

In this months MUTINY:



Our international correspondent Cynical Smurf is in the West Bank giving a firsthand account of harassment and violence on Palestinian youths by Israeli snatch squads.



Tim Briedis analyses the changing of the guard as Labor steps in to don the mantle of Australian imperialism that many previous governments have worn, and to continue in Liberal's steps.



A call for a Regional Anarchist Federation, that will create new networks and to link existing ones, to support opposition against all forms of oppression, to... you get the drift – read it here!



We see Anarchist Direct Action (ADA) strike out as a Melbourne organisation aiming to smash capital and the state through direct action. They're interested in hooking up with other anarchist peeps.



Reviews of Robert Newman's *The Fountain* at the Centre of the World, Benedict Anderson's *Under Three Flags*, and latest 3D novelty film – *Beowulf*.



Black Rose Anarchist Books turns 25! with 2 birthday parties!

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☞ Sunday December 16th ☞ 3pm ☞ afternoon tea in the library ☞ Birthday Cake! ☞ Old Photos! ☞ 22 Enmore Rd (Near Newtown station) ph:0424490792 e:blackrosebooks@yahoo.com.au

MUTINY

A PAPER OF
ANARCHISTIC IDEAS
& ACTIONS

DECEMBER 2007
NUMBER #21

A PROPOSAL
FOR A
REGIONAL
ANARCHIST
FEDERATION

ANNAPOLIS ON THE
GROUND



LABOURS NEW
MILITARISM:
"SMART POWER"



ANARCHIST
DIRECT
ACTION

Mutiny began as a group exploring different ways to resist war at home & abroad. We started a monthly zine to explore different avenues of disobedience. We know there are lots of radical ideas around & we want people to write about their experiences & opinions. The Mutiny collective is meeting regularly again: we're looking at Australian imperialism & avenues of resistance in the Pacific & the region. Contact us if you're interested.



(The mutiny zine collective does not necessarily agree with all the opinions of contributors. Contributors do not necessarily agree with all the opinions of the mutiny collective. The mutiny collective doesn't agree with all the opinions of the mutiny collective.)

Editors for this month:
Angry Nerd,
T with Alice,
SourDough, Graf
Cat, Dumpstered
Twin and Princess
Mob.

c/- po box 4, enmore, nsw, 2042, australia
 mutineers@graffiti.net

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compellingly, in episodes of victory and despair, teargas and police brutality, people power and betrayal by 'protest leaders'.

The book is given life by its supporting characters: an ambitious Mexican cop excited about modernisation and NAFTA, the women who use their jobs at the telephone exchange to pass on other messages, the British squatters who travel to Seattle with illegal-immigrant Daniel in their party.

It's about patterns and chance, choices and structures. What the police see as 'a whole network of grassroots, community subversion [...] an organised terrorist cell' is really the web of family and friendship connections, and literary coincidence.

Princess Mob

Beowulf 3D
(film)

The story begins with a Danish kingdom serially attacked by a deformed giant, Grendel (Crispin Glover), from which they have no luck defending themselves from. Enter Beowulf: his fighting strength surpassed only by his ego.

Beowulf 3D is a story filled to the brim with machismo. The women in the story serve as

something to serve men, clean after men, sexually satisfy men and be saved by men. Furthermore the most powerful woman, Grendel's mum (Angelina Jolie), is the ultimate evil. This presents a thoroughly conservative patriarchal interpretation of the poem (from which the story originates) that had the possibility to be taken in so many directions.

All the characters are designed with a medieval Norse aesthetic, except for Grendel's mum, who appears with modern day make up and high heels. For me, this breaks the illusion of the world that the rest of movie works to create. Also it works to normalise the beauty ideals of today, as if beauty is objective and timeless rather than socially constructed.

The battle scenes are very dramatic, taking full advantage of the third dimension to create some vertigo inspiring moments. The landscapes look great and use the 3D medium well with awesome close-ups and fly throughs. Though the 3D characters are sometimes a bit stiff there are times when they look so photo realistic it would be hard to distinguish them from a real life scene.

Overall: Dolby 7.1 surround sound 3D high definition silliness.

Graf Cat and AngryNerd



Jura Books has been continuously open for 30 years - pretty good going for an an activist organisation!

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Grains of Sand

5pm Sunday 30th December at Black Rose, 22 Enmore Rd Newtown

A Mexican documentary looking at the struggle of teachers in rural and city areas throughout Mexico. It looks historically at the reactionary role of unions in Mexico to sell out workers, and therefore the importance of organising from the grassroots with a level of autonomy. With archival footage, interviews with teachers and leaders in the union movement, this documentary provides a powerful critique of bureaucratic organising in the workplace, and stresses the need to try organising in different ways to not repeat the mistakes of the past.

