting. In most situations it's a very good idea to put people who have not yet spoken to the top of this queue.
 - if the discussion is just taking place between a few people and in particular if it is just between two it is often a good idea to suggest going around the circle and giving everyone a chance to speak
 - pay attention - people who are less confident about speaking will often indicate that they want to speak in a minor way (eg briefly half put up their hand). A good chair will spot this and encourage them to speak
 - control yourself - while the chair can speak in debates you should try and speak the least and **always** put yourself at the end of the queue. There is nothing worse than a chair who feels they are entitled to comment after every single speaker. Be very strict with yourself
 - don't allow people speaking to insult other people in the room. If they do interrupt and make it clear that this is not acceptable
- if the discussion is going around in circles with the same people making the same points again and again you should point this out and ask if people want to continue the discussion or
 - 1) Move to a vote
 - 2) Postpone the discussion to later in the meeting or the next meeting
 if there is any disagreement on what to do you should call an immediate hand vote on whether or not to continue the discussion and then on what to do with the discussion.
- if it appears a decision has been reached (ie everyone is agreeing) then write down what you think the decision is then read this back to the meeting.
- if it appears a vote is necessary then make sure the exact question to be voted on is written down and then read this question back to the meeting before taking the vote. This is very important in case there is later disagreement over what exactly was decided.

Agenda

If it is known who is chairing the meeting in advance it may be a good idea for that person to start the meeting with a suggested agenda. In any case the agenda should almost always include

- minutes of last meeting
- correspondence to be dealt with
- decisions that have to be made
- other issues people want discussed

- AOB at the end for minor things people want to mention or things they have 'just remembered'

If there is any disagreement over the order of the agenda then this should be quickly discussed and voted on at the start of the meeting. If the chair thinks there is a lot to get through it may make sense to set a maximum amount of time that can be spent discussing particular topics right at the start of the meeting.

Minutes

Someone should be responsible every week for keeping minutes of the meeting and preparing these to be read at or distributed before the next meeting. Minutes need not be very detailed (you don't need to write down what everyone says). They should include

- a list of who attended the meeting
- a list of topics discussed
- a list of decisions reached for each topic, this should be a copy of what the chair reads out
- a list of who has volunteered to do what
- a list of items to be discussed at the next meeting

Further comments

It is important that meetings start on time and end before or at the time they are advertised to end at. Certainly they should end once they have reached the advertised time and somebody needs to leave.

Financing an anarchist group

Unfortunately under capitalism finance is one of the most essential things to get right. In [setting up an anarchist group](#) I discuss some basic finance strategies and argue that the best method to use a system based on a Membership levy/subs

This is where all members are required to contribute a percentage of their (gross) income on a weekly or monthly basis. A percentage system is fairer than a flat rate as an unemployed member (on 100 dollars a week, the state welfare) pays 5 dollars where as someone working and earning 500 dollars a week pays at least 25 dollars.

In '1st world' countries this should provide enough money to run an organisation without the need for additional fund raising for routine use. However in serious organisations outside the '1st world' it is not unusual for members of a small group to have to donate much larger percentages of their income in order to keep their group functioning! For this reason if you are in the first world you might like to set aside a percentage of the groups income as an international solidarity fund.

Each local section of the group will need a treasurer to keep track of the payment of subs and to keep track and account for any expenditure by the local section. These

accounts should be available for any member to inspect although in terms of income you might want to decide that while individual subs should be listed no name should be attached to each item. This is essential as suspicion over the misuse of funds can easily destroy a group.

On a regional/national basis National conference should decide that a certain percentage of each branch's income (perhaps 50%) should go to a national account and supervised by a national treasurer. This national account can be used to pay for national expenditure (printing of papers, books etc), perhaps helping small branches with low income/unemployed members to carry out regular activity, and helping individual branches faced with local opportunities to make the most of them. Again these accounts should be open to inspection by all members and a summary listing major items should be regularly circulated to all members.

2. Role of the anarchist organisation (general)



<http://zabalaza.net/2010/11/28/the-role-of-the-revolutionary-organisation-in-the-class-struggle-zacf/>

The Role of the Revolutionary Organisation in the Class Struggle [ZACF]

“The revolutionary collectivists [i.e. Anarchists] try to diffuse science and knowledge among the people, so that the various groups of human society, when convinced by propaganda, may organise and spontaneously combine into federations, in accordance with their natural tendencies and their real interests, but never according to a plan traced in advance and imposed upon the ignorant masses by a few ‘superior’ minds.”

- **INTRODUCTION**

This pamphlet broadly outlines our view of the role of the revolutionary organisation.
[1]

- **CLASS STRUGGLE AND REVOLUTION**

Anarchists believe that it is important to build a mass Anarchist organisation amongst the workers and poor (the Working Class). The role of this organisation is to popularise and fight for the creation of a society based on the principles of Anarchism: that is, a society based on a federation of worker and community councils, production for use and distribution according to need. This society can be described as

Stateless Socialism or Libertarian Communism. The Bikisha Media Collective, Zabalaza Books and Anarchist Union network aims to build such an Anarchist organisation.

Such a society can only be built by a conscious movement of the Working Class, using our industrial power

In order for this to take place our class must have two things:

First, a revolutionary consciousness. This includes: a rejection of the State, capitalism and all forms of oppression; the desire to reorganise society in a new and better way in the interest of the workers and the poor; the recognition of the fact that only the workers and the poor can make and secure the revolutionary transformation, and following from this, the belief that only the mass organisations of the working class – in the workplace and in the community – are to make decisions in society. The State will not be allowed in any form.

