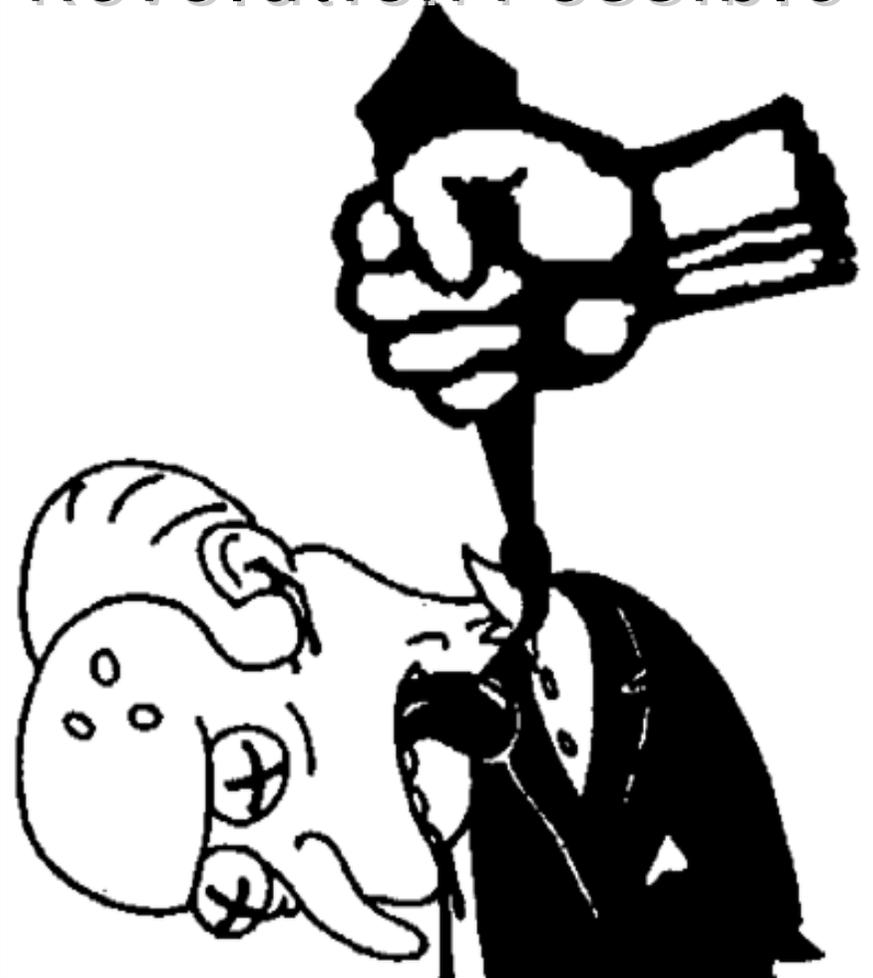


# Making Anarchist Revolution Possible



**Arthur J. Miller**



**Zabalaza Books**

*"Knowledge is the Key to be Free"*

Post: Postnet Suite 116, Private Bag X42,  
Braamfontein, 2017, Johannesburg, South Africa

E-Mail: [zabalaza@union.org.za](mailto:zabalaza@union.org.za)

Website: [www.zabalaza.net/zababooks](http://www.zabalaza.net/zababooks)

# Making Anarchist Revolution Possible

**By Arthur J. Miller**

Once we have seized our workplaces and communities we would then begin the transformation of society by dismantling forever the institutions of capitalism and the State, so that we will create permanent revolution for there will be nothing left for the ruling class or a new ruling class to ever seize control of. We would replace capitalism and the State with our anarcho-syndicalist organisations. This organisation would have the flexibility to evolve down the road to more idealistic forms based upon a process of needs and desires.

In this way we are paving the road of our ideas through reality to our dreams.

## ★ Introduction

This writing is not the product of any organisation or philosophical tendency within anarchism. Though it is greatly influenced by organisations and different anarchist ideas, it is in fact only the viewpoint of one anarchist who seeks to answer the question of how an anarchist revolution could take place in our modern society.

Our world has grown far more complex than it was when the original texts of anarchism were written. The capitalist class has organised itself on an international level that seeks to bring under its control all lands upon the earth. The State as the protector of the capitalist class has grown stronger, with super States dominating weaker States by military and economic might. The people are being herded into cities of producers and localised self-sufficiency and indigenous sovereignty is slowly disappearing. The organisational form of this process can be viewed as the New World Order of Corporate Fascism.

It is becoming clear that the old ways of resistance are no longer able to adequately hold back the advances of the New World Order. The resistance to the New World Order is only able to react to some of the aspects of Corporate Fascism, and thus leaving many other aspects unchallenged. Since the resistance, at this time, cannot challenge New World Order in its complete manifestation, it is also unable to create revolutionary change.

