



POSITION STATEMENTS

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Indigenous Sovereignty here and everywhere

Our organisation is based on the lands of the Wurundjeri and Bunurong peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation. First Nations sovereignty has never been ceded in 'Australia'. Because we're on stolen lands, our political work must work towards decolonisation and Land Back.

Settler colonialism is a system still ongoing in 'Australia'. It requires dispossession and extraction of First Nations peoples and their lands, their cultures and languages. Settler colonialism is ongoing in the overpolicing of First Nations, resulting in high rates of deaths in custody, criminalisation and imprisonment, racial segregation and surveillance through curfews, alcohol bans and spending restrictions, babies being taken from families. Settler colonialism is also present in capitalist resource extraction on Indigenous lands that has consequences for everyday life, where water becomes undrinkable, native plants and animals become extinct, and First Nations become further displaced due to gentrification and poverty.

To understand Indigenous people's oppression more broadly, we use the framework of 'racial capitalism', which explains the modern system of capitalism as already infused with racism when emerging from Western feudal society. Racial capitalism is grounded in the stealing and exploitation of land and human labour, particularly of Black Indigenous peoples from the African continent. Racial capitalism in so-called Australia is not only founded on an ongoing project of settler colonialism and Indigenous genocide, but also, the settler government's imperialist and neocolonial projects target other Indigenous peoples across the seas, causing immense social, economic and environmental disaster.

In our org, we place importance on situating ourselves in Place. We consider and navigate in our strategies and tactics: the historical and ongoing oppression of the Kulin Nation, and its historical and present resistance against said

oppression; how oppression has been done across the whole continent, and how it varies according to region and consequences for First Peoples from different nations; and how Indigenous people are marginalised and essentialised today.

SOVEREIGNTY

We understand First Nations sovereignty on this continent as the inalienable right to self-governance and self-determination, as well as Indigenous belonging to and interdependence with their Country and Culture.

This continent is home to hundreds of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations that existed for tens of thousands of years before colonial power invaded. Each of these Nations have different cultures and laws, languages, stories, social and internal power dynamics, with different networks of relationships and agreements between them.

Being against the State, we believe that Anarchism is a political tool that aligns with the goal of sovereignty, on this continent and beyond. There are many First Nations in 'Australia' who consider the State a poor tool for their liberation, and do not believe true sovereignty can come through centralised, top-down power under Capitalism or any other system. We agree that State centralisation of power would come at the expense of the self-determination and the autonomy of distinct Indigenous nations around the continent. A bottom-up revolution is the only way, and it requires poor and working class First Nations, migrants and settlers united around an understanding that Indigenous Sovereignty is a crucial part of our collective freedom and survival on this planet.

We do not assume that Indigenous ways of thinking and living are conflatable with Anarchism. Neither do we assume that Indigenous nationhood is the same as Westphalian nation states. As Anarchists we are supportive of national liberation struggles of oppressed nations/peoples. We oppose nationalism insofar as it's a religion of the state

(along with militarism), and differentiate between working class and conservative elements of national liberation movements.

LAND BACK

We understand the call for Land Back as part of the Indigenous Sovereignty movement on this continent since 1788, for the literal and material return of their lands. Land Back is also about the restoration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture: languages, ceremonies, practices of land and water care that re-establish the well-being of ecosystems and relationships with each other. For a Land Back movement that seeks longevity, the invasive, destructive, capitalist settler structures need to be entirely uprooted, and new structures built in a way that respects First Nations responsibilities to Country.

Class power is indispensable to the project of Land Back, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander unionists being key to pushing for solidarity within the union movement. In the 60s, Gurindji workers launched a strike at Wave Hill cattle station in the Northern Territory, receiving the support of workers from neighbouring language groups, other First Nations from across the continent, as well as rank and file union networks. In the 70s, the Black Moratorium marches also involved a national half-day strike by thousands of workers who were builders' labourers, ship painters, dockers, municipal staff and teachers. In the 80s, unions placed bans on the transport and operation of the oil drilling rig that was to be used at Noonkanbah in the Kimberley region. Since workers carry out colonial expansion, workers must be organised in solidarity with decolonial efforts, not the profits of colonial capitalists.

Anarchists wants a world without exploitation

As anarchists, we stand against all domination, oppression, coercion and exploitation in society — of capitalists over

workers, of states over people, of imperialists and colonisers over Indigenous sovereignty, of patriarchy over the gender marginalised, of humans over Nature. For us, all top down power is unjust and must be abolished and replaced with institutions of bottom up power through a social revolution led by organised masses of workers and exploited people internationally.

BOTTOM-UP POWER

Anarchists accept that authority is a part of life, we just believe that if authority is necessary, it should work in the polar opposite way it works today. Meaning, it should be elected by those who fall under it, be recalled by those who are affected by its misuse, last only as long as it has utility to people who want it, and be rotated as much as it needs to be to prevent abuses of power.

COULD THE WORLD FUNCTION LIKE THIS?

We think a world that operates in this way is both desirable and possible — not least because Spanish Anarchists operated society without bosses or top down power structures after they overthrew Capitalism in 1936. Pockets of directly democratic societies have existed both historically and in the present that may not identify themselves as Anarchist, but practice the principles of self-governance and bottom-up power that Anarchists broadly advocate.

Bottom-up power would begin with consent established through Natural Law and treaty agreements specific to the sovereign peoples of the land, that outline mutual obligations of relating harmoniously to land, community, and culture.

Balanced with treaty agreements, community members would collaborate to manifest their individual and shared destinies. Resources now held in common, not by developers and social parasites, community members could allocate resources where they're needed, to shape the processes by which housing, food and leisure are developed and accessed.