REVIEWS

Review of Under Three Flags by Benedict Anderson (book)

Under Three Flags is an ambitious attempt to illuminate how the anti-colonial revolution of the Philippines in the late 1890s was influenced by other movements happening around the world. It is ambitious because Anderson not only paints a picture of a world in turmoil – where there seemed to be an actual mass consciousness for revolution, whether it be worker’s uprisings in rapidly industrialising Europe or anti-colonial rebellions in the Third World – but how ideas and information of revolution and struggle effectively flowed across the entire world. He particularly focuses on anarchism as the critical ideology of the time.

Anderson uses two key figures of the Filipino revolution, anthropologist Isabelo de los Reyes and novelist José Rizal, to track how what was going on in other parts of the world came to influence the Filipino revolution. It actually starts as a rather drab affair as he gives the backgrounds of both men and follows with an odd (well I thought it was odd for a historian), extended literary review of Rizal’s two novels ‘Noli me Tangere’ and ‘El Filibusterismo’. There is a purpose to this though as he explains how passages from both books were clearly influenced by other artists and revolutionaries Rizal had met during his long stay in Europe. He shows that while Rizal himself was never an anarchist he was never far from what was a burgeoning anarchist movement in Europe. Isabelo, meanwhile, had his contact with anarchism when he was sent by the colonial authorities to the infamous Montjuïc prison in Spain where many anarchists were held, and torture was commonly used.

The real interest this book holds is how it depicts that the world at that time was possibly more open to the exchange of revolutionary ideas than today. Famous anarchists like Malatesta and Louise Michel pass through Anderson’s writing and many more unknown people are uncovered for the reader through his amazing research. He draws the links between Europe, Asia and the anti-colonial revolutions of Latin America, particularly in Cuba. There’s also a one page postscript where Anderson

tells of a visit to Manila University to give a talk on the topic of this book at an academic conference during which at one point he was just hanging about on campus when a student gave him a flyer. It turned out to be for the Philippines Indy media and Anderson is genuinely excited that some structure seemed to exist again for the spread and sharing of anarchist ideas around the world.

Sour Dough

The Fountain at the Centre of the World Robert Newman (book)

This is a novel about long-lost brothers. Evan Hutch grew up in the UK and works for a PR company that specialises in helping the worst of big corporations manage their image through skilful manipulation of the media. But then he gets sick and tries to track down his brother in the hope that their genetic link will help him. They have nothing else in common: his brother, Chano Salgado, stayed in Mexico and became a student revolutionary. His wife was assassinated and he went to jail and lost touch with his son. He was trying to live a quiet life but almost accidentally becomes a ‘terrorist’ after an action against a toxic waste plant. Just as Chano goes into hiding, both his brother Evan and his son Daniel come looking for him.

Published in 2003, this is very much a novel of the ‘anti-globalisation’ movement, tracing the interconnected passages of capital (from toxic waste plant to shining skyscraper) and people (stowing away in ships, captured in detention centres, walking, jet-setting) across the globe, recording the webs of connections and movements of protest and reaction.

Evan, Daniel and Chano travel across the world finding each other by chance and being torn apart. Their journeys lead them all to Seattle just as the WTO is about to meet... So we know something of what will happen, the background against which this part of the story will unfold. Despite Evan’s corporate arrogance, Chano’s weary cynicism and Daniel’s naïveté, we know that somehow they’re going to end up at The Big Protest: but we don’t know if they’re going to find each other, or what will happen if they do. This part of the story is told

Brief News

Mexico: student protesters attacked

Throughout November there has been brutal repression of students in a rural teachers College of Ayotzinapa, located in the Southern Mexican state of Guerrero. The protests were a response to the centre-left state government’s attacks on the college in reforms that would strip 75 positions. On November 14th, after months of negotiations with no result, students from colleges throughout Guerrero took to the streets. In the state’s capital, Chilpancingo over 800 students occupied the state legislature building. Two hours after the occupation some 500 agents of the State Preventive Police (PPE), with air support from a helicopter, marched into the building and tried to remove the protesters. The confrontation lasted about two hours, with police hurling tear gas canisters and clubbing students, while the students hurled firecrackers at the agents.