**Reformism:** The growth of the New World Order is accelerating at such a great speed that it is completely impossible to reform the present system into one that meets the needs of the people.

**Social Democracy (electoral politics):** Even if you could use the electoral system to make gains for the people, those small gains are not permanent because you must also engage in continuous struggle to protect those gains and that struggle alone creates road blocks to additional gains. First you must be able to have your gains enforced, then funded each year and protect your gains from being repelled. That makes it hard to produce further gains. The electoral process is dominated by the accumulation of political power. Political power once gained has as its first pri-

development of our ideas.

Our expressed experiences explain our needs and why we wish to build a better world and through that we create the ideas (theory) of how to proceed in dealing with our oppressions and creating a new world. With those ideas (theory) applied in practice, we then tap into the experience gained from that (what works and what does not work and how we can make it better in our process of change) and modify our ideas (theory), and that becomes our revolutionary process. That is why our experiences in being oppressed and the experiences with organising around our oppression and balancing that with our ideas (theory) are so important. That is why busting out of the absolutist containment of theory alone, or blindly reacting to personal experience of oppressive conditions without the direction of ideas (theory) are both dead-end processes, but the balance of both leads us down the path of liberation.

## ★ Syndicalist Revolution

**All the syndicates would have four main elements:**

1. The organisation of day-to-day struggles with oppression, capitalism, and the State.
2. The organised collective solidarity between the syndicates.
3. The organisational revolutionary power to do away with oppression, capitalism and the State.
4. The transformation of society from oppression, capitalism and the State to an anarchist society based upon the well being of all.

When building our syndicates, we are at the same time building all four elements.

Capitalism and the State are organised powers used to oppress and exploit us. Through syndicalist organising we are organising our collective power to defeat the organised power of the ruling class.

When the organised power of the people is greater than the organised power of the ruling class then our revolution would take place through a social general strike. That social general strike would be the complete refusal, in industries, communities, and in all means, of co-operation with capitalism and the State, and of providing goods and services to capitalism and the State, along with the organised protection of our revolution. Capitalism and the State cannot exist without our co-operation with the ruling class. We feed them, we provide the services they need, our communities are controlled by our co-operation with them, we are everywhere, even in the homes of the ruling class. There is nowhere for them to run, we are everywhere, there is nowhere to hide, we are everywhere. We will starve the ruling class out of existence; let them eat their money and deeds of property.

Our revolution would not be centralised with an easy target to suppress; rather it will be spread out in all places.

ority the continuation of its power. That means that it must struggle against all real or imagined threats to its power. Since political power is centralised power in the hands of a few in order to govern the many, the many must be controlled in order to govern them. Thus even the most progressive tendencies of political power become nothing more than a new ruling class.

**Marxist-Leninism:** The idea of a single vanguard party seizing control of the apparatus of the State and through a dictatorship creating a communist system has been one of the greatest historical mistakes ever made. It is the very nature of the State to centralise power within it and given that reality, no State will ever wither away its power, rather it will continue to seek to strengthen its centralised power. The State is the mechanism in which the few govern the many. And thus the direct interests of the governing few and the people who are governed have little in common and the interests of the many are a direct threat to the governing few. In order to protect itself from the threat of the many, the governing few, no matter who they are, must meet that threat by greater social control and suppression of the threat from the many. Thus, Marxist-Leninism can never evolve past its single party dictatorship.

One of the stated goals of Marxist-Leninism is to do away with capitalism and the capitalist class's control of the State. But since Marxist-Leninism uses the institutions of the State it is unable to create permanent revolution because capitalism has the means of re-establishing itself by regaining control of the institutions of State power. This process has been seen clearly throughout the world, as one Marxist-Leninist controlled country after another one has fallen back into capitalism. Though Marx had the idea that socialism would evolve out of advanced capitalism, we are seeing throughout the world where Marxism advances the industrial devolvement of a country and rather than evolve into advanced socialism, it has evolved into advanced capitalism.

Given the realities of the New World Order and the failures of reformism, social democracy, and all forms of Marxism, we, in my view, must look in a different direction for solutions to the massive problems that we as a people and our planet earth face. Those solutions, I believe, will be found with the abolition of capitalism and the State, in other words they will be found in Anarchism.

## ★ Anarchism

The basic idea of Anarchism is that the people can live without capitalism and the State, through different forms of decentralised free association, self-management and mutual aid. Though Anarchists have been moved by a great sense of philosophical idealism, we cannot allow our idealism to stand in our way of revolutionary process. For if we do our grand ideas become impossible to fulfil.

Idealism is important for it challenges us to struggle for greater things than now

exist. But our idealism must be able to meet the revolutionary challenge of struggling against the New World Order, which does not function in our idealistic manner. The New World Order is an organised power that must be met by our organised power. When the organised power of the people is greater than the organised power of the ruling/capitalist class then by the means of our collective power we will be able to rid the world of the New World Order and replace it with an Anarchist society.