Similarly, work would be coordinated by workers themselves not bosses seeking profit. Thus workers would produce goods and services that are expressly useful to communities they live and work in. Each person will contribute according to their ability, and take according to their needs. And in this way every person's basic needs can be met. All work can be shared amongst all people, unnecessary work can be abolished and automation simply increases people's free time, instead of plunging them into poverty.

WE REJECT STATISM

As Anarchists, we reject statism as undemocratic and inherently top-down in nature. This means we reject the dogmatism and unscientific faith in state socialism, vanguards of the "class conscious", and all self-appointed political elites that purport to be qualified to represent and rule over others while concealing their true class character. All who wield the state are no longer meaningfully working class, but administrators of the working class — another elite minority with separate interests to regular people.

This is the purview of Marxist-Leninism, Maoism, Trotskyism, and Stalinism. While Marxist class analysis is an important tool, we reject its use as rigid doctrine. Anarchists expand upon Marxist class analysis to apply not just to the Capitalist/Worker class dynamic, but all class dynamics, as they all inevitably involve opposing material interests. Even union bureaucrats that languish in high-salaried jobs paid for by workers membership dues — all classes must be abolished.

FEDERALISM IS THE KEY

In place of a state, decisions could be made from the bottom up using Federalism — a mode of decision-making that allows autonomous groups of people, workplaces or whole communities to elect temporary delegates to represent their wishes at federated meetings involving delegates from other autonomous groups — All power resting with the constituent groups of a federation to construct, approve or reject proposals. Delegates would have no lasting power, and can

be recalled or rotated at any point.

In this way, workplaces could federate into larger-scale industries in order to coordinate production for broad areas sustainably and collaboratively, utilise new technologies, and develop and test new work methods. Common agreements could be developed and held by multiple otherwise autonomous communities, with all power flowing from the bottom up. If centralisation was inevitable in some sector of society, then it could be created accountably from below.

Although getting back to a simpler time sounds compelling, we need a society technologically proficient enough that it can care for disabled people and people with complex needs.

Of all the proposals for how regular people could have agency over their own lives and be free from domination and oppression, this proposal is the most developed and tested in the real world.

Class power in solidarity with all

It's true that the last century saw big communist organisations sideline struggles of race, gender and sexuality for class — a mistake that essentially birthed a new left that knew well that oppression doesn't begin and end at work. But in return, this new left largely sidelined class for these other struggles, and in the ensuing decades radical union activity and union density has dwindled, and with it the left's prospects of winning their demands has almost disappeared entirely. There is a relationship between these two things.

Anarchists feel that neither reductive ideas based in class nor other types of identity are acceptable, and that class power should be built so that it can be leveraged in solidarity with all struggles, not just those of the white working class.

WHY IS CLASS POWER IMPORTANT?

If we want revolution, we need power. We've seen million people protest movements fail to have their demands met because blocking city traffic for a few hours poses no meaningful threat to capital. A million workers downing tools and refusing to make Capitalists money is another story entirely. Profit is realised through exploiting workers at the point of production, and so we must organise to deny it to them at the point of production.

Furthermore, all reasonable revolutionary proposals require working class organs of power and decision-making to replace capitalist infrastructure and those working class organs must be built through struggles in the here and now.

THE STATE OF THE UNIONS

As Anarchists, we recognise not only the class differences between bosses and workers, but also between paid union organisers and rank and file members of unions. This class difference was intensified due to the class collaboration facilitated by the Labor government and the bureaucracy of the Australian Council of Trade Union (ACTU). Union officials consented to working with politicians, setting up corporatist processes that push legal means, fines, arbitration, enterprise bargaining and de-registration to manage class conflict between unions and the state. This means that today's unions are fined huge sums of money for endorsing 'unprotected' industrial action taken by union members. This criminalises effective strike action and pits the interests of workers to win better wages and conditions against the interests of the union officials to maintain high wages and not be fined by the government. The current state of unions are that most are neo-liberal in function and continue to beg the Labor Party for meager scraps of recognition in exchange for a commitment to campaign for their re-election.

SHOULD WE BUILD ANARCHIST UNIONS?

Anarcho-Syndicalists propose that we pull workers out of these stifled neoliberal unions and begin Anarchist unions,

run and operated by and for the workers ourselves without bureaucrats on 6 figure wages to stop us.

The problem with this proposal is that it forces workers to accept and understand deeply the ideology of Anarchism before they can access the ability to campaign for paid lunch breaks at work. This makes Anarchist ideology a barrier to class struggle in a way that we disagree with.

The only way to not make being an Anarchist a prerequisite for union activity would be that these unions aren't principally Anarchist at all, only worker-run and operated. Such unions could be easily pushed towards reaction, nationalism, and electoralism and tread on all other principles of Anarchism besides workers self-management, which alone is a far-cry from making a union Anarchist.

SHOULD WE TAKE PART IN EXISTING UNIONS?

Although union density has fallen, and a substantial number of vulnerable workers aren't in their unions, broadly Anarchists feel we should struggle with workers in existing unions where we find agreement — not because we love those unions, but because they are mass organisations of potential workers power through which we can meet and organise other workers interested in class struggle.

The idea is not to rely on paid union organisers to lead us to victory, but to build a movement of militant rank and file workers that complacent, paid bureaucrats and conservative governments can't ignore. If the base is strong, the power will flow upwards into more accountable and democratic leadership, of shorter-tenured official positions, into more democratic processes, and into demands for broader solidarity efforts with wider struggles.