Secondly, industrial organisation. The workers must have enough organisation and solidarity to be able to physically take over the means of production and distribution and destroy all remnants of the state. In concrete terms this means that the workers must be organised into revolutionary unions in the mines, factories and farms (Anarcho-Syndicalism). It also means that the workers and the poor must be able to defend their revolutionary conquest by means of a democratic workers militia under the control of the mass organisations of our class.

• **THE ROLE OF THE ANARCHIST ORGANISATION**

The role of the Anarchist organisation is to win the most widespread understanding and influence of Anarchist ideas and methods amongst the workers and poor. Anarchism must become the “theoretical driving force” or “leading idea” of the working class.

We believe only these ideas can make possible a successful revolutionary transformation of society. Only these ideas can both destroy capitalism, the State and all forms of oppression AND prevent the emergence of a new form of oppressive elite.

Anarchist ideas link a criticism of capitalist/State society with a vision of a new way of organising human society. This link involves practical understanding of the means necessary and acceptable to achieve results, and which can also help build the confidence of the class in its own abilities and decision-making power.

The Anarchist organisation does not aim to “lead” the workers and poor into socialism, or to decree socialism from above. The workers and poor must make

the revolution by and for themselves. The role of the Anarchist organisation is to educate and organise the masses to take power in their own name.

In concrete terms this means we need to build a mass international Anarchist organisation.

This aims to link a criticism of the modern State/Capitalist society with a vision of a new way of organising human society. It will produce propaganda and help to build the confidence and ability of the workers and the poor to fight for themselves and make their own decisions.

It will work inside the unions and other class organisations for the leadership of the Anarchist idea. It will fight for the reconstruction of the union movement on the basis of Anarchist ideas (Anarcho-Syndicalism). The unions must become the battering ram that can destroy capitalism.

The Anarchist organisation must be big enough and effective enough to block the tendency of political parties to substitute themselves for the masses.

The Anarchist organisation, and its sister organisations internationally, aim at building such an international Anarchist organisation.

• THE ANARCHIST ORGANISATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORKING CLASS

The Anarchist organisation sees itself as part of the working class, its Anarchist ideas a historical development of the experiences of workers, who as an exploited class seek to create a new world free of tyranny and exploitation in any form.

We wish to win the most widespread understanding and influence for our Anarchist ideas and methods in the class and in society, primarily because we believe that these alone will expedite a successful revolutionary transformation of society. In this sense we recognise our role within the class being a “leadership of ideas”.

We seek influence for our ideas in all working class organisations. In real terms that means that we will go forward for all positions in the unions and other bodies where there is the possibility of mandating and recall. We will never accept any position that is not under the control of the members of that body. Such positions are not ends in themselves. The struggle to win them must be bound up with a fight for more democracy, more mandating, more grassroots control. We are striving for the self-activity of the many.

We have to be able to explain and clarify what is happening in society. We have to be capable of combating false ideas such as Marxism and nationalism. We aim to be a “collective memory” for the class – in terms of combating false ideas, and in terms of keeping alive and developing the traditions of the working class movements and

Anarchism. This includes analysing the lessons of past community and workplace struggles.

History teaches us that organisations like ours can experience a rapid growth in membership and support for its ideas during a revolutionary situation... but also that a certain size is necessary for this to happen. So it is important that we win more people to the organisation but this will be worthless unless we ensure that people are joining us because they understand and agree with Anarchism and share our libertarian values.

It is not enough to build a small organisation with many sympathisers. Where there is no clear line between members and supporters a massive central apparatus is needed to hold together a mass of half-politicised people in a series of political activities. Political discussion gets toned down, a lack of seriousness creeps in. This in turn reduces the capacity of members to make independent political evaluations and provides the basis for a dependence on a central bureaucracy. This would be in absolute contradiction to our Anarchist values.

“Only the truth is revolutionary”. Whoever first said this was correct. We do not raise as immediate demands those that are impossible at the time because of the balance of forces. We do not play at politics. We do not fool, intimidate or manipulate people from our class towards Anarchism. We aim to win the arguments for change and Anarchism. It is not part of our program to try to take power “in the name of the workers”. Anarchism will either be the creation of a free and politically aware working class... or it will not be Anarchism.

• ANARCHISM AND EVERYDAY STRUGGLES

We understand the centrality of struggle and organisation in the workplace because that is where we have real power.

But this does not mean that we neglect or ignore the struggles that take place in other areas of life. We don't. We support all struggles that can improve the conditions we live under: in schools, the communities etc. Nor do we think the class struggle is just about wages, etc. It is also a struggle against racism and all forms of oppression, and to unite the working class in a progressive struggle for freedom.

At every opportunity we seek to bring these struggles into the union and workplaces, we try to bring the potential strength of organised workers to bear in their favour... to link up the different struggles into an understanding of their common roots in Capitalism and the State, and to establish the legitimacy of political issues being taken up on the shopfloor.

We support all progressive struggles both for their own aims and for the increased confidence that campaigning can give people. Secondly, we support them because we recognise that it is in struggle that people are most readily won to the revolutionary ideas of Anarchism. Third, we support them because it is in

struggle that people can potentially create organisations of self-management that develop their skills and that may possibly help in the revolutionary transformation of society.