Supporting the action was the Guerrero Autonomous University (UAG) radio station which ran live reporting on the events and called on area residents to back the students. Some residents appeared and tried to stop the police, as did some legislators.

Finally about 300 protesters broke out of the building, blocked the Sun Highway and took 20 gas cylinders from a gas delivery truck, threatening to set them off. The police pulled back, and local politicians arranged for all the protesters to leave the area; most went to the UAG campus. Some 10 people had been injured in the operation and one protester was hospitalized with a fractured cranium; another 250 suffered from the effects of the tear gas and broken glass. According to media sources damage to computers and furniture in the police operation added up to over \$300,000.

On the 30th November continuing the struggle against the privatization of the education and the defunding of public education, more than 2000 students held another march near the rural teachers College of Ayotzinapa with support from peasants, parents and social organisations. This march however suffered violent state repression as 56 were arrested, 10 people disappeared (which the government refused to give information about), and 2 people were taken to hospital with serious injuries. This repression included prominent figures within the movement being harassed and bashed by police leaving the protest and in one case at the home of one comrade.

After such severe repression students at the colleges stated they would march and disrupt the tourist region if all prisoners were not released. On December 3rd, 500 students gathered in anticipation, yet the court ordered the final 18 training teachers be released. The students are however committed to continuing their struggle of demanding their rightful teaching positions, the guarantee of free, public

Australia: Two More G20 arrests

Two more people have been arrested in the last month in relation to the G20 protests last year. On November 15th, Gabriel Shanks from New Zealand, was arrested at Sydney airport while changing to a flight to Europe. He was charged with riot. He was held in custody over the weekend before being released on \$10 000 surety, with the condition that he remain in Melbourne until his trial.

On December 10, a 37 year old man was arrested in Brisbane and charged with riot. He was not taken into custody but will make his own way to Melbourne to appear in court on December 14.

In other news, a magistrate rejected an application by twenty G20 defendants to have their cases heard in the Magistrates Court, rather than the higher County Court. They will join 5 other defendants in County Court, and it is likely that the trial will not happen until 2009.

Childrens court cases are in court this week as we go to press.



Labor's New Militarism: 'Smart Power'

Cops, Troops and Racist Managers at Home, Imperialism Abroad

by Tim Briedis

While Howard's crushing defeat on November 24 was an important victory; coming on the back of mass opposition to WorkChoices, concern over climate change and opening up further space for radical ideas, Labor's ascendancy offers a host of new problems that are crucial to analyse & understand. Militarism and imperialism in particular will remain vital aspects of the Australian state. This article attempts to briefly summarise initial developments in this area and to deduce likely future outcomes.

The 'Defense' Agenda

Rudd has openly articulated the core elements of his 'defense' plans. As he says "Our Defense policy is based on three pillars: our alliance with the United States, our membership in the United Nations, and... our policy of comprehensive engagement in East Asia and in the wider Asia Pacific region." This means at the least, a continued support for American



wars, and an expansion of Australian interests and domination over the Pacific.

In Rudd's election

campaign there was a firm commitment to continuing Howard's record of 11 consecutive years of military budget increases for the long term. He argued that "what we are committing ourselves to... is to maintain real Defense expenditure into the future by at least three per cent real annually out to 2016".

As has been widely reported his acceptance speech included a moralistic paean to the United States - stating that the U.S. remains "our friend and great ally". This continues on from his earlier arguments that one should "state unequivocally that America remains an overwhelming force for good in the world".

Commitment to (partial) withdrawal from Iraq is entirely consistent with this. New Defense Minister Joel Fitzgibbon explains that "we'll be sitting down with our allies, in particular the U.S., over the coming weeks to work out how we can bring those combat troops home by mid-next year, without leaving anyone in the lurch, without putting our troops or the troops of any other nation at risk". While Iraq is ravaged by Blackwater mercenaries, U.S. troops setting up baits for sniper practice - where an explosive device is put on a road and if anyone touches it they're shot - and the continuing destruction of all services and infrastructure, Labor prefers to use 'diplomacy'; and politeness.

organizing rather than through establishment-controlled structures like universities or student unions.

5. A regular publication, either quarterly or biannually, could be produced. We see this as crucial to furthering both internal communication and propagating anarchist ideas to a wider audience. A website could be established.

6. An annual convergence (that isn't centred around a major protest) to bring together anarchists from across the region, to strengthen networks, share information and skills and to improve collective campaigns.

7. Collectives would nominate rotating delegates or spokes that would meet either quarterly or every six months. This would be to further communication and facilitate the better functioning of the federation. We believe these would operate by a consensus-based model, with details to be decided at the foundation convergence.