If part of that process involves workers starting new unions, because existing unions are not fit for growing class power, so be it. The goal isn't union sign ups, it's workers power.

The role of the anarchist organisation

The role of the Anarchist organisation is to prepare and support Anarchists to take a principled role within the workers and social movements, to push them toward realising their power. We feel a complementary, symbiotic relationship between revolutionary organisations and mass movements has been crucial to historic periods where workers power was most realised.

This strategy is called Organisational Dualism. It goes back to Bakunin, and then was further developed and implemented by the Platformists from the failures of Russia, as well as the Especifists in Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil. This means this strategy has been tested not just in Europe, connected to the lineage of Marx, but also pressure tested in the Global South under colonisation and imperialism. If we are true internationalists, it is important that our organisational strategies can flourish in the Global South.

Let's walk through the thinking behind how Anarchists set up our organisations to complement movements.

1. Anarchist Communists want movements to remain non-ideological.

The workers movements and social movements attract mass participation exactly because they're non-ideological. Any worker can join their union, and anyone that doesn't like police violence can join a social movement. This is something we want to protect.

But just because we want movements to remain non-ideological, doesn't mean ideological groups don't vie for dominance within these spaces — electoralists, non-profits, vanguardists all want movements to serve their own ends. To combat these interests, Anarchist Communists aim to be an organised force within movements that supports them winning their demands, and for their power to be kept with those with the most at stake.

2. Anarchist Communists want to stand beside workers and the oppressed.

As Anarchists, we must not stand in front of workers and the oppressed, but beside them as equals where we find agreement, struggling with them for better wages and conditions, an end to racist policing, and ultimately toward an end to all exploitation and oppression on earth.

Ignoring mass movements, acting as individual radicals within movements or merely tailing the average ideas present within them is a road to defeat. These approaches would all end in propping up more organised ideological interests present within movements to achieve their ends – some of which would gut the movement, or put its faith in political figures that can't deliver on promises, or drive the movement toward reaction or nationalism. It would be an unprincipled and useless position to take.

Instead, Anarchists must unite to present clear arguments within movements. Our only tool of influence must be the merit of our ideas, and the trust we build with those we struggle alongside. The way we unite around this strategy and vision is through the Specifically Anarchist Organisation.

3. Anarchist Communists build their organisations to complement movements.

Because movements ebb and flow and take on the many different influences of people within them, they often fail to retain clear political memory of failures and lessons for the future. Not to mention that workers often don't join unions to strategise, but for the added protection and better pay union jobs offer them.

Therefore the Anarchist organisation in part exists to outlive movements or downturns in radical worker activity, to keep a political memory of movement lessons, studying history, tactics and strategies that have worked in the past, in order to argue for the strategies most likely to result in the demands of movements being met.

Broadly these principles are of direct action, direct democracy and anti-electoralism.

4. The Anarchist Organisation must be united in theory and tactics.

To be a coherent group within movements, the Anarchist Organisation builds theoretical unity with its members, which is a base level of political agreement members learn through the organisation's education. Agreement with these political minimums intends to stop nationalists, liberals, reactionaries and vanguardists from joining the Anarchist Organisation and rendering it ineffective or splitting its focus.

Tactical unity is an agreement to act as a unit within struggles, while collective responsibility is an agreement to advance the organisation's positions and to be responsible to the organisation, not undermining its positions or acting in a way that inhibits it from achieving its aims in movements. It also means the organisation is responsible to you as its member.

5. Anarchist Communists shouldn't hide their political motivations.

There is no trick here. Anarchists should be genuinely reliable, trustworthy and hard-working within movements. They should endeavor to be the spark that inspires collective action and solidarity. If it is safe, they can feel free to let others know that they are Anarchists and that is why they fight for regular people to democratically wield movements of their own emancipation and for them to choose strategies that win their demands.

The broader fight for revolution can be shared with those we struggle with too. That we not only want to see an end to specific injustices (wage theft, refugee detention, etc) but ultimately our goal is to end all injustice on earth. Those who agree with these premises can come back to the organisation and join the broader fight against Capitalism.

6. The Revolutionary Program.

If it has genuine revolutionary aims, the Anarchist Communist organisation can't just be a supplement for

movement building – it also must also be a hub of Anarchist revolutionary strategy and theory in a given context. It must produce an often revised program that in the short term offers an in-depth analysis and plan to build workers' power at crucial points of production. In the longer term that would involve a plan to build an imposing workers movement capable of conducting cross-industry general strikes to overthrow Capitalism and establish a directly democratic and classless society.

EXAMPLES FROM OUR CONTEXT

The Communist Party of Australia once had substantial influence within the Builders Labourers' Federation; a construction union that was de-registered in 1986. The BLF managed to ban the development of areas in Sydney to prevent the poor being pushed out, protected Indigenous heritage sites from being bulldozed, and engaged in 'work-ins' that ran construction sites under workers' control. It sought the participation of all workers (including migrants with limited english) in decision-making, and mobilised the force of the construction industry in solidarity with various social issues. Things the union movement couldn't dream of doing today. This is broadly our vision for how class power can be weaponised in solidarity with struggles outside of the workplace.

And while we don't want to organise hierarchically like Authoritarian Communists, it doesn't mean we have to cede organisation to them. Organisation can be directly democratic, and is the tool that unlocks our ability to intervene meaningfully in mass movements to build the power of all exploited and oppressed peoples. As Anarchist Communists we would recommend all revolutionaries join a political organisation that supports your education, training and has a focused, clear program and then seeks to intervene in struggles to give them the power to win.