Idealism has been both Anarchists' strength and weakness. Anarchist idealism has opened up our philosophy to many social possibilities without the drawbacks of rigid sectarian dogma. The weakness of Anarchist idealism lies within its ability to transform society when having to confront a ruling class that is so well-organised and entrenched.

When Anarchism is guided by its idealism alone by being a hodgepodge of ideas and based within the idea of autonomous localism it is unable to muster the power that it takes to confront the well-organised New World Order in a revolutionary manner. What gains that are able to be made are lost to the forces of repression because it is unable to defend itself through the unity of action. In other words, Anarchists tend to go in so many different directions at the same time that they end up going nowhere at all.

Our idealism must be flexible enough in order to develop in a practical manner in revolutionary struggle. On the other hand our practical application must be flexible enough so that our revolutionary struggle has the ability to give birth to an Anarchist society without it becoming just another form of social control by an elite few.

Some people say that we must not create a blueprint for revolution and our post-revolution society. To some degree that is correct, for both our revolution and our post-revolutionary society have to be flexible enough in order to adapt to the situations we find ourselves faced with. But with that said we also need unity of ideas and organisation in order to progress to the point of making revolution possible. Also, if we have no means in place for the transformation of society and the fulfilment of needs, then even if we were able to defeat the ruling class, once the people's needs go unfulfilled they will revert back under a new ruling class that has some means of fulfilling basic needs.

In my view, we should look upon building an Anarchist revolution as a building process. For the reasons stated above, that process, in my view, needs the following key elements:

**1. Unity of ideas.** We as a revolutionary movement need to be heading in the same direction or else we will dilute our ability to create revolutionary organisation and direction.

**2. Unity of tactics.** If our revolutionary struggle is to have any real success, we need, in my view, to have a clear analysis of tactics. Our tactics need to be applied based upon what is effective in the situations in which we use them. One of the problems I have seen in the Anarchist movement is militancy of image over militancy of substance. Revolutionary militancy does not just act out an image of militancy, but rather it uses tactics that advance the process of building a revolution. Part of that

but rather it is a continuously flowing evolution. Any moment in time is influenced to one degree or another by things that went on before that moment. Thus, the analysis of any struggle or event must take into consideration its influence on that which came after it.

Our revolutionary process, in my view, should be based on a flow of taking from the past that which we can learn from, advancing it in the present with new ideas and passing it along to the next generation for them to take it and advance as they can. This creates an evolution of revolutionary process.

Even what may seem to be a rather insignificant event may have influenced individuals or groups to go on to greater things. Even the most renowned activists had their starting points, and the same can be said of all activists. Based upon the experience gained in starting points, revolutionary activists then begin their individual revolutionary process. This makes the creation of starting points of activism essential to our movement.

In realizing this, the most important time of any event is not the time before the event (the organising of it), or the time of the event (a starting point for new activists), but rather the time after the event. That time is crucial for it is the follow-up of events that allows for the development of new activists into our movement. Without the follow-up of the starting points for new activists, we not only may lose people who could become activists, but also we could lose influencing the direction that new activists take.

The first most important factor in developing new activists is to make that beginning point easy for them to get involved in our movement. Sometimes anarchists tend to isolate themselves to the point that for a new person to get actively involved in the anarchist movement they must go through such a struggle that they burn out before they become committed to our movement.

Part of the reason for the high burnout of new activists is that many older activists expect everyone in the movement to be well educated on anarchism and issues, and at times they even get hostile when someone does not understand something and attack them as if their lack of understanding is an ideological point of view. We do not become knowledgeable anarchists at the point that we become interested in anarchism. Education is a process.

Since our struggles are a resistance to oppression and exploitation, our educational process should not be of abstract theories alone. Our educational theoretical work needs to, in my view, relate directly to the experiences of oppression and exploitation of each activist. In order to do that, activists need to be able to express their experiences.

The working class has come under the dominance of the intelligentsia. The books on the history of working class struggles and its ideas are almost exclusively written by the intelligentsia. This has created a situation where theory is held up on a pedestal and the direct experiences of our class, as explained by our class, has almost been driven into extinction. As such, the intelligentsia has become a ruling class over working class struggle. One of the first steps in our revolutionary process should be in seizing back the voice of the working class in its own education and the

oppression. That would be co-ordinated out of a defence/solidarity assembly. Next, an assembly could be called to co-ordinate direct resistance against the multi-national corporation and the State aiding it, and to provide for the needs of the resisters.