8. These people could be a contact point for the federation in their geographical area. A phone tree for urgent contact and discussion would be established.

9. When there is a cross-over between collective work on certain important issues, federation working groups could be established. For instance this could include an Indigenous Solidarity working group or one against Australian Imperialism. We see collectives across the region working on these issues, and believe that there could be

better co-operation and development of ideas. An Outreach working group could be set up to better spread our shared philosophy.

10. We hope for a safer spaces policy to come out of a foundation convergence and we believe that there should be a grievance committee delegated at each convergence.

Ideas on Safer spaces

We have to talk and think about ways to make the Federation and its events spaces in which we respect and support each other: because this doesn't just happen automatically. It is everyone's responsibility to think about how their behaviour and the behaviour of others affect people's ability to participate and feel safe in a space. We all have to constantly work to ensure our spaces are free from physical violence and sexual assault, from intimidation and discrimination. There will be people involved in the Federation from various backgrounds and with various identities and people will have different experiences of the same spaces. We want to be able to vigorously disagree with each other while still making sure that everyone is listened to and is able to talk.

We want to set aside significant time at the initial convergence to talk about these issues. Any founding document would highlight such concepts as a necessary element of revolutionary struggle. We hope that collectives and individuals will bring concrete ideas and proposals to participate in this dialogue.

Moving Forward

As we have tried to make clear, all parts of this proposal are open for discussion and change. To facilitate discussion over the next few months - hopefully leading to a convergence - we have created a blog and email account. We see the blog as a public forum for discussion while the email would originally be for direct queries/responses/getting in contact. If it becomes necessary we would possibly also look at creating an egroup for more practical matters such as organising a formation convergence.

<http://afederation.wordpress.com>

Anarchist.federation.discussion@gmail.com

Living without Hierarchy

The language of 'non-hierarchical' organising can still be used to implement the centralised control of a few. We believe that radicals should create structures that are genuinely decentralised and leaderless. Some frameworks for this include rotating and recallable delegates, consensus-based process and spokescouncils.

Although we may formally understand that racism, sexism, etc are an oppressive part of capitalism we still need to consciously 'unlearn' these concrete ideas and ways of social interaction in our own political organising and daily lives. This cannot be achieved by merely writing a paper - we need to create a liberatory culture everyday. That there are many ways of resisting all these forms of oppression is a strength, and we want to find ways of connecting our politics with these struggles.

Some Thoughts on Contemporary Struggles

The struggle against the global environmental crisis is inextricably linked to that against capitalism, and is a significant part of contemporary radical action. Environmental crises will necessarily affect those already marginalised and excluded more than those who are economically and socially privileged. 'Green capitalism' is not an answer, and we understand that a truly sustainable society will necessarily be decentralised, anti-capitalist and radically democratic.

We support Indigenous struggles for true sovereignty, dignities and against the theft of land and resources and ongoing genocide. We understand that many modern states were built on a brutal and ongoing colonialism, which continues to be upheld and imposed by police and the military.

Our struggles are internationalist and directed against the nation state. Nationalism and patriotism are barriers that are used to divide and repress 'ordinary' people, and prevent our own autonomous self-organisation. Permitted and unpermitted migration is a pivotal part of contemporary capitalism, dividing rich and poor, and the vast bulk of people on the basis of a false nationality. We accept the slogan that "No One is Illegal".

Direct Action, not Lobbying or Negotiation

We don't want to negotiate with the representatives of the state or the functionaries of capital. We realise that the dominant global institutions are so intrinsically undemocratic, pervasive and directed by profit-making that lobbying has little or no effect. We see direct action and mutual aid as occurring in many different forms and as the most practical and realistic way of building our power, our autonomy and achieving revolutionary change.

Thoughts on structure

1. When we talk about a regional federation, we are deliberately unclear about where in particular we are talking about. To limit ourselves to Australian borders seems silly: we would like to be open to comrades from Aotearoa and further. On the other hand, perhaps it would be more practical to begin with a smaller geographic region. There has already been some discussion about forming an Asian Anarchist Network as well.
2. The federation would be horizontal and based upon already existing affinity groups or collectives that choose to align themselves with it. We see this as one way of ensuring a rejection of top-down politics.
3. We do see there as being some solid requirements for participating individuals and collectives. We believe that there should be some kind of dues structure. This would give us some financial reserve and could be used on, among other things, a publication, jail solidarity and travel expenses for delegates. There would be an e-mail list or a message board for discussion.
4. Anarchist spaces that already exist, such as infoshops throughout the country, could be supported more effectively. They could link up more frequently, and could provide an alternative space for