Building racialised class power

The most exploited and oppressed people in our context are under-represented within unions and organisations on the left. This means many who face the most injustice are without important tools to fight it, nor the means to shape class struggle into the future. In order to correct this, programs must be built that are capable of overcoming current barriers to participation to build the power of the racialised working class.

The goal of ARC UP is to build such a program. We seek to maintain a majority membership of racialised working class people, so that we can construct and then test our program as an organised force within migrant workplaces and communities, movements for Sovereignty and Land Back, and within the broader workers' movement, against other organised forces that would inhibit real power being developed.

For instance, most battles the contemporary union movement still fight are in the workplace. For many this is what class struggle is, but this orientation excludes migrant workers, whose visa issues are the biggest determinant of their workplace issues. A class struggle that works for migrants would need to take coordinated aim at an abusive visa system that traps migrant workers in super-exploitative workplaces under fear of deportation, or restricts their ability to legally work enough hours to survive. In other countries, independent unions of migrant workers are finding they are more effective in organising visa-precarious, temporary, casual and gig workers outside of the existing bureaucratized unions.

In so-called Canada, migrant care workers ensured their ability to collectively bargain on par with a large part of the working class by winning permanent residency. Other countries like Spain have managed to change legislation that establishes gig workers as employees, against the likes of Uber arguing that they are self-employed through an app. This establishes Uber as responsible for minimum wage and other protections for their workers. This strategy would have

to harness the power of migrant workers rather than just a legal team, but whether inside or outside existing unions, these are the struggles that need to be built now, so that a renewed workers movement might lift all workers.

In addition, the orientation of workers power for workplace issues has forced First Nations social movements to build power from sources other than the union movement. In fact, many First Nations activists no longer look to the union movement for solidarity at all, and understandably so. Workers power must be mobilised in solidarity with Indigenous sovereignty, but real workers power can't be requested from a complacent union leadership, it must again be built from below at the rank and file level.

Rather than looking elsewhere for power that doesn't win our demands, racialised people and workers should join together to build the kind of workers movement that can have everyone's back. This requires organisation, education, political agreement, shared strategic aims, comradeship and broad solidarity, which our organisation is tailor-made to provide. After 50 years of diminishing workers power and thus diminishing wins for the left, the way forward is clear — we must build power proven to be capable of winning.

We reject liberalism in all its forms

iberals put forward 'progressive' ideas for social change that leave intact the exploitative root of Capitalism. More diverse representation in the media, more diverse CEOs in boardrooms, more ethical choices in consumer goods. None of these things are stepping stones toward smashing the economic system that births the social issues liberals care so much about changing. Liberals want to prune the leaves of the weed that is Capitalism. Revolutionaries want to uproot it.

We'd add that liberalism is any idea that claims to seek to destroy Capitalism but fails to make proposals or take actions capable of the task. This is a form of liberalism

present on the left that comes draped in radical rhetoric, but is at best ineffective and at worst is an actively disorganising force.

DIVERGENCES IN ANARCHISM

We reject divergences from the revolutionary, working class root of Anarchist politics that veer into the weeds of lifestyle, consumer choice, subculture and illegalism. We reject the abandonment of the workers movement and workers power as an integral weapon of the oppressed. We feel that unscalable, underground cliques planning political stunts and symbolic actions removed from the possibility of mass participation is a highly inadequate method of organising. We reject the glorification of disorganisation disguised as an ideological commitment to 'spontaneity'. Spontaneity alone isn't going to build a highly coordinated revolutionary movement capable of destroying Capitalism, and it certainly won't produce a highly coordinated post-Capitalist society capable of meeting the needs of the planet.

MIDDLE CLASS LIBERALISM AND GRIFTING FROM THE LEFT

We reject the middle class influence on radical politics, where movement-building is turned into a social game and used for social leverage, career-building, influencer clout. The focus on symbolic and individual acts of moral goodness that do nothing to build power or shift circumstances for people. In these scenes and informal 'communities', there is also weaponisation of identity (class included) and oppression as a social tool of manipulation, punishment, gatekeeping and exclusion of those with less developed politics, or those who use the wrong language.

Liberals can also take radical politics from the streets and reduce them to slogans to sell on t-shirts, producing content for their platforms and businesses. There are those who sit in corporations and nonprofits looking to break into young political demographics, essentialising and tokenising marginalised people as innate leaders performatively shoved

into the spotlight. There are those who teach anti-racist seminars to give neoliberal organisations a radical veneer. This layer of so-called 'allies' to movements only serving to make capitalism more palatable to regular people while they grift for their own careers.

'DO THE WORK'

We reject liberal calls to allyship — vague gestures that call upon the individual to educate themselves as an atomised being in a collective society. We recognise that this alienated allyship only leads to political paralysis and division in the left. It assumes there is a unified 'education' to undertake and not a mish-mash of contradictory political ideas that people calling for the self-education of others might be referring to.

Built-in training and education within organisations is the answer to the problem of certain groups of people 'hand-holding' others through political lessons. We are comrades, not allies. We take responsibility for people's education in this organisation, whether it's through workshops, study groups, or being honest with each other in the day-to-day, in order to unlearn individualistic and liberal tendencies we all have. We commit to learning solidarity with all people together in both a highly organised and human way, in direct consultation with our comrades in need of solidarity. Through careful allocation of labour and strong organisation, we can collectivise the process of so-called allyship and make it accountable, useful and consultative.

ANTI-SECTARIANISM

We are against sectarianism, which means being hostile to various left political groups due to ideological or tactical differences. We disagree with airing leftist conflicts publicly where they could be sorted out in private. We understand sectarianism to be both a liberal and wrecker behaviour and is often a result of anti-organisationalist sentiments within liberal elements of the left. With that said, we would stand against demonstrably abusive groups and the silencing of

harmed individuals to protect the reputation of organisations.