Out of that assembly a direct action plan would be created. The tribal organisation may set up roadblocks on tribal land. The syndicates may set up roadblocks on the outside of the tribal land. The Industrial Syndicates may place a boycott on the multi-national corporation, so that no syndicalist workers are involved in the companies operation on tribal land, that no syndicalist workers provide any goods or services to that company, and that a consumer boycott is put into place. Then the syndicates could organise protest demonstrations as widely as possible.

In the functioning of providing needs, the syndicates could function as follows. Let's say the need is a road between communities. First, an assembly would be called between the two communities to define the need of a road. Then an assembly would be called of those that are directly affected by the road and building of the road. That would be the industrial syndicates of road builders, transportation workers who would use the road, and the community syndicates that have a need for the road. Let's say that between the two communities there is tribal land, so the tribal organisation would be included. Then if there were environmental concerns, (i.e. there are wetlands in that area). Perhaps there is a concern of bike riders; they would have their syndicate in the assembly, also. If the assembly should be open to all members of the syndicates involved or should be a delegate assembly would depend upon how large the draw of people would be.

Out of that assembly a basic plan that would address everyone's needs and concerns would be drawn up. Then a council made up of representatives of the syndicates would work out a detailed plan and take that back to the assembly for approval, which may also include taking the detailed plan back to each syndicate before taking it to the assembly of syndicates.

This system of assemblies of syndicates would take place anytime there is an activity that deals with the needs or concerns of two or more syndicates. It could be something as simple as a syndicate of fiddlers who want to put on a fiddle festival. The fiddlers syndicate would meet with the syndicates in the community that they want it to take place in, the syndicate of the workers that maybe needed, the transportation workers syndicate for transportation needs, and so on, based upon what is needed. In such a case there may be just a need for a delegate from each syndicate and not a mass assembly.

## ★ Revolutionary Process

Every struggle goes through a process, and the better we understand that process and give that process some direction the better off we will be, rather than just let the process direct us. History is not made up of individual isolated moments,

involves day-to-day struggles, for revolutionary process is also a process of winning concessions from our enemies. Once the analysis of tactics makes clear which tactics will benefit the purpose they are being applied to, then we need to unite behind those tactics as a force of power. If we cannot do that then again we dilute our ability to succeed.

**3. Unity of focus.** It should be clear to us who the enemy is, capitalism, the State and such things as racism, sexism and all forms of domination, oppression and exploitation. Though it is natural for people to have disagreements over one thing or another, those disagreements should not be used to create struggles against each other. Our focus should be on the enemy and not on each other. In my view, the clearest statement of any side of a disagreement is made by whoever takes their ideas and makes them work. Factionalism only aids the enemy.

**4. Proaction rather than reaction.** Too often in our struggles folks just react to those things that they personally don't like without a clear analysis of the effects of their actions on others, on our struggle and if their actions in fact serve the purposes that we are struggling for. Rather than just react to things, we need, in my view, to analyse the situation and act in a proactive manner that not only deals with it, based upon what can truly affect that situation in the way we wish, but also what will aid our purpose of building the revolutionary process. Often this will mean creating alternatives at the same time that we confront directly that which we feel we must confront.

**5. Collective action.** I am not speaking against individual action when it leads to collective action. One of the most famous examples of this was the individual action of Rosa Parks who was arrested for not giving up her seat to a white person on a bus. But what made her action so significant was that it led to the collective action of the bus boycott. But when individual action is not directly connected to the pulse of a collective group then it can lead to a reactionary backlash. This is often the case when people take actions with the thought that by making things worse for people that somehow they are going to react to that in a positive manner. In such a case, more often than not, the people will go along with the reactionary backlash and the struggle itself will suffer a set back. Our goal in the things that we do should be to provoke collective action for collective action is where the power to succeed exists.

**6. Self and collective discipline.** When I speak of discipline I am not speaking of a militaristic form of discipline that is forced from above onto those below. What I am speaking of is the self and collective discipline of doing that that needs to be done in any given situation. The struggle is very hard at times, that is why we call it a struggle. If we wish to succeed then we must be willing to have the discipline that it takes to do those things that are hard and sometimes even cause us to suffer. At times that even means personal struggle against burnout and depression. When it is hard, that is precisely the most important time to continue. If we are unwilling to do this then our work is a complete waste of time.

An Anarchist society will not come about just because we think it is a great idea. It will take a lot of hard work and personal and collective sacrifice. It will take a clear

analysis of our enemy's power and of the types of organisation and tactics needed in order to develop greater power than our enemy, if we hope to succeed.

## ★ Direct Action

Anarchists believe that the best form of action is that taken by those directly affected by something and aimed directly at the cause of the problem, thus you have the term direct action. Even in the best of situations, forms of action in which people delegate to others to do that which they should do for themselves becomes ineffective in that process.

Direct action is not just a tactic; it is a way of life. It is the idea of social relations based upon those within the relations acting for themselves, which is the basic idea of Anarchism.