In his first few weeks, Rudd has already begun subjecting government to militaristic neoliberal 'efficiency' – proposing an initiative to cut the spending of all departments by 2% except defense. Fitzgibbon has criticized Howard's purchase of 24 Super Hornet Fighter Jets – for not being effective enough. As he says "I'm sure the Super Hornets need to be part of the mix now, but we want to ensure that we maintain our superiority and air capability". Importantly, there have been reports of an increased Australian military presence in Afghanistan. Labor has constantly sought to make a clear distinction between the 'good war' in Afghanistan – conceived of as being entirely justified in the fight against terrorism and the war in Iraq; seen as a strategic blunder. Robert McClelland, their spokesperson for defense under Opposition, was explicit about this. According to The Age Labor "is very likely to make that commitment (to increased troop numbers) at a meeting of defense ministers in Scotland this week. Defense Force Chief Angus Houston has argued that international troops are likely to be 'needed' in Afghanistan for at least a decade. This comes in a period of deepening political crisis in Afghanistan; with heavy fighting and mounting casualties.

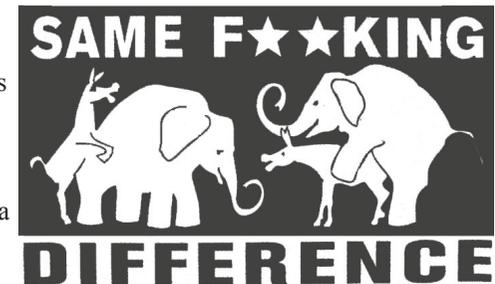
New Language, Same Results

A prime distinction from the Liberals is likely to be the use of a different imperialist vocabulary. In an article for the leading Australian foreign policy magazine The Diplomat Rudd opined about the importance of what he calls 'Smart Power'. He argues that Howard has let "Defense drift" – because of a lack of intelligent application of its use.

As Rudd explains "When you look at the long-term defense-force structure, quite apart from immediate operations here in our own region and war fighting operations currently occurring in various parts of the Middle East, it's very important that clarity is achieved in a new defense white paper, and the full structure evolves from that."

This approach is particularly pertinent with regards to his advocacy for "comprehensive engagement" in the Pacific. When he discusses what he terms the "Arc of Instability" (the Pacific) he argues in a critique of the Liberals that "Instead of the promises of the Enhanced Cooperation Program, our relations with Papua New Guinea are marked by bans on contact with PNG ministers; the Solomon Island's government has responded to Australia's role in the Regional Assistance Mission by booting out the Australian High Commissioner and the Australian-recruited police commissioner; the government's efforts to prevent a military coup in Fiji failed completely despite the years of assistance we have provided to the Fijian military forces; and we have had to send emergency help to restore order to the previously peaceful state of Tonga." Labor would prefer control of the region without such complexities.

Their approach would instead be supplemented by large scale 'leadership' training programs in Australia. The 'best and brightest' of the region will be Australian (or New Zealand)



trained - and will have an 'associated personal and professional sense of connection' with Australia and Australian interests in the region. Resistance movements, which have already seen riots in Tonga, East Timor and the Solomons, will be undercut in this vision.

Despite the added 'intelligence' a withdrawal of troops is not on the cards, and Rudd has stated his desire for military increases. An expansion of Operation RAMSI – the Australian military and police operation in the Solomon Islands – is a real possibility, with the 4 year undertaking already comprising hundreds of soldiers, police, and bureaucratic personnel.

Smart, 'Humanitarian' Militarism at Home

Labor is also a strong backer of Howard's neocolonial intervention in the Northern Territory; openly described by Aboriginal communities there as an invasion. The federal election revealed overwhelming opposition to it from Indigenous persons in the Northern Territory. When Labor MPs in affected areas emphasized some political differences to the Coalition they consistently received over 80% of the vote; with 95% in the town of Wadeye. Labor has promised to restore the CDEP (Community Development and Employment Program) and the permit system but this is not nearly enough. A host of problems remain. White managers have been appointed to 'prescribed' communities; they have the power to enter any meeting and change any local program. The welfare 'quarantine' system, which apply only to Aboriginal people, and turns half of their income into food vouchers typically tied to specific large businesses (which further undermines small Aboriginal businesses), rely on the suspension of the Racial Discrimination Act. A vicious and brutal police and military presence is in existence, enforcing the changes.