ANTI-INDIVIDUALISM

This is not an organisation for individual activists, who (intentionally or not) seek to 'use' the resources of the org to serve their individual ends. Individuals in this organisation shouldn't see their role as strong-arming the organisation towards adopting their positions and ideas, or to form sects within the ranks to coerce the rest of the group. This behaviour is undemocratic and will be dealt with seriously.

All members should see themselves as part of a collaborative team trying to make the org as strong as possible in alignment with its stated goals. Major disagreement with the org's stated goals should result in a member attempting to raise aboveboard proposals to change them, or to try to reconcile ideas, suggesting debates on topics in order to convince the organisation of their position or stepping away if agreement isn't found, not a mutiny that attempts to redirect the org undemocratically.

If the org is missing something it needs, we have avenues for members to express concerns and raise ideas in a supported way. Members should try to contribute their bit to improving the org, rather than expecting the org to be perfectly formed and complete before they join — this is our commitment to organising in good faith.

Feminism and gender self-determination

If we are against coercion, we are against state, structural and cultural enforcement of gender and gender roles. If we are against exploitation, we are against the devaluation of domestic and reproductive work. If we are for freedom, then we must accept that each person is their own, along with the expression of their gender.

Patriarchy has created two exclusive genders based a western biological reduction of the body, where medical, political, and religious authorities assign 'sex' based on

physical attributes, while intersex people are pathologised for not fitting in either category. This is how gender hierarchies are justified and reproduced, as part of heterosexism and the nuclear family model.

These institutions and structures of top down power that reduce gender down to sex, that socially and legally enforce gender as obligatory behavioural categories, should be abolished. We recognise that there are more egalitarian Indigenous gender systems and we defend anyone's right to identify with the roles of their gender under their religion or Indigenous culture, without assuming all traditional gender roles are inherently egalitarian. Basically, Anarchists believe all people should be free to choose the life that suits them, traditional or not, but they should avoid supporting policies or initiatives that force others to be like them.

While patriarchy predates capitalism, today patriarchy is a system rooted in colonial property relations and ownership, where positions of dominance and privilege are primarily held by cisgender and heterosexual men — even though patriarchy can be reproduced by anyone. As Anarchists we are against gender and sexual oppression, and recognise we must confront patriarchy head on in our organisations and social movements. While the state may grant some superficial LGBT rights and push rainbow capitalist initiatives, they also enable the right wing enforcement of violent policies of Trans and Queer exclusion in everyday life, and leave criminalised trans people to face state-sanctioned sexual violence.

We stand in solidarity with people of marginalised genders and sexualities, particularly those who are targeted with transmisogyny at the intersections of race, class, sexuality and disability. Our org seeks to learn from both class struggle feminist movements and revolutionary transfeminism, and to advocate for autonomous organising by working class women, gender and sexuality marginalised people. Gender self-determination requires building a feminist and anti-patriarchal counter power, especially within

struggles around gendered labour, housing, childbirth and abortion, daycare, access to hormones and surgery, sexual and domestic violence etc.

We support the decriminalisation of sex work and for sex workers to form unions. We reject any so-called feminists that police what people do with their bodies and view sexual labour as not an equally legitimate livelihood as other jobs, which equally deserves respect, dignity, safety and fair wages. We reject liberal feminism that satisfies itself with the empowerment of the middle class cis woman, her career aspirations and of equalising boardrooms under capitalism — white liberal feminists benefit from having racialised housekeepers fill the role they previously occupied in their own homes. We reject “radical feminism” that relies on arguing a sex-based oppression, which in turn has produced a reactionary anti-trans politics aligned with fascism. Radical feminists discuss abstract harms to cis women and ‘their spaces’ by the inclusion of trans women, while ignoring real harm felt by the trans community.

Our understanding of patriarchy goes beyond the oppression of women, and includes how it harms cis men, trans men, and other masculine gender-nonconforming folks. As an org, we are committed to unlearning the over-simplistic notions of masc-threat, fem-victim, and other gender and sexuality essentialisms, and seek to address gendered distribution of work to cultivate an org culture where people can meaningfully care for each other without coercion. Our organisation requires members to respect people's bodily autonomy — boundaries are unique to each person and are meant to communicate how that specific person wants to be related to (or not) by others. No one gets to claim sovereignty over another person's boundaries. For us, these behavioural agreements are to be lived fully within the org and in our personal lives.

Disability justice

Disabled and chronically ill people are some of the most

harmed by the commodification of human bodies to produce capital, due to having physical and mental differences that are stigmatised and marginalised.

Today, healthcare systems rely on colonial regimes of biocertification. Those who are born disabled often face challenges not only with getting enough help within these systems, but also face social discrimination in everyday life. In turn, war and occupation also produce disabled people, whether they are civilians or military. Many others become disabled through work, whether it's over time in an oppressive environment of burn out, or due to dangerous workplace practices. Capitalism values people who are able to produce profit, and devalues those who aren't seen as productive.

Disabled people have been at the forefront of fighting for welfare and medical advancements, organising against eugenicist policies, job and housing discrimination. Disabled experiences are all unique. We want to honour our different ways of thinking, insights, and different ways of communicating to build a shared culture and respect people's bodily autonomy and wholeness. It's not just about 'accommodating' access needs, disabled people know as well as anyone the need to overthrow any system that only values bodies for the labour and profit they can produce.

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic continues to draw out latent immune problems and chronic illnesses in previously healthy people – this newly disabled population are learning to cope with their new reduced capacities, flooding disability support groups for advice and to lament how they weren't warned properly about the possible side-effects of repeat Covid infections.