We argue in campaigns strongly against reliance on politicians, the courts, arbitration etc. It is through mass struggle that the greatest potential lies.

We defend other progressive organisations that are involved in struggles, from repression. Where necessary, we will engage in United Front action alongside them. However, whilst we defend these groups unconditionally, we do not do so uncritically – we maintain our independence and argue for our ideas.

In addition, we see involvement in campaigns as a central part of the work of the Anarchist organisation because it forces us to test our ideas against existing reality and because it provides a forum in which new members learn the skills needed to be active in struggle. Finally, most campaigns are an education in themselves as activists acquire first hand experience of the reformists, leftists, the law etc.

• BUILDING TOMORROW TODAY

It is important that we Anarchists have a clear idea of the type of society that we aim to establish.[2]

The two fundamental structures of the Anarchist society will be the syndicate (democratic workplace association) and the Free City-commune (the self-managed city or village, made up of syndicates and community committees in a given area).

Communes will be federated into regions and inter-regionally; they will also be linked by federations of syndicates that provide services impossible to organise purely at the level of the individual commune (e.g. transcontinental railways, post, etc.).

Each commune must be located in a particular ecological region (bio-region) and must learn to preserve, enhance and integrate itself into that region's natural dynamics.

There will also be a workers militia to defend the free society³. This militia will be internally democratic, and accountable to, and bound by, the decisions made at congresses of the mass organisations of the revolutionary working class.

These structures may also be referred to as “worker and community councils (or committees)”

We believe that the trade unions and community organisations of today (e.g. civic associations) can provide the nucleus of the future syndicates and communes, as well as the vehicles of revolutionary transformation.

In order for this to take place, such structures must be restructured on anti-bureaucratic and grassroots democratic lines, and won to the ideas of Anarchism and class struggle.

Within them, revolutionaries have to fight the ideas of authoritarian tendencies and continually argue that, in a revolutionary situation, the new workers' democracy must not delegate away its power to any elite, or allow any minority to seize that power. Within them members of the Anarchist organisations must be the "driving force". This means winning the battle of ideas. It does NOT mean capturing the leading positions, vesting them with undue authority and then dishonestly interpreting this as a mandate for giving orders.

After the initial stage of the revolution when the ruling class are dispossessed of their wealth and power, the Anarchist organisation will continue to grow. There will be a massive surge of working class poor people into its ranks because its ideas will seem all the more concrete and realistic.

In the transitional period (that time before the overthrow of the old order and consolidation of the new), the main task will be to further Anarchist ideas and values, and fighting for all power to be taken by the mass organisations of the working class.

As the revolution consolidates its gains and begins the reconstruction of society the task is to help the class towards the Anarchist ideal. As this ideal becomes more and more established and the obstacles to its achievement fade away, the revolutionary Anarchist organisation becomes less necessary and eventually vanishes completely.

• ARE ANARCHISTS A "REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP"?

Our role is that of educators and instigators. In so far as we are leaders it is because we are a "leadership" of ideas.

We have no time for the leadership of personalities or that of a higher committee of a party. We have no wish to be what the Marxists (Leninists, Trotskyists) call "The Revolutionary Leadership" (or "vanguard"), which implies their Party has reached a stage where it has the "right" to take decisions for the class (whether we like it or not). We reject this sort of leadership as authoritarian and destructive of workers' democracy. We reject the notion that the revolutionary organisation has the right to "lead" or rule our class because of its "leadership of ideas". We are totally opposed to the idea that power must be controlled by the "vanguard party" during and after the revolution.

While we do recognise that there is an uneven level of class consciousness amongst the class, and that only a few are presently won to a revolutionary position. Our aim as an organisation is always to minimise such unevenness without compromising our content. We recognise and will always fight against that influence in our class that seeks to promote the need for a permanent, unelected leadership no matter what context, explanation or excuse is used.

We reject the idea that the State can be used to create Socialism. The State is a hierarchical, centralised, top-down structure built in order to allow the exploiting minority to rule over the poor and working majority. No State can ever create a free society for the masses.

The division between leaders and led, between those who rule and those who are ruled has lasted far too long. The revolution must be made by and for the working class. These masses must rise up in our own name. The State must be destroyed: any attempt to control it “for the workers” can only lead to the creation of a new ruling elite. Socialism cannot be brought into being from above by the decrees of a “vanguard party”. These are the lessons of the Russian Revolution. All power must lie in the democratic mass organisations of the Working Class. Such power shall be compatible with the Anarchist slogan that individual freedom will know no limit except that it does not take away the freedom of others.

It is on this issue that our fundamental difference with Leninism is made clear. We agree with Lenin that authority can only be defeated by authority, that the authority of the bosses will be destroyed by the authority of the workers. We agree on the need for a lead to be given within the class, but while our leadership is one of persuasion and education, the Leninist party goes way beyond this and tries to grab power through control of the state. It seeks to exercise the authority of the party over the workers. In doing this it prepares the way for the growth of a new oppressive ruling class.