Despite the claim that the intervention was a response to the Anderson & Wild "Little Children are Sacred" report, there have been no new charges laid in connection with child sexual abuse. No new community-based services to ensure the safety and protection of children have been established, and there has been a notable duplication of services, particularly in the area of child health checks.

In the December 1 Australian, the new Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Jenny Macklin, argued that the intervention should be expanded to all states and territories. This has again been justified under the rhetoric of humanitarianism. Macklin doesn't want to be "ideological about it". She claims she is "just going to take an evidence-based approach and if it's working to protect children, (if) people are spending less money on alcohol and gambling and more money on food and clothing to get kids to school, then (she's) for that". Clearly this is an extremely troubling development.

The removal of the Liberal government opens up new space to approach these issues with a renewed vigor. Hopefully there can be a broadening and deepening of anti-war politics and concerns, both in a move away from annual protest marches and to increased militancy and directness, linking up with Indigenous communities and their struggles; and a widening of the repertoire of arguments from those about the 'tragedy in Iraq' to a more thorough-going and consistent understanding of the brutal nature of Australian imperialism.

It was written by a small group of anarchists in Sydney. We've been helped a lot by discussion with others from Sydney and elsewhere, from looking at other models and from discussion that happened around previous proposals for a federation here. The people who wrote this are involved in anarchist projects such as Mutiny and the Black Rose Books collective, but it hasn't been endorsed by these groups.

How we might get from proposal to federation:

Over the next few months, we hope that people will discuss the idea of an Anarchist Federation in their groups, in their cities, through existing forums & through an email list and a blog set up for such discussion.

<http://afederation.wordpress.com>

Anarchist.federation.discussion@gmail.com

Within the first half of next year we would like to help organise a convergence with the explicit purpose of discussing, and hopefully forming, the federation.

Common politics

The fundamental politics for participation in the federation would be that members:

- Seek the abolition of capitalism and class society in all its forms.
- Support an organisational philosophy based on decentralisation, mutual aid and autonomy, and reject domination and hierarchical/authoritarian organising.
- Oppose all forms of oppression and power over others and recognise that these rarely play out in isolation but are strongly interwoven and connected.
- Believe that an anarchist society is desirable, necessary and possible. Revolutionary change isn't going to come from leaders, experts or professional activists but can only come from below: from the collective self-organisation of 'ordinary' people.
- Believe in solidarity across and against borders and are internationalists. We reject the state and all its functions such as the police and military.

Some further points:

Here are some more thoughts that we've been discussing, and which inform our understanding of what the 5 points mean. These are provided for the purpose of discussion, not to be limits on the basis of federation.

Radical Struggles, Capitalism and Class

There are many different important elements in revolutionary and radical struggle. These include, but are not limited to, class, anti-colonialism, anti-racism, feminism and queer liberation. Some see one liberatory movement – such as the class struggle – as most important, whilst others choose not to create such a hierarchy. We hope that through working together we can discuss these differences in helpful ways.

When we talk about class struggle, we don't simply mean the actions of the 'traditional' blue-collar working class. We recognise that the class composition of today has changed - largely as a product of neoliberal economic policies - and is characterised by conditions of casualisation and precarity. The unpaid and unrecognised labourer, the unemployed, the casually and underemployed, are all integral to revolutionary change. This class is diverse, but interconnected and we realise that all these struggles are affecting the same global capitalist system.

We further understand that capitalism is not just multinational corporations, economic summits or secret meetings of the very rich; it is a social relation and system that is played out and produced in our everyday lives.

A Proposal for a Regional Anarchist Federation

Introduction

Even as many of us constantly engage in struggles to enact our revolutionary politics and ideas in collectives, as individuals, at work and at play, there is often an underlying sense of isolation from broader anarchist activity from which to draw knowledge and inspiration. We feel that this is a severe barrier on our ability to maintain effective struggle or to even propagate a revolutionary, anarchist politics on a larger-scale. We believe a Federation that collectives (and individuals) over the wide distances of this region can align with would begin to solve these problems.

Mostly the feeling that an Anarchist Federation is necessary emanates from a simple desire for solidarity amongst revolutionaries that cannot always be found in our local communities and workplaces. A Federation could provide strong support for campaigns and actions across the region. When organising around similar issues, collectives would gain a greater momentum from being able to share ideas and resources with others from across the continent and beyond. This is not a new idea but we hope that a new attempt can be made at solidifying such possibilities. That is what this proposal is for.