Existing disabled and chronically ill people have either been forced into now life-threatening working conditions to survive, or if they're the lucky ones, they've have been able to retreat from public life and live solitary lives. Unable to safely go to the shops, to appointments, see friends, visit

family without incurring risk that could totally ruin their remaining quality of life or worse. People that still wear masks are harassed and side-eyed in the street. This extreme marginalisation is unprecedented and there are no serious attempts to address this from any advocacy body or organisation in society.

The Left seems largely to be relishing being able to return to organising as usual, and hasn't yet contended with the reality of a mass disabling event on working people. A minority of left-wing events recommend masking, but many attendees don't wear them, and the other half wear ineffective cloth or unfitted masks, creating exclusionary zones of what are meant to be the last bastion of inclusion for the marginalised. It seems the propaganda of the 'new normal' has been successful, along with confused messaging about effective measures against disease spread.

Our organisation has meetings online and attends public events safely. This is both out of respect for the disabled and chronically ill community, and because its the only way to be a principled Anarchist in an ongoing pandemic. We refuse to risk harm because its easier than facing reality, and we refuse to allow our organisation to be yet another inhospitable place for disabled or health-conscious people.

More broadly, we are committed to addressing ableism and sanism in our org, and reject burn out and self-sacrificial cultures of activism. We seek a creative, flexible relationship and collective responsibility to doing, sharing, communicating about work, capacity, and accessibility, and to support our members, including disabled people, to do important political work. We want to be capable of care and support and equitable treatment of our disabled members, even if the purpose and sole focus of the organisation isn't creating a support group for disabled people. Our care work needs to be in service of revolutionary ends. We want sustainability and healthy interdependence for the long term.

Environmental justice

Western colonial structures continue today to steer the binary categories of Human vs Nature, through Enlightenment and Darwinist thinking that enables the Man's 'right' to dominate over the Earth. With capitalism and war, this has resulted in great environmental devastation over three centuries, which is ongoing in the forms of greenhouse gas emission, deforestation, ocean acidification, ice caps melting, pandemics, desertification, biodiversity loss and much more.

Third World and Indigenous people experience the brunt of environmental racism. Many have become climate refugees, who are dispossessed from their homes, lands, or forced to live amongst the wreckage of climate catastrophe. Workers put themselves and their health in danger digging for minerals, sorting out plastic rubbish, dealing with industrial waste. Climate crisis is a mass disabling process.

The state is uninterested in taking meaningful climate action, and this includes 'green' political parties that advocate short-sighted policies around carbon prices and fossil fuels. A parliamentary path to climate justice totally contradicts what is actually needed to overturn colonial structures and ways of being in relation to the Earth. We believe you can't consume your way into saving the environment, as this excludes people without money to afford ethically produced goods, and disregards the multinational corporations and states that create the most damage. We also disagree with Climate Leninists that dealing with environmental crises necessarily requires further centralisation of power via a state.

We believe in the necessity of Indigenous sovereignty for a decolonial ecological justice. We seek to learn from past and ongoing campaigns led by Indigenous peoples, as well as their community-based management methods, environmental knowledges to look after nature and biodiversity. This requires solidarity with Indigenous peoples'

in defending their lands and their ways of life.

We also believe in building working class movements that can undertake direct action for environmental justice at a mass scale, through radical unions. Workers deserve to have their livelihoods protected within the industries they are in, and this requires workers' self-management and common ownership. Our understanding of common ownership is not 'nationalisation' as a way of centralising power. We seek the restoration of land ownership to First Nations, but also for workers to self-manage industries in alignment with treaty agreements.

We are in solidarity with environmental activists under state repression, even if we have strategic disagreements. While we recognise the urgency of climate change and those experiencing climate disaster, we are keen to do that through building relationships with First Nations communities and organisations, as well as agitating within workers movements.

While there are limitations of campaigning for legal and heritage rights methods to protect the Earth, this does not mean we refuse such tactics if it aligns with our politics and strategy. In order to halt environmental destruction in the short term, we are supportive of reforms such as Just Transition, as a starting point to common ownership and control of energy, departing from corporate control, and moving towards renewable energy and technology that is accessible for everyone in the world – not just the Global North.

Anti-imperialism

DEFINING IMPERIALISM

As anarchists we define imperialism as involving either state and/or capitalist actors pursuing economic and political influence over other nations or regions.

Imperialism is a tool of capitalism, and an inevitable phase of

capitalist development. US imperialism is a dominant global threat, and international institutions like the World Bank and IMF largely enforce or are aligned with US corporate and strategic interests. Today, there are also corporations richer than whole countries, giving them the ability to exploit resources, workforces and suppress labour laws, unions and environmental protections. Despite rivalries between states and capitalists playing out on mainstream media, they also collaborate to protect common interests, trading military and intelligence strategies to undermine popular movements.

While capitalists in the Global South might be dominated by international capitalists operating within their borders, all capitalists seek profit, power, influence, hegemony, and all require exploitation and expansion to secure profit and remain competitive. As such, we disagree with the Leninist stance that the ruling class only consists of capitalists in particular imperialist nations. Rather, capitalists and states of all nations constitute the ruling class because their interests and position in society conflicts with that of the working class.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIALISM

Australia is a significant imperialist power, its expansionism began from the ongoing occupation of Indigenous nations here, towards historical power grabs in Papua, New Guinea, Fiji and Vanuatu. Australian imperialism today includes placing troops in Iraq, Egypt, Palestine and South Sudan, joint training with the Indonesian military who occupy West Papua, as well as intervening in East Timor, Solomon Islands, Tonga to suppress protests. The Australian government seems unwilling to depart from US interests in Israel's occupation of Palestine, as well as their antagonising of nations like Iran. In addition, US oil and gas companies pay little or no tax while extracting billions in profit from natural resources. A gift to a bigger superpower the Australian government doesn't want to piss off. This allegiance will be tested as the US careens toward fascism and makes demands of its allies and threats to its enemies.