NOTES

1. Our position on the role and structure of the Anarchist organisation is based directly on Makhno, Archinov et al, [1926], *The Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists* (reprinted by Workers Solidarity Movement. Ireland). As such, we stand within the “Platformist” tradition of Anarchism, but we do not think that this is incompatible with the tactic of promoting revolutionary unionism. We agree with the Platform that the Anarchist organisation must be based on ideological and tactical unity, collective responsibility and federal organisation. We agree that it is necessary to build a large and democratic Anarchist organisation that can ensure that Anarchism becomes the “leading concept” of the exploited masses. The idea that Anarchists must not “lead” the masses into revolution, but prepare the masses to make the revolution for themselves is, of course, a basic principle of Anarchism.
2. On the theory of the syndicates, communes and regions as developed by classical Anarchism, see Guerin, Daniel, (1970), *Anarchism: From Theory To Practice*. Monthly Review Press. New York and London. Chapter 2, esp. pp. 56-60. See also G.P. Maximoff, (1985), *The Program of Anarcho-Syndicalism*. Monty Miller Press. Australia. pp. 42-8. The addition of the bio-regional dimension is found in Purchase, Graham, (1991) *Anarchist Organisation: Suggestions And Possibilities*. Black Rose. and Purchase, Graham, (1990), *Anarchist Society and its Practical Realisation*. San Francisco. See Sharp Press. (All available from Zabalaza Books)
3. On the defence of the revolution, see Makhno et al, [1927], pp. 29-31; Berkman, (1964), *ABC of Anarchism*. Freedom Press. London. chapter 14; G.P. Maximoff, (1985), *The Program of Anarcho-syndicalism*. Monty Miller Press. Australia. pp. 49-55. (also available from Zabalaza Books)

3. Publications & Campaigns

Source: <http://struggle.ws/ap/organise.html>

Producing an anarchist publication

Probably one of the most important things you can do as an organisation is to produce anarchist publications. This can be a way of explaining your ideas and the ideas of anarchism to far more people in your area than you could reach by any other means. Lets start by looking at some different types of publication

A single sheet leaflet or as it's called in the US a pamphlet

This is by far the easiest publications to produce and because it's short also by far the cheapest. Basically anyone with a computer or even a typewriter can write a leaflet, bring it to a local stationary shop and photocopy as many copies as they can afford. Most of the time leaflets are produced to advertise a particular event (a march) or to try and mobilise people around a particular issue. (For instance at the time of writing we are considering producing 20,000 leaflets urging a [No vote in a referendum.](#))

The disadvantage with a leaflet is that you can't say very much - there isn't enough space. So while they are useful for promoting a single idea/event it's difficult to do much more. Have a look at some of the '[Anarchist News](#)' leaflets we produced which as well as addressing particular issues also try and also introduce some explanation of what anarchism is.

An anarchist paper

Most groups try their hand at some point at producing an anarchist paper. Here over a number of pages you can combine articles on anarchism with articles about particular issues. But the higher cost of producing a paper means you will almost certainly have sell them to people rather than giving them away. Although with a good subs structures, a few members in full time employment and a thin paper you may be able to do this - currently we are doing this with '[Workers Solidarity](#)' allowing us to distribute 6,000 copies six times a year.

A paper should really be directed at people who are not convinced anarchists and perhaps who don't even see themselves as left wing. So it needs to address issues that concern the 'guy in the street' in a serious way. A lot of anarchist papers don't do this very well, they tend to be full of articles that are relevant to the anarchist movement or which simply sloganise about particular aspects of capitalism.

Articles should be written as if they are going to be read by you non-political friends, relations and work mates. In fact you should be quite happy to sell these people your groups paper and feel that they will get something out of it. Generally this means that you need to avoid 'jargon' and address issues in a way that will make sure they read to the end of the article rather than throw the paper into the corner after the first paragraph.

If your saying something 'unpopular' for instance (and a lot of the time you will need to) you need to carefully argue for your point of view and back it up with as many facts as possible. And when your using facts its often a lot more convincing if you can say they come from a source people accept as valid. So for instance rather than simply saying "top executives earn 419 times the average wage of a US blue-collar worker" you should say "Business Week reported that in 1999 top executives earned 419 times the average wage of a US blue-collar worker."

A magazine

We publish a magazine called [Red and Black Revolution](#). The idea of this magazine is that we can publish quite long articles (up to 7,000 words) that can look at issues around anarchism in a lot of detail. This is quite useful if you want to influence the thinking of other sections of the anarchist movement and also to demonstrate to activists here that anarchism is not just a couple of nice slogans but can uniquely add to our understanding of historical and current struggles.

This means that a lot of the articles require some real original research in order to be written. Rather than writing articles in day or weeks as you can for a paper the articles often need to be researched and written over months.

I think this sort of magazine is quite ambitious, definitely something you shouldn't try until you have established a regular paper. Apart from anything else it appeals to a much narrower layer than a paper can. Many of the technicalities of publication though are the same for a paper, you just need to leave a lot of extra time for each stage.

Pamphlets (short books)

In Ireland a pamphlet means a short book of 20 or so pages. These are a lot easier to produce than a magazine but allow you to cover a topic with the same sort of details. Arguably the first thing you should consider producing is a pamphlet that explains what anarchism is and how it would work using local examples. This is particularly the case if you live in a region where people know very little about anarchism.

Editing

Something that you should have with every publication is an editorial procedure. In a very new and small group it is often a good idea for the entire group to edit the groups publications as this will help to develop skills and also will procedure a useful mechanism for discussion.