Direct action does not seek to reform the system, but rather seeks to win concessions from the system in day-to-day struggles as a means of building for a social revolution where the people directly seize the means of production and their communities and expropriate them from the capitalist system and the state.

## ★ Anarchist Federationism

There is a mistaken idea that anarchists do not believe in organisation. Though it is true that some extreme individualists do reject organisation, the majority of anarchists see the need of both organisations for the revolutionary process and for the post-anarchist society. The extreme individualist's idea that somehow the people will rise up spontaneously, as individuals without organisation, and do away with the State, is utterly absurd. This is a case of people's fantasies overtaking all sense of reality. Some extreme individualists place their hopes for anarchy upon the idea that the State will collapse someday. While such a collapse may in time take place, but without anarchist alternatives in place the people would go through great suffering and out of such crisis a new authoritarian system would arise.

Most anarchists advocate a horizontal form of federation organisation. This starts off with anarchist groups joining together in local federation, then regional federation and all the way to international federation. Each federation is based upon the common needs of those that make up the federation. This is not to say that such a form must be built in the beginning, for it maybe found that in some areas a regional federation is organised before the local federation because the local groups maybe spread out widely in a region and thus a regional federation is built first to give collective aid in order to build up the local areas in order to organise the local feder-

some cases did. Some forms of radical ideologies, even though they seek to change the system for themselves, do continue the process of oppression of traditional indigenous tribalism.

Since syndicalism is based upon the idea of people organising in their direct self-interests, it recognises the inherent right of the sovereignty of indigenous tribes. Rather than being another form of missionaryism that seeks to impose its ways on others, syndicalism seeks to give solidarity support to the struggles, needs and wants of indigenous tribes, but only when requested. Interaction between the indigenous tribes and the different forms of syndicates would take place when needed and wanted, based upon common needs, co-operation and respect.

## ★ Synthesis of Syndicalism

One may look at all that I have written and think, isn't that a bit much? How could we ever organise all that? And how could so many different syndicates function together?

First, the organisation of the syndicates would take place upon what the people are willing to organise and are able to organise. As more people become directly involved in the syndicalist movement, more forms of syndicates could be organised. Since all the syndicates are connected, any form of syndicalist organising directly advances the overall syndicalist movement.

How syndicates would work together depends on the need. In our day-to-day struggle with capitalism and the State it could look like this: Let's say an industrial syndicate goes on strike. The other industrial syndicates would make sure that the striking workplace does not receive goods and services, that no goods from the striking workplace are handled and the work of the strikers are not done in another workplace. There could be an exception to the work of the strikers, for instance, if the workplace provides needed services to a community, the striking syndicate along with community syndicates may organise the continuation of those services in such a way as the capitalists do not profit from that work.

The industrial and community syndicates would work together to provide for the needs of the strikers. And all the syndicates would work together to give direct action support for the strikers. All this could be co-ordinated out of assemblies called for the purpose of providing the needs and direct action solidarity. This same means of functioning could be applied to community struggles, struggles around issues or in support of groupings of oppression or indigenous tribal struggles.

For example, let's say that a multi-national mining corporation, with the help of the State, has gone on to tribal land for the purpose of energy development. The State has arrested some of the tribal people who have tried to resist and now they request the assistance of the syndicates. First, the defence/solidarity committees would give aid to those arrested and help build an offensive campaign to resist that

based on that grouping. Yes, class oppression is a part of that because those groupings based upon race are for the most part forced down to the lowest levels of class. And having a class of super-exploited people is a fundamental element of capitalism. So, as the super-exploited class resists capitalism on an economic level, it must also organise and resist based upon the factor of race group oppression.

Part of the process of race group oppression is stripping those groups of any power over their lives, as individuals and as communities and by creating a bias (racism) against them within white classes. Like the organisation of workers and communities, race oppression must be resisted and organised around by those directly affected by the means of self-determination and empowerment. Though I use the term social syndicalism, the form of self-organisation should be determined by the oppressed themselves. Thus, there is the need of self-organisation of the groupings of race oppression, their inter-connections and allies within the general idea of all groupings of race oppression.

On top of the self-organisation of these groups, there needs to be the dismantling of racism within the overall society. There is the economic racism within industry that the organisation of oppressed groupings would struggle along side the industrial syndicates to overcome. There is the struggle within communities that should be handled in the same way.

Then there are some inherent problems. If you have a generalised community or city form of democracy, where all people decide upon all things, and if the people within the groupings of oppression by race, are a minority, then you have, in fact, people of colour depending upon the goodwill of white people to see, understand and act upon their oppression, needs and concerns, and thus, you still have white supremacy. Hopefully over time and good revolutionary process society can eliminate the forms of oppression by race, but that can't be done until the people of colour have achieved their own empowerment first.