A solid, ongoing federation would help us look after each other. Solidarity with and support for those of us (and also those who aren't 'us'), who come under the repressive boot of the state is a crucial aspect of mutual aid and creating an anarchist community and will be an ongoing project for as long as we continue to resist.

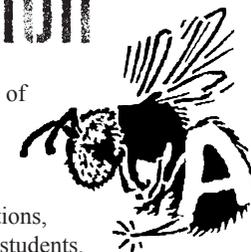
Much of what communication currently takes place between anarchists happens on an ad-hoc basis at convergences, which are usually connected to major protests. This activist focus tends to exclude those who, because of family or work responsibilities, geographic isolation, or other reasons, can't, or don't want to, attend such events. A federation would enable better communication and ongoing political development. It could be a useful point of reference for people who, for whatever reason, are unable to be involved in collectives but who want to stay in contact or who need support. This would be important in helping to ensure intergenerational continuity so that individuals are able to stay involved and connected to anarchist struggle while being able to pass on their knowledge.

We do not wish to see a federation replicate or 'override' networks that already exist. By wanting to organise more explicitly as anarchists we don't want to become inward-looking, purist or isolated. On the contrary, we hope that if we are more strongly organised, we will be better able to work alongside and be a part of social struggles that do not define themselves as anarchist.

One of the points we've discussed frequently is the tension between openness and political commonality. We don't think it's necessary or desirable to try to form an organisation of every activist, or even everyone who calls themselves an anarchist, in the region. Without a certain level of shared politics we won't be able to go beyond talking about what we're against and begin to talk about, and work towards, what we want. Alternately, we don't want to define too narrowly a particular type of anarchism. One of the benefits we see of a federation is the possibility that different strands of anarchism can learn more about each other, and that we can further develop both our common and our separate politics. We want as much as possible that our contacts be your contacts, our networks your networks, our resources your resources and that internal strength can be translated into an outward focus.

This proposal is very much a draft. We're putting forward our ideas in the hope that other people will consider and discuss the idea of a federation, not because we know for sure what it should be like.

ANARCHIST DIRECT ACTION



Anarchist Direct Action (ADA) is a Melbourne based activist organisation of anarchists aimed at participating in the struggle against capitalism and the state.

We are activists within our communities and participate in a broad range of social, political and community groups including unions, student organisations, protest groups, campaigns, and other direct action groups. We are workers, students, unemployed, individuals and collective organisers.

ADA aims at contributing to the movement against capital and the state through the politics of direct action. Direct action does not pertain to the level of militancy different individuals are willing or able to live up to in their activism. It means that we act on behalf of ourselves and do not seek to 'represent' others in our political action. We encourage others to do the same instead of leaving political action up to others, be they politicians, bureaucrats, officials or other representative institutions. Our approach derives not only from the belief that in a free society institutions should be both directly democratic and federatively run, but that in getting there we must also actively oppose new, unnecessary hierarchies from establishing themselves. This is relevant in our unions, student organisations, protest groups, campaigns, and even in direct action groups. In the struggle against capitalism we must also maintain a critique of power in all its forms, not simply that which amounts to economic exploitation.

We are opposed to capitalism. This is because capitalism is an economic system based on private property and therefore the dispossession and alienation of vast majority from the products of their own labour. Instead, we are for a self managed economic organisation of society, whereby the tools and the whole productive capacity of society is autonomously owned and controlled in federative and directly democratic way. Some know the concept of an economy based on inalienable rights to social property as socialism, but for others this word has come to signify state control, and state-capitalism.

We are opposed to the state. The state is a form of social monopoly, over the autonomy of individuals, or of groups of individuals, and their right to associate freely, if collectively, with each other. Any form of government, even so-called 'representative democracies' will eventually end in despotism because the interests of the rulers will always depart from the ruled. Without the right to freely associate, there is always a tendency towards the centralisation of power, the oppression of minorities by tyrannical majorities, and eventually despotism. The state (and representative political action) has not helped to undermine the worst elements of capitalism in Australia. Direct action and the rejection of government and capital have been the driving force, while the state (and representative political action like elections) have moderated this direct threat and mediated it with the interests of capital. It is the state which through its monopoly of violence over society enforces private property. The modern nation state arose with capitalism. The state is the political expression of oppression and must be overthrown if capitalism is to be overthrown.