There are several important aspects to an editing procedure

Political content

Is the articles in general agreement with the groups position, if it's not should it be published anyway with a note saying it is the writers view. Often the writer may just have not fully thought through what they are saying so then the best thing is for the editorial group to make suggestions about how the article could be changed.

Sometimes though the writer may want publish an article that disagrees with aspects of policy - the group will need to agree how this is to be done.

Some anarchists are nervous about this sort of political editing. But I can say after having gone through many years of it both as a writer and as an editor it is actually extremely useful to the writer as well as the organisation. It is often difficult to spot all the implications of everything you write. Something you read one way may be read in a completely different way by someone else. Often I forget to cover particular details or get distracted and waffle on about stuff that is not all that relevant. A good editorial procedure not only corrects this but also helps me write in a better way in the future (at least I hope so).

Article balance

The editorial group should make sure the overall composition of the paper is balanced. Basically its best if the organisation as a whole defines a guideline of what a balanced paper should look like. For instance this could be at least 1/4 anarchist history/theory, 1/3 local news (of which 1/9 should be about unions), 1/4 international news which should as far as possible be about victories.

For each issue of the paper the editorial group should first sit down and work out a list of articles that will reflect this balance. They should also give an idea of what points they think should be covered and how long the article should be (e.g. 400 words). They might also decide who should be asked to write each article or in a small group they could just bring the article list to the next meeting and look for volunteers.

Every now and again the organisation should discuss the paper and tell the editorial group whether or not they felt the balance was right. Over a period of time this should help to develop a consistent paper quality.

Proof reading

A common problem with anarchist papers is that they are riddled with spelling mistakes and incorrect grammar. Now while this doesn't worry me much the world is full of people who will use this as an excuse not to take the ideas they contain seriously. Let's not give them that excuse!

After articles have been agreed someone from the editorial group who is good at 'proofreading' (basically spotting mistakes) should look carefully at them and either correct the article themselves or pass the corrections on to who ever is doing the layout.

Layout

While its true that the better your publication looks the more seriously many people will take it today with the help of a computer and a little bit of time anyone can produce a nice looking publication. Include lots of graphics and don't make the text too small - this will encourage people to read it.

Printing

For small numbers of copies, up to a couple of thousand then photocopying may be the cheapest way to produce your publication. But for larger number and for a better looking publication you will should get it printed. Start off by asking where other small left or community groups get their printing done. Odds are this may be the best choice for you as well. Failing this ring around a number of printers for quotes – check also if they are unionised, the last thing you want to do is do your printing via some union busting corporation!

Distribution

Any sort of public protest or left/union/community meeting is probably a good place to distribute or sell material. Also consider doing a street sale at a regular time every week or month which can also be a way of people getting to meet you. If there is a large workplace in your area which has clear shift changes this can also be a good place to distribute. Finally many groups distribute 'door to door', one advantage of doing this is that it means the same people can be given consecutive issues of the publication and so can 'get to know you'.

Its always worth encouraging people to volunteer to help you with distribution. Often people who don't have the time to be fully involved with the group will be willing to help give out or sell a few copies of each publication you produce.

By way of a conclusion

Producing a publication is pretty easy, the trick is not to be too ambitious and to aim at a level you can achieve. There is nothing wrong with starting off with a single page leaflet for instance. Or in producing a paper a lot of whose content you simply take off the internet to add to the few local stories you have time to produce. It's something you will learn as you go along, both in terms of how to produce your publication but also in terms of what to write about that people will find interesting.

Source: <http://struggle.ws/ppapers/campaigns.html>

Workers Solidarity Movement position paper

Campaigns

1. In the long term a successful revolution will depend on large numbers of people with the confidence and skills to make decisions and carry them through. As anarchists we want these skills to be learnt not just by our members but by as wide a layer of activists as possible. To-days campaigns, action groups etc provide many of these skills.
2. Our involvement in campaigns or with other left groups will always have at its centre the construction of a working class movement, independent of all organisations and capable of seeding a future revolution. The success of any future revolution will depend on the creation of such a movement, not on the size/influence of any particular organisation.
3. As an anarchist organisation involvement in campaign work will play an important part in the activities of the organisation and of all of our members. It is not possible to build an organisation or its ideas without constantly having to test these ideas against existing reality. Ideas incapable of interesting those struggling against capitalism to-day are unlikely to interest them at some indeterminate point in the future.
4. This involvement means we will be constantly exposed to other left organisations and their ideas. It also means we will be in constant contact with a layer of unaligned activists some of which at least will have well worked out ideas of their own. This contact will expose and force us to face up to any weakness in our ideas.
5. Campaigns are also a way new members gain the skills they need to be active in politics. Most campaigns are also a political education in themselves, as activists acquire first hand experience of liberals, bureaucrats, the law etc etc.
6. Within a campaign we should be seeking to convince those in and around it of our politics, both with regard to the campaign and in the general sense. The accepted formula for parts of the existing left is to do this by constantly putting their pet issue on the agenda and insisting on it being discussed for as long as possible. The purpose of this is to pinpoint likely recruits so commonly these pet issues are of little relevance to the workings of the campaign but highly controversial. Obviously we should never use such methods, our interventions at meetings should be based around matters of real importance. Much of our more general political work should be done through paper selling and talking to people after meetings and demonstrations over a drink.
7. The reality of working within any moderately sized campaign is that we will have to work alongside members of other left groups. We have no problem with working

with anybody in a particular campaign. However it is important to realise that this is not a common attitude on the left, many left organisations have very bad relations with each other and unofficially at least will never work alongside each other.