The above example should be applied to other social groupings of people who find the need to organise directly around their oppressions, needs and wants. Another example would be women organising against sexism and patriarchy.

Social syndicalism advocates that social groups of people become empowered by organising together in their own self-interest and use their organisations to interact with the other syndicates in order that their needs and concerns are addressed directly.

## ★ Sovereignty Syndicalism

Throughout the world there are groupings of people that are based upon traditional indigenous tribalism. As a matter of fact, all people have indigenous tribal roots. But the conquest by capitalism and the State, and the forms of conquest that capitalism evolved out of sought to destroy traditional indigenous tribalism, and in

ation. Thus, anarchist federationism is flexible enough to be built upon needs rather than rigid ideology.

Anarchism will not come about just because we wish to dream it into existence. It will take deeper revolutionary acts of education, organisation and action. Though most anarchists seek to organise around all human and environmental needs, the forms of those organisations would bring in people who are not specifically educated anarchists. Thus, anarchists have found the need to organise specific ideological anarchist federations in order to pursue anarchist strategies throughout the many social struggles. Also, in times of repression there is the need of collective defence of both anarchists and the general social struggle.

The anarchist federations, in my view, should not be a hodgepodge of anarchism. Rather, as I have already stated, it should be based upon unity of ideas, unity of tactics, and unity of collective action along with the discipline needed for effective organising and action.

In times of repression the anarchist form of federationism makes it difficult for the anarchist movement to be suppressed because there is no centre to target. Each area of federation can operate on its own if other areas of the federation are suppressed. And the reorganisation process can begin even if a whole area of the federation is wiped out.

I believe that the local or regional federations should not be made up of just already organised anarchist groups. One of the problems with limiting a local or regional federation to just organised anarchist groups, is that it tends to isolate itself from outreach organising. The anarchist local groups maybe affinity groups or collectives that don't want to open themselves up to every anarchist that comes along for they may have purposes that don't fit the needs of all anarchists. At times anarchists are good at getting out good educational material and showing themselves in other organisations and events. But once a person is convinced that anarchism is the way for them, it is hard for them to get started in anarchist activism if there is not some form of organisation that is open for them to join. We should make being an active anarchist easy, not hard. Thus I believe that local and regional federations should have general recruiting groups that can be used for new anarchists and anarchists that don't belong to any established anarchist group.

## ★ Anarcho-Syndicalism

Anarcho-Syndicalism originated out of the self-interest organisation of workers into unions. But union organising had its drawbacks, thus anarchists sought to change the direction of union organising to include anarchist methods and goals.

Syndicalism is based upon the idea of organising together those that are directly affected by something and instigating the self-management of those people, as in the organisation of shop floor workers. It is a bit different than the idea of generalised

organisation where you have people not directly affected making decisions for those that are directly affected. In other words it is different from the idea of all people making the decisions for all people, thus creating a situation where a majority dominates minorities. And in some cases the minority could be those that are directly affected by the decision being made.

Syndicalism is the organisation of syndicates (unions) of direct self-interest of those directly affected or having direct common concerns. The syndicates use the same federation form of organising as do the anarchist federations. The group syndicate, the local syndicate, the regional syndicate and so on based upon the needs of those organised. Though syndicalism grew out of direct shop floor organising, its methods can be applied to all forms of social relationships, needs, issues and common concerns. Thus by the general organisation of syndicates we would be building our revolutionary power at the same time we are building our post-revolution society and still be able to fight the day to day struggles.

There are some anarchists that believe that syndicalism is fine for bringing about the revolution, but that once the revolution takes place the syndicates should dissolve themselves. I do not agree with this viewpoint. The transformation time after the revolution will mean the difference between a successful anarchist revolution or reverting back to authoritarian means. The first goal, in my view, of the transformation is fulfilling the needs of the people and not idealism. Once the needs of the people are fulfilled, then the syndicates should be flexible enough to evolve to the continuing needs of people and their desires. When a form of the syndicates are no longer needed they will no longer exist. That is based upon the fundamental function of the syndicates being based upon common needs and concerns through self-interest and self-managed organisation, thus if there is no longer a need or if the need changes, or there is a desire for a different form of social organisation, the syndicates would evolve.

## ★ Industrial Syndicalism

Industrial Syndicalism is based upon the idea that working people must organise their economic power in order to fight the day-to-day struggles against their bosses, while at the same time building their collective power in order to do away with the capitalist system.

The structural means of workplace syndicalism is rather simple. First it should be viewed as a horizontal form of organisation, which begins with the shop floor of every organised workplace. The shop floor organisation should include everyone in the workplace and not divide them up, as does the outdated trade unionism that organises by trade rather than by job. The decisions affecting the shop floor need to be made on the shop floor.