ON NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

Many national liberation movements in the Global South will ally with domestic capitalists to fight off imperialists. For the people, nationalism can be a tool of resistance to imperialist domination, but for capitalists it is a tool used to obscure class antagonisms and promote a false unity that benefits them at the expense of the working class.

In allying with domestic capitalists and forgoing class struggle, these movements are quickly pulled from their liberatory values and towards authoritarianism and profit-seeking: increased government repression, corruption, exploitation of local people, control and decimation of unions, disastrous economic policies, as well as civil war, mass imprisonment, torture, displacement, and extrajudicial killings. These injustices cannot be simply excused as moral failings of specific leaders, but are inevitabilities brought about by the realities of operating capitalism through a state in a globalised capitalist world.

Anarchists will organise within national liberation movements because we are anti-imperialist. Though, as anti-capitalists, our task within them is to argue that the international working class and peasantry should band together to fight both domestic and international capitalists, through popular class organisations that aim to wrestle back control over our lives and can birth democratic structures for a new society that is opposed to authoritarian rule.

CLASS STRUGGLE FOR ALL?

Though, as many Global South liberation movements learned, workers strikes alone are often violently opposed by occupying militaries. Where dock workers were slain while striking against Portuguese colonisers in Guinea-Bissau, the PAIGC abandoned class struggle for armed struggle. It would be remiss of anarchists to propose a strategy that didn't take into account the violence wrought by imperialists and colonialists. In resisting US imperialism during the 1970s, anarchists in Uruguay correctly saw their workers

movement as the central liberatory force, but managed to defend it against the unrestrained violence of the imperialists. Those who know this history can see that anarchists can maintain a class struggle orientation without it only being applicable in 'western' contexts, as some claim.

In not centering armed struggle, but class struggle, the working class can meaningfully build and maintain organisations through which to express their democratic political will. In Cuba, the state took hierarchical control of the unions to create a subservient working population, decimating the popular organisations that should facilitate the democratic will of the working class and turning them into an apparatus of control. This is antithetical to the anarchist vision of a democratic revolution led by the working class itself, and anarchists who were the most organised force within the Cuban workers movement at the time paid the ultimate price for their commitment to workers' democracy.

Rather than allying with states and arguing for their 'sovereignty' while they launch attacks that predominantly kill working class people, we ally with the working class in struggle around the world. Through our respective workers organisations, we can coordinate workers action across different continents, trapping imperialists in a vice grip between strikes by domestic workers and by international workers in solidarity. We can starve regimes of oil and guns by refusing their manufacturing or transport like dockworkers from various western contexts did, to embargo apartheid South Africa while struggles in the country were waged. Only with a truly internationalist strategy can a globalised imperialist capitalist system be ended for good.

This requires dispelling the myth that workers in the west have been bought off by the proceeds of imperialism. Not only is this not demonstrated empirically but some of the most militant workers within our context (Builders Laborers Federation) were the highest paid precisely due to their militancy. There is revolutionary potential in the working

class, it just needs to be accessed through organising more effectively than reactionaries and nationalists, and that is not achieved through essentialising settlers or white workers.

ANARCHISTS OPPOSE CAMPISM

From where we are, it is necessary and practical to oppose the Australian state in its conquests here and elsewhere. While pursuing a commitment to revolutionary defeatism and anti-imperialist struggle, we will still take a principled stance of opposing all oppressors everywhere, because we stand with the international working class and not the states that oppress them.

The campist notion that nation states are waging a protracted anti-imperialist war for the liberation of all people on earth is an idealistic fantasy that should have ended with the Sino-Soviet split, though many on the left still bend reality to defend this fiction. While these arguments aren't meaningfully defending the global south from imperialist attacks, by denying or justifying cruelty from non-western states, they are demonstrating to large portions of the working class that they can't be trusted.

In reality, states like China, India, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Vietnam, Iran, Ethiopia etc are seeking either global or regional power too, and oppress the working class, indigenous and ethnic minorities in their regions. People that anarchists will always stand with and act in solidarity with. Despite the social democratic reforms cemented by these regimes and parroted as propaganda by their supporters, to call these regimes 'socialist' is a disservice to all that suffer under them, and to all who genuinely fight for the establishment of a socialist world.

Religion and spirituality

Because there is no one definition on what exactly constitutes 'religion' or 'spirituality', we loosely define them as ways of faith, worship, and relating to the sacred. Our

organisation holds absolutely no hostility to either religion or spirituality, and does not regard either as inherently problematic. We welcome members of all faiths and none.

The liberation theology movements of Latin America (amongst other places), the Sufi-led resistances against western colonisation in North Africa and elsewhere across the Islamic world, are examples that show how religion has played a large part in peoples struggles. For many First Nations in Australia, spirituality also exists in their struggles for Country, as all life on Earth is interrelated, and interconnected with their ancestors and creator spirits. On the other side of the coin, religion and spirituality are exploited to further capitalist, colonial and imperialist projects. For example, many so-called 'missionary' movements are active across the Global South that engage in oppressive practices, such as enforcing their own foreign education, exploitative NGO and charity work, even promoting violence against queer and trans people.