8. It is not unusual in campaigns for this to translate into constant sniping throughout meetings. Some groups systemise this by entering campaigns almost purely to expose some rival tendency. This may win them a recruit but it is disastrous for that immediate campaign. It also results in the long run in activists rejecting the far-left as a bunch of sectarian nit-pickers with no real interest in contributing to anything other than their own organisation.

9. This is the atmosphere we have to operate in so it is important that we do not accept the existing methods and practises of the left as inevitable. Indeed the general approach and attitude of the left to campaigns is rooted in the Leninist philosophy of the party coming first. As anarchists we should have a visibly different approach and attitude to campaigns.

10. We understand that for a revolution to avoid degeneration the running of the new society must be in the hands of the working class and not of some party or coalition of parties. Within campaigns we should try and make sure those involved are getting the maximum in experience in making and carrying out decisions. This means the campaign must be democratic (see below). It also means giving people the skills to carry out decisions. We should encourage less experienced people to play a part in writing leaflets, etc. In practise this will often mean helping people by working alongside them on something.

11. We should be serious about winning whatever the campaign is fighting for. Sometimes it may be that you know something is unlikely to be won in the short term, in this case we should be trying to win over as many people as possible to the issue. This means we should put what work we are capable of into the campaign. Our workload should not be judged on how much effort other left groups are putting in.

12. Campaigns should be democratic. All decisions should be made so that everyone involved has an input either directly if the campaign is small or through a system of mandatable and recallable delegates. In practise many campaigns originate as fronts around an important issue. In this situation the fight for campaign democracy may take some time. It is important that in fighting for it we do not create the impression that it is our "pet issue".

13. We should involve any contact's we have in campaigns. This improves the contact between us and them, allows them to see us in action (and Vice Versa) and importantly enlarges the general pool of activists. It also means the person involved picks up at least some of the experience and confidence that will help them to play an active role in politics. Campaign meetings will be advertised in any relevant publication we produce and we will attempt to mobilise contacts for marches etc.

14. We do wish to recruit activists from campaigns, this is something we should be quite open about. We also wish to give all those involved a better idea of what anarchism is about.

15. After involvement in a campaign we shall produce a history of what happened. The first form of this will be for our internal bulletin and will be used as the basis for a branch discussion. Where possible this will then be edited into a form suitable for publication.

16. In general we will work in any campaign that is fighting for something we think would be a step forward. We will work alongside anyone to achieve this. We will not however hide our politics in order to get into or stay in any campaign. In practise we will prioritise particular campaigns as with our limited number we can not play a part in everything that arises.

17. All members will be expected to be involved in a campaign where one is available. There is never a stage where you are too inexperienced to be involved or where you are so experienced that you can learn nothing. Obviously the level of commitment an individual can give to a campaign will be determined by the personal circumstances and their other political commitments. Where possible members should have a choice as to what campaigns they would like to be involved with. An interest or identification with a particular campaign or issue ensures the person will be a lot more effective in that campaign.

18. Within any campaign we will argue the tactics we think are needed to win it. We will argue what the long term perspective of those fighting on the issue should be by arguing for what is needed rather than what is possible. The purpose of such an exercise is to convince the activists and make sure they understand the full implications of the position, not to generate paper motions we can boast of in our publications.

19. The left has an unfortunate tendency to set up front campaigns. A front campaign is one set up so that a particular group has control over it. They pull in activists interested in the issue so that the left group can recruit them but once the "owning" group thinks there are richer pickings elsewhere get closed down. This may well pick up a few recruits for the organisation involved but its effect on the movement in general is disastrous. It leaves activists demoralised and with a picture of the left as a manipulating wasters. This may be all very well for Leninists where the party comes first but for us such an outcome is a disaster. We will therefore never set up front organisations.

20. Where resources permit the WSM will produce a campaign news bulletin which will include articles outlining our position, a brief history of what has occurred since the previous issue and other useful articles. Its purpose will be to inform activists of the progress of the campaign, serve as a record of events, get across our position and provide an additional method of getting anarchists involved. It will also encourage those involved with any one campaign /issue to get involved in the others we are supporting at the time.

21. That a co-ordinator be elected when we are involved in specific campaigns (e.g. a strike support group, 'Justice for Abu-Jamal', service charges). This person will be responsible for collecting information about the issues involved, informing the WSM of same, preparing reports for the IB, and the co-ordination of our activity within the campaign.

Single Issue Campaigns, Community Syndicalism & Direct Democracy

Date: Wed, 2012-06-13 14:24

Source: <http://www.wsm.ie/c/campaigns-community-syndicalism-direct-democracy>

There's been a lot of talk lately about participatory and direct democracy. Renewed interest in alternative forms of organising society has arisen from increasing dissatisfaction with mainstream politics and the domination of the economy by a few corporations. This dissatisfaction has found its expression in the Arab spring, the May 15th movement in Spain and the Occupy movement in the English-speaking world. Where the anti-capitalist movement of the last decade focussed almost exclusively on the power of the corporations and finance capital, this current tendency is to also focus on politics and the state.

