

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)

Anti-Copyright



Statement of Principles

Collective Action

4 November 2013

The following points of agreement are neither complete nor final. They represent, at best, where our group was at the time they were adopted.

1. As anarchists we fight to create a self-managed, socialist and stateless society, in which all contribute freely according to ability, and through which all have full access to the material basis for pursuing their individual and collective fulfilment. In this libertarian socialist society, individual freedom is harmonised with communal obligations through cooperation, directly democratic decision making and social and economic equality. We believe such a society is both desirable and possible, and we actively work toward overcoming the hierarchies, exploitation and systems of oppression that stand in its way.
2. To confront oppression in all its forms, the self-organised activity of all persons experiencing oppression is necessary. Systems of oppression manifest both as structures in the economic system and in the ideology of the dominant

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culture. Within the dominant culture of our society, intertwined oppressive systems include (but are not limited to) sexism, racism, queerphobia, transphobia and ableism. These oppressive systems, whilst occurring within the context of capitalism and shaped to serve its purpose, are not reducible to capitalism. Unless we actively struggle against all oppressive power systems, these hierarchies will be reproduced both within our own organisations and in any post-capitalist society. We see fighting against these forms of oppression as just as important to the creation of an anarchist society as fighting capitalism and the state. Only by working to eliminate oppressive power relations within the working classes will we be able to create a revolutionary movement capable of genuinely transforming society.

3. Australian capitalism is founded on an act of genocide – the murder and dispossession of this continent’s indigenous people. Capitalism on this continent was built on the seizure and exploitation of indigenous land, and continued attacks on indigenous communities are perpetrated by Australian capitalism and its racist state in the pursuit of what lands and resources that remain. We unequivocally support the ongoing struggle for indigenous self-determination in Australia, and recognise that indigenous sovereignty over the Australian landmass was never ceded.
4. Capitalism is a social system based on the private ownership of the means of production (land, factories, workplaces, machinery and access to raw materials). A tiny minority own the means of production and profit from the productive labour of the working class. The working class consists of all whose access to the means of existence requires that they place their ability to labour at the service of capital. This includes all who labour for a wage, all who are presently unem-

ployed, and all who labour in the reproduction of the working class (domestic labour). Workers are paid the minimum the capitalist can get away with in a given situation, and the capitalist steals the rest. The private property owned by capitalists is the wealth stolen from past generations of workers. Capitalism denies the vast majority their economic and social inheritance through recourse to violence and coercion. Any incursion into private property is punished by the state. This system, capitalism, the state and the oppressive ideologies that support it, must be abolished in their entirety.

5. The state is a centralised structure in which a small number of people, through their control of the police, military and courts (a monopoly on 'legitimate' violence), impose decisions on the vast majority. The state is not simply a "body of armed men" in service of the dominant class, it is also an institution that develops its own interest and that seeks to perpetuate its existence and expand its power. As anarchists we wholly reject the state, and instead we aim for "the most complete realisation of democracy—democracy in the fields, factories, and neighbourhoods."
6. Capitalism reaches across the entire globe. Military and economic imperialism (so-called globalisation) continue to subordinate most of the globe to the capitalist system, securing access to resources, labour and markets for the capitalist core. As capitalism is global, the struggle against capitalism must also be global, and we must act in solidarity and support for the struggles of oppressed people wherever they occur.
7. Capitalism has wrought upon our planet a global ecological crisis that now threatens the basis of existence for the majority of humanity. Capitalist entities grow or perish, whenever capital is not growing it is in crisis. Capitalism, as the effective cause of the present environmental crisis, cannot ef-

fectively solve or even lessen the extent of environmental degradation. Capitalism's demand for continued growth on our finite planet is at odds with human survival as a species, and therefore as a matter of necessity, and not just desirability, it must be abolished.

8. The role of anarchists is to build the capacity of oppressed peoples as a whole to struggle for our collective emancipation. It is only when the collective and conscious social force of the mass of oppressed people exceeds the power of capitalism and the state, that a revolution with truly libertarian socialist potential be possible.
9. We believe that revolutionary unionism, or syndicalism, is an essential strategy to build the collective power of the working class. We seek to build rank and file organisations that unite workers across existing unions, and advocate for directly democratic structures and militant strategy.
10. We unite as a specific anarchist organisation on the basis of *theoretical unity*, *tactical unity*, *collective responsibility* and *federalism*. By *theoretical unity* we mean developing and organising around a shared understanding of anarchism, capitalism and the context in which we operate. By *tactical unity* we mean developing and collectively implementing a common strategy for achieving our goals. By *collective responsibility* we mean agreeing to act collectively – rather than individually in the pursuit of our common strategy. By *federalism* we mean organising on a directly democratic “grass roots up” basis, rejecting any “top down” command structure.