Workplaces in the same industry, within a general location would organise

the Industrial Syndicates and environmental syndicates with community syndicalism, but the organisation of environmental health, resistance and action, in my view, needs to be taken a step further. There needs to be a federation of environmental syndicalism. The component parts of the federation should include the organised syndicates of specific environmental needs, issues and action, which would specialise in the research of problems and the development of tactical action. For example there could be a Syndicate of Old Growth Forest Concerns, or a Syndicate of Rivers, Streams, Lakes and Wetlands Concerns.

## ★ How Green Syndicalism Could Work

The Federation of Environmental Syndicalism would be made of all syndicalist formations dealing with the environment. Lets say you have a specific environmental problem like water quality. An assembly would be held of the committees from industries, communities and the Syndicate of Rivers, Streams, Lakes and Wetlands Concerns. Together they would access the problem based upon the research, knowledge and concerns that would be combined from the different syndicates.

They may decide that further or ongoing research is needed and thus organise a committee of people from the different syndicates. They may decide that direct action is needed to confront and force the concessions of change in pre-revolution struggle. Such direct action then would be taken from within industry by the Industrial Syndicates, within communities by the Community Syndicates and from other needed places by the Environmental Syndicates. Since the impact of change could impact the workers in industries and communities, a part of the direct action process needs to include dealing with those impacts.

## ★ Social Syndicalism

Not all forms of oppression will be eliminated by a social revolution against capitalism and the State. Such things as sexism and racism, though their roots may be found within capitalism and the State, have also become conditioned factors in society. Thus, just doing away with capitalism and the State will not in itself do away with all forms of oppression.

The idea of social syndicalism is to organise those people who are directly affected by different forms of oppression. For example, the social system of capitalism and the State groups people together by what they call race and oppresses them

would be delegate assemblies.

## ★ How Community Syndicalism Could Work

In the day-to-day struggles before the revolution there would be complete solidarity within the syndicate. For example, if a landlord is unwilling to fix housing or is evicting tenants, a tenant rent strike could be called and all renters within the community would withhold their rent payments.

In some cases housing is owned by large corporations. Thus there could be a need for a pre-revolution housing or a tenants' syndicate organised of all the tenants of that corporation for the purpose of collective direct action.

In the event of a direct action of any of the community syndicates, community syndicate assemblies would organise direct solidarity in action and helping with the needs of those in struggle.

When people are free of competition with each other and the basis of society is co-operation and the well-being of all, many conflicts within a community will be resolved by that alone. But given that there could be some conflicts between individuals, within syndicates, between syndicates, or between different communities, that cannot be resolved among the people directly involved, the dispute would be taken to the community mediation syndicate. First, those that may be directly involved in a dispute who are members of the community mediation syndicate would not partake in the work of that mediation, but would rather partake in the sides of the dispute. The purpose of the mediation is not to choose sides or determine winners or losers in a dispute, but rather to help direct a process in which a solution can be found that is fair to both sides, and to prevent the outburst of violent conflict where a dispute is settled by whomever has the greatest physical might.

## ★ Green Syndicalism

Though syndicates should be organised around all needs and issues, the organisation around the environment has special importance. Capitalism and the State have had a devastating impact on our environment. In order to resist that continuing impact and to change society (industries and communities) to exist in balance with our environment and to clean-up messes and heal the wounds to our environment, we need an extended effort in that direction.

Already this writing has included environmental/health/safety committees with

together as a local industrial syndicate. And that same process would extend to regional industrial syndicates and continue out to international industrial syndicates.

All related industries would organise together into industrial syndicate departments. And these industrial syndicate departments would organise locally, regionally and internationally, as the need exists.

All local industrial syndicates would organise together into local industrial syndicate councils and then regional and international industrial syndicate councils.

Because the basic idea of the organisation of the syndicates is the organisation of needs, it may be necessary for the industrial syndicates to take on additional forms of organisation.

### The following are some examples:

**1. Many workplaces are owned by large corporations.** In the day-to-day struggles of workers it maybe needed to organise beyond just industrial syndicate forms of organisation and to also organise together all workers that work for the same corporation. While still maintaining the industrial syndicates, the workers of a specific corporation would organise, let's say IBM Workers Syndicate which again would be organised locally, regionally and internationally, so that in the time of a strike they could close down the complete corporation rather than just part of it.

**2. Work area syndicates.** It may be found that an effective tactic in a business district may be to form a syndicate, while still maintaining the industrial syndicates, of all the workers within that business district together into one syndicate. This way the whole business district could be struck at the same time. Also there is the case of ports where workers of different syndicates work, seafarers, longshoremen, truck drivers, railroad workers, those that provide services for the ships, and shipyard workers who repair the ships, would be organised together as a port syndicate. The area syndicate could be used to shut down the whole port as workers act together over all of their demands.