With all this in mind, ADA meets regularly to organise how to best contribute to strong and effective community opposition to these illegitimate authorities. We have taken part in community action together, and in our individual pursuits the group acts as a space to reflect on our daily struggles. We have recently started making publications, and have a number of projects on the go at once. We also discuss how to make our action more effective and how to best advocate for the tactics of direct action within the broader social movement. We are open to those who identify as Anarchist and the group is freely federated - meaning the only requirement is that you want to work with us and we want to work with you

ANNAPOLIS ON THE GROUND

So Annapolis peace talks have brought an extra 3000 Israeli soldiers to the West Bank. In Azzoun yesterday, a small town in the Qalqilya region, where i have been spending quite a bit of time of late, three teenagers were shot during an Israeli army invasion - one, aged 16, was shot in the chest and is still in a critical condition; another, aged 13, was shot in the stomach; and the third, also 13, was shot in the calf and arm. I had forgotten how small 13 yr old boys are before i came here. The thought of bullets in bodies so small makes me shudder with sadness and impotent rage.

The invasion brought over 200 soldiers to Azzoun, a town already overrun on a regular basis. They invaded homes, shooting them up, beating women and arresting young men. Young men in Azzoun are in a very dangerous position. They're arrested randomly, because of their gender and age. One family told us of soldiers invading their home, demanding "Give us all your sons". A couple of days ago I was in a carpark with kids playing football when soldiers drove in and grabbed a sixteen year old boy just because he was slower at running away than the rest. Actually, i reckon he's probably pretty fast, but that he stuck around to see what was happening. I fear he stuck around because we were there, and he thought he'd be safe with internationals present. He wasn't. He was taken into the back of the jeep, beaten and then thrown out of the moving vehicle half an hour later. I guess after that they drove back out on to the main street, because we saw them out there, waiting, and as a couple of twelve year old boys were walking by with their dad, they opened the door and beckoned them at gun point. My friend and I implored them not to get into the jeep, or to get within the soldier's grasp, which afterwards seemed kind of a stupid thing to do. But one of them could not resist the fear of the gun and so went forward and was grabbed and abducted. Beaten and released later.

The area has been under intense pressure for many weeks now, with curfews, roadblocks and "flying checkpoints" - the kind that just consist of an Israeli jeep parked in the middle of a road, stopping cars, checking ID and searching. The entrance to the main road of Azzoun has been closed mostly since 31st October (blocked with concrete cubes put in place by Israeli soldiers), forcing people to enter through a nearby village, the entrance to which has now been blocked by an earthmound (a big pile of earth and rocks put in place by a bulldozer). So now to drive in your own car to Qalqilya, a village 9km west, takes about 45 mins as you go via an extremely round-about route to the south. Of course, if you're taking a taxi you can go directly, but you have to change taxis twice - once to get past the earthmound at Izbit al-Tabib, and then again when you go through the main checkpoint to get into Qalqilya. That's when road 55 is available for Palestinian use. Of late that's been pretty intermittent too.

About 9 days ago a settler was shot and killed in a nearby village of Al Funduq. The soldiers admitted that they knew the shooter wasn't from the village (the villagers have historically had really good relations with settlers, even to the point where settlers would do their shopping in Al Funduq, which is generally unheard of) but they still imposed a 4 day curfew on the town, during which time people weren't allowed to be out on the street, drive

on the street, or open their shops. Given that it's an industrial town (in that it has a lot of factories), this was pretty devastating economically.

Nearby settlers decided to get in on the collective punishment act, and set up a road block of their own, blocking traffic. Of course, because the road was already blocked to Palestinians, it was only other settlers they were inconveniencing. Whilst it was clearly stupid, I recognized too much of my own history of activism in their actions - I had no sympathy for their cause, but their tactics hit close to home. The army was there of course, but stood by watching most of the time - it's not really their job to interfere with those doing God's work. The settlers then turned their attention to the shops and cars lining the street. Windows were smashed and houses were attacked. It wasn't until the local council turned out the street lights that they left, heading up to the nearest major intersection to stop cars there.

A couple of nights later about 300 of them went on a rampage through Al Funduq, again smashing homes and cars. One Palestinian was arrested and a few more beaten by soldiers.

So while everyone knows that the shooter is nowhere in the region, the army are using this as an excuse to further implement repressive measures. Such as invasions, road closures and curfews.

Whilst Israeli apologists deliberate over whether it's better for there to be more or less troops in the West Bank over Annapolis, (the trade off between a show of good will and leaving oneself open to "showy attacks") the pincers of the occupation draw closer, squeezing the West Bank to the point that life becomes untenable.

Cynical Smurf