The movement in the English speaking world has exhibited many difficulties: The rejection of previous organisational forms and aversion to traditional politics, while understandable given the history of the authoritarian left, has led to any political philosophy with a historical basis being shunned. The result has been that a new generation of activists have been fumbling in the dark for a way to change society, unable to see the writing on the wall: "Not all old ideas are bad ideas".

Another problem has been the tendency to start with general, sometimes abstract demands. Demanding direct democracy doesn't mean much to a person whose main concern is keeping their children fed and clothed, while demanding the IMF get out of Ireland is all very well but it's at best aspirational and doesn't really come with an alternative. So how do we make the demand for direct democracy relevant to day to day life? How do we make people see the necessity of fighting against capitalism and the state?

Non-Hierarchical

Anarchists believe it is important to oppose hierarchy in all its forms and replace the current socio-economic system with a democratic non-hierarchical society. This would entail the replacement of top-down managerial structures in the workplace and authoritarian forms of power such as the state, but we don't expect people just to start waving red and black flags because we're sure we're right. We want people to see for themselves what Anarchism is like in action. The presence of Anarchists in campaigns helps spread libertarian ideas and show their superiority to organisational forms advocated by authoritarian socialists.

There are three main reasons for Anarchists to get involved in single issue campaigns: To show that Anarchist methods can work in practice, to give people a sense of their own power, and, ultimately, to build horizontally-structured organisations capable of replacing hierarchical state and corporate systems. Moreover the involvement in struggle is a learning process for experienced organisers and first time activists alike. Only when ideas are put to the test can we see which ones are relevant and which aren't. Last year many different ideas of what direct democracy entailed were tested by the occupy movement. Some embodied the tyranny of structurelessness and led to small informal leaderships taking over, while others provided an example of how tightly organised structures can work in practice. The problems of fetishising the

consensus process were also exposed as it was found to be a cumbersome and often undemocratic form of decision-making.

The main lesson that those involved in social struggle will learn, however, is that the State and capital, with their many tentacles of control, are not on our side. First-time activists in the Campaign against Household and Water Taxes will have learned that the mainstream media is not there to report the truth, but rather to put across whatever message is desired by the state and corporate media bosses. Throughout the campaign, RTÉ have shamelessly presented the government's fudged figures as fact and halved the numbers involved in the protest at the Fine Gael Ard Fheis in their report of the event. The role of the Gardaí was revealed to some of those who attended the protest at the Labour Party conference, when pepper spray was used against activists.

Democracy?



More generally, the campaign has revealed that despite what we were brought up to believe, the state is not what democracy looks like. More people are boycotting the Household Tax than voted for the Government. It wasn't in the manifestos of the governing parties, so no one voted for it. Yet there is no sign of it being abolished and those who refuse to pay are being threatened with court appearances and large fines.

When people see that the state is not on our side, that it is not even a neutral intermediary between us (the majority) and them (the wealthy minority), they begin to see the importance of building an alternative society, and involvement in campaigns that utilise direct action can give them a sense of their power to do that.

As the Italian Anarchist, Errico Malatesta wrote:

“Whatever may be the practical results of the struggle for immediate gains, the greatest value lies in the struggle itself. For thereby workers learn that the bosses interests are opposed to theirs and that they cannot improve their conditions, and much less emancipate themselves, except by uniting and becoming stronger than the bosses. If they succeed in getting what they demand, they will be better off: they will earn more, work fewer hours and will have more time and energy to reflect on the things that matter to them, and will immediately make greater demands and have

greater needs. If they do not succeed they will be led to study the reasons of their failure and recognise the need for closer unity and greater activity and they will in the end understand that to make victory secure and definite, it is necessary to destroy capitalism. The revolutionary cause, the cause of moral elevation and emancipation of the workers must benefit by the fact that workers unite and struggle for their interests.”

[Malatesta, Errico Malatesta: His Life and Ideas, p. 191]

Identifying the problem also poses the question of a solution. Organising their own campaigns not only gives people confidence but it also gives them the skills necessary to create and administer a society that is designed to meet their needs. If struggle is a school of self-governance, then the means employed must correspond to the desired end. This is one area where Anarchists are often at odds with authoritarian socialists. The latter believe that in order to achieve socialism there must be a vanguard party, with “the correct leadership” directing struggle from above. While they often give lip service to workers’ democracy, this usually either means that they will put that into place sometime after they take power or that it equates to the power of the vanguard party. Authoritarian methods of organising resistance, however, can only give birth to authoritarian “revolutions” and new forms of authoritarian society. A movement that does not trust the working class to direct its own struggles, to create the type of society that reflects its desires and needs, will not easily relinquish power after it has seized it in the name of the class. Just as a truly socialist society would mould itself around people’s needs, so too must the way we fight for that society.

Issues and Solutions

Community syndicalism (or unionism) is a process of creating the structures of a new society within the old. It involves people organising locally to raise issues affecting the community and finding solutions to them. It encourages all members of a community to involve themselves in tackling the issues that they face in their daily lives without the need for the intervention of so-called representatives like TDs or councillors. It creates a localised form of dual power that is counterposed to traditional hierarchical forms. Community syndicates can also provide valuable support for strikes in the field of industry.

The community syndicate would ideally be based upon the mass assembly of members, where issues like local services, education, rent etc. could be debated and decisions made on how best to win improvements. Beyond the locality, the syndicate should federate with similar organisations in other areas to collaborate on campaigns that have a wider scope. Each syndicate would send delegates to the federal assembly with a strict mandate and the right to recall and elect new delegates in their place if they abuse their mandate.

