

The ultimate aim of Beyond Resistance is a self-managed, stateless society free of class division, racism and patriarchy, based on the principle 'from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs'. From our *Aims & Principles*:

We advocate the abolition of capitalism, wage slavery and all economic systems of oppression and exploitation through tactics like direct action, solidarity and class struggle. We aim to create a free and classless society, based on workers' self-management of the means and relations of production, distribution for need not profit, free association, mutual aid, and federation — Anarchist Communism.

In the short and medium term, and as an essential forerunner to such a society, Beyond Resistance has developed a strategy dedicated to constructive and practical anarchism. Through forms of struggle such as industrial networks and community assemblies, we hope to build 'dual power' — where we can take control of our own lives and the many decisions that effect us — and plant the seeds for the eventual destruction of the current order. *Towards a Constructive Anarchism* lays out these ideas.

Beyond Resistance

www.beyondresistance.wordpress.com

CONVERSATIONS BY ERIK RUIX



Towards a constructive anarchism

Towards a constructive anarchism

THE STRATEGY OF BEYOND RESISTANCE

Introduction

In Aotearoa as around the world, we face many obstacles to the growth of a mass, anarchist communist movement. The forces of capitalism and the state aside, we are up against a society used to the delegation of power to someone else. Politicians, union and community bureaucrats, and lobbying are the main channels of current dissent in Aotearoa. Likewise, our highly individualised society — with its loss of community and the increase of isolation, consumption, and apathy — has overshadowed the ideas of direct action, collective decision making, solidarity, and self-organisation. In the workplace we face individual contracts, casualised labour, and a lack of class consciousness; where unions do exist, they are hopelessly reformist and entirely entrenched in the current capitalist structure.

The position of Beyond Resistance is that in order to challenge these current conditions, it is necessary to struggle. But if we are a fighting organisation, then strategy and tactics must be applied. We need to know well our long term objectives and how to overcome these obstacles — the end being to weaken our class enemy, strengthen organs of self-management and dual power, and take concrete tactical steps which bring us closer to a position of breaking with the current system.

Propaganda is necessary to build a visible and vibrant working class movement. But it cannot be the exclusive focus of our efforts — propaganda cannot determine the needs of an organisation; it is the needs of the organisation that have to determine the propaganda.

With this in mind, we must be able to offer constructive and practical action based on our ideas, our methods and our goals. We must work towards a constructive anarchism. Therefore, Beyond Resistance seeks to implement the strategy put forward below.

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In the short and medium term, and as an essential forerunner to such a society, Beyond Resistance aims to implement our strategy in order to achieve the following (in no particular order):

Short term

- regular forums, workshops and events
- community info stalls
- our own paper (*Black Flame*)
- our own group articles, propaganda and press
- regular internal education
- working relationships with AWSM and other like-minded groups
- working relationships with flaxroots Maori groups
- working relationships with anarcha-feminist groups
- a men's and women's caucus within the collective

Medium term

- formation of a regional industrial network
- continued development of community assemblies
- a federation of class struggle anarchist groups in Aotearoa

BEYOND RESISTANCE:

Who are we & what do we do?

We are a collective of anarchists based in Otago/Christchurch. As well as working towards the strategy above, we host a number of events such as film nights and discussion forums, encourage and create spaces for children's participation in all events, and support various struggles effecting our communities.

We have a number of skills and resources available for your own community building, educational events and other kinds of activities, so please get in touch! We're always keen to help. Contact: otautahianarchists@gmail.com

which connect struggles against sexism with the class struggle and building dual power. Finally, our future vision must be feminist. It should imagine a world not only without sexism or homophobia but one in which gender relations are completely transformed and liberated. Toward this end, we recognise resistance to masculine/feminine gender borders and encourage people to critique and explore their desires rather than repress them.

Tino Rangatiratanga

Anarchist strategy and activity in Aotearoa must recognise Maori oppression, Tino Rangatiratanga, and Indigenous forms of self-organisation. We recognise and support the need for Maori to struggle as Maori, with Maori, and on Maori terms — it is not up to Pakeha to tell Maori what is best for them, for this is the continuation of white supremacy. Instead, we can illustrate the link between class exploitation and colonial oppression, vocalise an anarchist communist perspective, and offer a critique of Maori corporatism, hand-in-hand with local iwi.

Maori currently make up a significant portion of the working class, yet the recent history of Pakeha exploitation of traditional lands and culture must not be overlooked. We believe it would be detrimental to ignore the very real past of colonisation and forms of Maori protest against it — as contradictory as this may seem to Eurocentric anarchist traditions. Cultural diversity and self-determination does not have to imply nationalism and a nation state, therefore Beyond Resistance aims to support, engage with, and learn from flaxroots indigenous struggle in Aotearoa.

“If the anarchist approach to social change requires means and ends to be linked... any progressive steps forward require those concerned to walk softly, respectfully, patiently and sensitively, with a willingness to engage, share ideas, listen and learn. Unless you want the cycle of oppression to continue to suit your ideas, Indigenous perspectives and collaboration must be key in shaping strategies for progressive social change...”