**3. Trade syndicates.** Though the most effective form of syndicates is industrial, still there are common concerns and needs of different trades. For example the trade of welders, they have in common such things as welding safety, the training of welders and in times of layoffs finding work in other industries that use welders.

**4. Specific needs.** This may be the needs of people in wheel chairs, or women or people of colour wanting to open up industries that had denied them employment or whatever needs exist that workers have. Syndicalism is the organisation of needs by those that have those needs; so specific needs syndicates should be an important part of the syndicalist structure.

**5. Direct democracy.** All decisions or election of officers are made by the directly agreed upon decision-making process of each syndicate. Each member of the syndicate should have an equal say in that process.

**6. Officers.** When anarchists elect officers it is the election of workers to do specific jobs and not an election of a political leadership. Within the syndicates the term of office is limited with the right of recall if necessary.

**7. Assemblies.** When two or more syndicates have a need to get together for one

reason or another they call for an assembly. Some times assemblies run at predefined times, like once a year, or they maybe called for specific needs that have come up. Sometimes the assemblies are open to all members of the meeting syndicates, but other times that is not practical, so the syndicates elect delegates to assemblies.

**8. Defence/solidarity committees.** Each syndicate should have an organised defence/solidarity committee.

**9. Industrial Environmental/Health/Safety Syndicates.** The capitalist system has had an enormous negative impact on the environment and health and safety of workers. These issues cannot wait to be dealt with at some other time in the future. They must be viewed as an important component of all anarchist and syndicalist forms of organising. Though there should be struggles outside of industry on these issues, the industrial syndicates have the role of struggling directly within industry to change industry in the direction of becoming earth, workplace and community safe and friendly. Thus, each syndicate should have an environmental/health/safety committee that are organised together as an Industrial Environmental/Health/Safety Syndicate, and again that syndicate needs to be organised locally, regionally and internationally.

## ★ How Could Industrial Syndicalism Work

Each shop floor industrial syndicate would draw up a list of their demands. Then a local assembly would be called and if needed, regional and international assemblies, depending upon the needs. These assemblies may be industrial, may be different syndicates of workers working for the same corporation, or area work syndicates or a combination of different forms of syndicates. At the assemblies the demands are combined together. The delegates at the assemblies are authorised to take a strike (or other such job actions) vote. If the vote is for a strike if the demands are not met, the syndicates go to the industrial syndicate councils to put a boycott on the shops that would be struck. Such a boycott would require that:

- \* No syndicalist workers would cross the picket lines.
- \* No syndicates would supply those shops with any goods or services.
- \* No syndicates would do the work of striking workers, even if the company moved the work to non-striking shops.
- \* No syndicalist workers would ever handle scab goods.
- \* No syndicalist worker would even consume scab goods

The industrial syndicate councils would also organise support of the needs of the striking workers. Needs could include: food and rent money, defence if there is

repression, picket line support, and direct action against the companies if needed.

## ★ Community Syndicalism

The working class does not just exist in workplaces, we also live in communities. And thus the organisation of the working class needs to extend to the communities. It has also been found in the history of working class struggles that in day-to-day struggles and in revolution that well-organised industrial organisations and community organisations together add to the strength of the organised power of the working class.

Community Syndicalism would organise communities in the same way that Industrial Syndicalism organises industry. That is, those that have a direct need organise together and continue that organisation outwards as far as needed.

Unlike such things as city councils or city government where you have people making decisions on things that they don't have any direct interest in or experience with, community syndicalism organises the direct democracy of those that have a direct interest or need.

How is a community defined? Those that live in a community do that. In a smaller town it could be the whole town. In cities it would be defined by neighbourhoods.

What are some of the needs of a community? Housing, schools, roads, cultural centres, parks, food, sewage, power for heat and lights, physical needs like those people in wheelchairs, community mediation, medical, the environment, needs of people of colour, needs of women, needs of youth, needs of older people and so on.

Sometimes the needs are temporary and sometimes they are permanent. Sometimes there could be permanent needs but the needs do not require a continuous functioning organisation, and thus the syndicate of that need would only be functioning at times when necessary.

How long the need is organised would depend upon how long the need exists. When two or more community syndicates have a necessity to interact, an assembly would be called between the syndicates directly involved. When a need involves everyone in the community a general community assembly would be called.

The community syndicates would federate together within a city, region and internationally as the need exist. As there is a need, the federated syndicates would hold assemblies, or based on those in direct need of something, there could be a combination of syndicates meeting in assembly. If the need were of all, general assemblies would be held.

For example, lets say forces of the counter-revolutionaries are massing to march upon a liberated area, or some natural disaster has taken place. General assemblies of the syndicates may be needed to deal with such problems.

How the community assemblies would function would be like the industrial assemblies. Some times they would be mass assemblies and sometimes they