We oppose theocracy, which we define as methods and structures of governance that, in the name of a particular religion or religious elite, use violent and coercive measures to oppress and control people. In simple terms, a theocracy is a state that justifies itself via religion — and of course, states are inherently oppressive. We do not conflate theocracy with 'authentic', 'pure' or 'traditional' manifestations of religion. Theocracy should not be confused with participation of religious people in politics, or forms of politics that arise from religious practice or are informed by religious principles. However, we acknowledge that in many parts of the world Anarchists suffer severe repression by theocratic states for their beliefs and are in-turn often more strictly anti-religion. We stand in absolute solidarity with our comrades facing repression and acknowledge that our position stems from the conditions within our society.

Similarly, we are opposed to cults, defined as any group that (usually, but not always) styles itself as religious, spiritual or even as a social, lifestyle or political organisation, but whose

activities are centred around benefiting one leader or leadership elite. This includes the use of manipulation, deception, exploitation, coercion, and violence against group members (or the general public) in order to generate profit or some other benefit (such as power, control, or sexual gain) for the group's leader/leadership. We understand that the word 'cult' is often used as an insult to delegitimise religions that one doesn't like. We recognize that there are some groups regarded as cults that are still routinely persecuted by states. Our general position towards such groups is that we oppose the state persecution that they face, but reserve the right to condemn their beliefs and/or practices.

We oppose movements like New Atheism that advocate all religion as 'irrational' and push to worship 'science' instead. Although people are free to oppose religion, we have absolutely no tolerance for reactionary behaviours and actions that stem from the belief that religion and spirituality are inherently unsuited to leftist politics. We likewise reject attempts to exclude religious people from revolutionary struggle, or undertake struggle which seeks to destroy or delegitimise religion or spirituality. We recognise that similar to theocracy, secularism is ultimately a Statist discourse that has also been used for oppressive purposes.

Anti-fascism

Fascism is a threat to all life on earth, and can be defined as a set of right-wing ultra-nationalist ideas characterised by forced suppression of opposition, and rigid command and order of society invested in the power of finance capital. Its political ideas, movement, and regimes are inextricably linked to colonialism, imperialism, nationalism, authoritarianism, and clung to historically by the wealthy afraid of the 'proletarianisation' of the poor and socialism. Fascism isn't only made up of reaction and fear, it has a clear intellectual history that makes moral and biological claims to natural leadership, survival of the fittest, and might is right. Fascist philosophy has justified slave trades and

genocide through ethno-supremacist ideologies such as White Supremacy, Nazism, Zionism, Hindutva, Han Chauvinism etc. Fascism today is disguised and effective through the State and their prison, police, military and intelligence arms.

During times where the cost of living is high and people struggling to make ends meet, fascists recruit and do well with fear tactics to secure their support. By scapegoating Indigenous, poor, migrants, Jews, trans people, fascists argue that 'traditional' values will fall, western society will collapse, and wealth will be pulled from those who 'rightfully' hold it. Whether the upper, middle, working classes believe in a rightful order of elites or not, these groups absorb a perceived or real fear of communism and can side with fascists. Even marginalised people can harbour and perpetuate conservative, regressive ideas and actions, due to people's own cultural backgrounds or adopted from foreign cultures. For example, people may come to fascist ideas from forming political or emotional defence mechanisms against their own hardship, also to actually assert dominance against another culture or class so they can improve their own social status or capital.

Fascism in our context has found inroads and success electorally and through building reactionary movements. Fused with conservative politics and capitalist business interests, fascism delivers 'much needed' authoritarianism — tight border control, excessive surveillance and interference in everyday life, anti-protest laws justified to prevent 'terrorist threats'. Ecofascists blame immigration for environmental degradation. Gender fascism looks like debates on the 'existence' of trans people, accusations of grooming, attempts to remove reproductive and sex worker rights. The antisemitic far-right covid pandemic deniers along with liberals have enabled 'covid-normal'. Nazis on our shores recruit out of these reactionary social movements concerned about so-called threats to 'Australian values' and 'the family unit'. In this way fascism requires false narratives, pseudoscience and the dehumanisation of people.

Fascism can dress itself in red too. Happy to wave in authoritarian governments with communist trimmings in order to protect itself against larger imperialist threats. The way Stalinists are often yelling about the atrocities committed by imperialist powers, but still justifying that power should be centralised in their hands. Stalinists are primed to the threat of America, but when they've seized power, these states have historically murdered Anarchists for suggesting that power should be wielded in common by regular and working people, not by a state of elites. While American Imperialism is a real threat to world democracy, this still doesn't justify authoritarianism as a response. It justifies the organised masses of working class people the world over forming structures of genuine class power, especially the Global South.

Any serious organisation existing in these times must take a hard and clear stance against fascism — whether it be the pandemic eugenics willing to sacrifice the disabled and immunocompromised for 'freedoms' of the able-bodied, or literal Nazis who recruit from right-wing media propaganda. We aim to organise serious opposition to local fascist groups organising in our context, amongst communities threatened by their existence. As an org that takes seriously the emancipation of the Global South, critically analysing the roots and consequences of fascism amongst marginalised people is crucial for strategising against international fascism. The way we do this is to build a serious militant organisation with serious security, as fighting fascism doesn't just mean Nazis on the street, but fighting against an ever-increasing genocidal national fascist security state that increasingly crushes dissent and democratic protest.

About

ARC UP is an Anarchist Communist organisation based in Narm (Melbourne), on Kulin Nation lands, with a focus on building Indigenous and migrant class power.

Want to learn more about anarchism?

We run online workshops where you can explore these political ideas more fully. To express your interest, fill out the form on our website: <https://arcup.org/join/>