— From ‘Racism, Xenophobia & White Privilege’

Strategy in practice: anarcho-syndicalism

As anarchists, we are against representation and in favour of self-organisation in all arenas — political (government), economic (the workplace) and social

(our own lives). Therefore, we view anarcho-syndicalism as the way of putting anarchist communism — or more specifically, our strategy — into practice, both in the workplace and the community. This will take the form of industrial networks and community assemblies.

Industrial Networks

Industrial networks are the means by which revolutionary industrial unions and other forms of libertarian workplace organisation can be created. An Industrial Network is a network of workers who support the ideas of anarcho-syndicalism, namely direct action, solidarity, collective decision making and self-organisation.

The role of this network would be to call for workplace assemblies, argue for direct workers control of struggle by these mass assemblies, promote direct action and solidarity, put across anarchist ideas, and build organs of dual power. It is the role of the workplace assemblies to set recallable delegates who negotiate with the bosses, not the network itself. This is vastly different to the the current representative unions, who simply negotiate with the bosses, act as mediators of the conditions of capitalism, and only achieve a fairer form of our exploitation rather than its complete abolition.

Industrial networks and its mass meetings are the alternative structure to current union structures that are dominated by full time bureaucrats. In a workplace with a recognised CTU union, the network would promote the anarcho-syndicalist strategy of workplace assemblies, while its members could still be part of the traditional union. In a non-unionised workplace, industrial networks would be set up to call workers assemblies and to connect workplaces to the wider network.

Thus industrial networks explicitly develops the revolutionary methods of anarcho-syndicalism and the practice of self-organisation in contrast to representative unionism, be it traditional (such as the CTU or Unite) or radical (such as the IWW).

A successful example of this strategy in practice is the networks of Solidarity Federation (UK): www.solfed.org.uk.

Community Assemblies

Community assemblies take a similar form as above, but based in the wider community. It is the building of forums by which we can raise issues that affect our working class communities, and provide a means of solving them. As such, it is a means of directly involving local people in the life of the community and collectively solving the problems facing us as both individuals and as part of a wider society. Politics, therefore, is not separated into a specialised activity that only certain people do.

The community assembly is the mass assembly of its members, practicing direct democracy, mandated delegates, and the creation of administrative action committees to see that the assemblies' decisions are carried out. It could also raise funds for strikes and other social protests, organise pickets and boycotts, and generally link up with others in struggle (such as industrial networks). By organising our own forms of direct action (such as tax strikes, rent strikes, environmental protests and so on) we weaken the state while building dual power.

In these ways, a flaxroots movement from below can be created, with direct democracy and participation becoming an inherent part of a local political culture of resistance, with people deciding things for themselves directly and without hierarchy. The combination of community assemblies and industrial networks will be the key to abolishing the current order, and to create an anarchist communist society. These forms of struggle allow us to become accustomed to managing our own affairs and seeing that an injury to one is an injury to all. In this way, revolutionary dual power can be created.

Constructive anarchism

THE GOALS OF BEYOND RESISTANCE

The ultimate aim of Beyond Resistance is a self-managed, stateless society free of class division, racism and patriarchy, based on the principle 'from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs'. From our *Aims & Principles*:

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A dual power strategy

The focus of our work will be the building of *dual power*. Dual power is the idea that the embryo of the new world must be created while fighting the current one; 'building the new in the shell of the old'. It means encouraging working class organs of self-management, where we can exercise our autonomy and restrict the power of boss and government until such time as we can confront and abolish both. A dual power strategy is one that directly challenges institutions of power and at the same time, in some way, prefigures the new institutions we envision. Therefore, it not only opposes the state, it also prepares for the difficult confrontations and questions that will arise in a revolutionary situation.

Social reforms won by progressive movements may be important, but if they do not work towards dual power they should not be the focus of Beyond Resistance. Thus, campaigns developed by the collective that do not contribute toward the building of dual power should be seriously analysed and evaluated. If a popular protest movement has little hope of building dual power, it is not one we should be collectively involved in. We may morally and politically approve of such movements but as a small group with limited resources, we must reject the liberalism of reform activism and concern ourselves with our revolutionary strategy.

A radical feminist perspective

From our *Aims & Principles*:

We reject patriarchy and fight for the empowerment and liberation of women. We stand in solidarity with feminist struggles, and believe that actively challenging the personal and interpersonal manifestations of patriarchy is equally as important as working towards structural changes. Both need to happen together to create a new society free of male domination.

With this in mind, Beyond Resistance aims to have a radical feminist perspective, in several ways. Firstly, we need a radical feminist analysis of our society that challenges male dominance, compulsory heterosexuality, and the bipolar gender system. Secondly, our internal operations (organizing structure, roles and responsibilities, meeting procedures, decision making, etc.) must ensure women's participation and be strongly aware of practices that tend to favor men's voices over women's, and we must work to overcome them. Thirdly, we must not neglect radical feminist political struggle, particularly those kinds