A recent example of community syndicalism in action comes from the 2001 revolt in Argentina. Local assemblies were set up and federated to co-ordinate struggles. They occupied buildings and created communal kitchens, community centres, day-care centres and built links with occupied workplaces. As one participant noted people “[began] to solve problems themselves, without turning to the institutions that caused the problems in the first place.” The neighbourhood assemblies ended a system in

which “we elected people to make our decisions for us . . . now we will make our own decisions.”

The History of the CNT in Spain, particularly in Catalunya, is littered with examples of community syndicalism in action. The CNT is usually thought of as primarily an industrial union, but at one time it had strong organisations in every working-class neighbourhood in Barcelona. This was made possible by the reorganisation of the confederation at its 1918 congress where district committees based in union centres in the neighbourhoods were established. Organisers were known as “the eyes and ears of the union in the neighbourhood”. Within a year the national membership had doubled to 715,000, with 250,000 alone in Barcelona. Organising in this manner provided valuable support for the industrial unions of the confederation. In 1919 a strike broke out at the Ebro irrigation and power company after a small number of workers were sacked for union membership. In response, all CNT power workers walked off the job. The local federation mobilised and what started as a small-scale industrial dispute turned into open class war on a city-wide scale. Chris Ealham writes in his book *Anarchism and the City: Revolution and Counter Revolution in Barcelona 1898 to 1937* that “much of the state’s repressive arsenal was mobilised; martial law was implemented and following the militarization of essential services, soldiers replaced strikers and up to 4,000 workers were jailed.” (pp 41.)

However, the CNT’s vast network of neighbourhood syndicates allowed it to raise financial support and requisition food and other essentials. The strike was able to hold out long enough to cripple industry in the city and the state was obliged to step in, forcing the power company to capitulate to the demands of the CNT which now moved beyond the reinstatement of the workers and union recognition to pay rises, the payment of wages lost during the strike and an amnesty for all those involved in pickets. Furthermore, the strike created such fear among the ruling-class that the government became the first in Europe to introduce the eight-hour day in an attempt to avoid further class conflict. What began as a single issue was generalised into a battle for improved conditions for workers all over the city.

In 1931, the CNT led a rent strike in Barcelona, which demanded a 40% rent decrease. This began with a mass meeting on May 1st and by August there were 100,000 participants. As well as the boycott of rent, they organised to resist and reverse evictions. Many landlords, finding their income streams drying up, gave into the demands and waived unpaid rents from the period of the strike.

More recently, and closer to home, the Anti-Poll Tax Federation in the UK and the anti-water tax campaign in Ireland were organised along lines that closely resembled community syndicalism. In the case of the former campaign, some local groups outlived the single issue. One of these still in existence is the Haringey Solidarity Group. They are far from being a mass community union but they do have a contact list of thousands and campaign both on local and broader issues.

Lessons

Of course, there is no point in citing historical examples if we do not draw lessons from them that we can apply to the present. There are obvious differences between Barcelona in the first half of the last century and Ireland today. The example cited in

Argentina took place during a period of revolution, not a single issue campaign and the Haringey Solidarity Group organised at a time of defeat for the working-class.

Today, the Campaign against Household and Water Taxes in Ireland is organised on a national scale. At the moment, in places its organisation resembles an embryonic form of community syndicalism. It's at its best where activists groups are organised in a directly democratic manner, where all members who wish to participate can and all have equal say in decision-making. Many local areas have begun the process of federating, with mandated delegates being sent to county-wide meetings.

With the announcement that water meters will be installed by the end of the year and will have to be paid for by householders, it is clear that this will become a protracted battle. Within the campaign, the battle will be between democratic and authoritarian methods of organising. In communities, the battle will be to win non-payers to the idea of local activism. With the right structure and a mass campaign membership, what is already the biggest boycott movement the country has seen since the Land League could be a force with far more power than any so-called workers' party participating in elections could ever achieve.

With a victory under its belt, or even by holding its own in a long, drawn-out struggle, such an organisation could draw other groups under its wing. By drawing in workers engaged in occupations such as the Vita Cortex workers, it could begin to develop an industrial wing. Working with groups like unlockNAMA, which is already organised along directly democratic lines, could lead to the opening of community centres and, in harsh times, communal kitchens. Such an organisation could eventually by pass the bureaucratic monoliths that are the mainstream unions and organise strikes.

Ultimately such an organisation would be a libertarian communist society in embryo. It would have to overcome modern problems such as suburbanisation and rebuild the idea of community, but if organised in every neighbourhood, along with an industrial wing it would have the wherewithal to bypass the capitalist state and create a new society within the old.

Of course this would inevitably bring it into open conflict with the state. It would be the role of an Anarchist organisation like the WSM to work within such an organisation, to spread the revolutionary anarchist idea that the state cannot just be bypassed, it must eventually be smashed or it will ruthlessly crush us and our movement.

All this is aspirational, but it is possible if we put all our efforts into building community syndicalism. If we win the argument for libertarian ideas in the Household Tax Campaign we have the opportunity to build a powerful national federation of communities and workers. There is no point in having a new world in our hearts if we don't strive to create it in the here and now. This is just the beginning.