

RED DAWN!



**THE INVADING ARMIES PLANNED FOR EVERYTHING-
EXCEPT FOR EIGHT KIDS CALLED 'THE WOLVERINES'**

A zine by some folks of our experiences of 'interventions' by Socialist Organisations in collective spaces working on environmental justice.

About the Red Dawn Zine

We are a bunch of environmental justice activists in Sydney, who have been involved in student and community climate activism for a bunch of years.

Some Socialist Organisations in Sydney have been very interested in some of our collective and movement/network spaces and events: particularly Socialist Alliance and their youth wing Resistance, and a newer organisation, Solidarity. Some folks from these organisations have simply attended events we have been part of organising; some folks act as a pressure group or 'caucus' within collectives; some groups have been identified as a 'focus' for these organisations for their political work and recruitment, whilst some have experienced a more aggressive 'intervention' to change the processes and politics of the group, or explicitly to divide and damage the group. To be clear, it's not commie ideas and ideals that piss us off (we even share many of these), it's destructive behaviour - as an organisation/faction - that is disrespectful, undermines collective organising, and wastes our time.

Our experiences have been varied, and the impacts of these interventions on our collectives, movements and us personally have been huge. We're aware that our experiences aren't new - but we haven't been able to find much support, resources or literature. We have tried to document some of our experiences so we can learn from them, to share them with others, and to contribute to thinking about how we sustain struggles for justice over the long-term (in ways that don't hurt us, too much), how we can defend spaces we organise in, and how we can build stronger movements.

These are our accounts, and whilst we've discussed and debriefed ad nauseum, there are other interpretations of what happened.



The images in this zine are all from a 1984 movie called 'Red Dawn' that depicts a Soviet Union invasion of the United States, starring a bunch of American high school kids who resist the occupation with guerrilla warfare, and call themselves Wolverines, after their school mascot. The film is probably really conservative and crap - we haven't seen it, we don't know. But the images are apt, and serve a beautiful narrative for this zine, which is a homage to the mega babe Patrick Swayze, recently deceased. Rest in peace.

"I want you to be nice... until it's time to not be nice."

- Patrick Swayze in 'Road House'.



The Sydney Uni Collective Story

By the end of semester it will be one year since the unilateral declaration of autonomy by students now known as the Student Environment Action Collective (SEAC). Some reading this zine may have seen our declaration and the response. This declaration of autonomy was seen by some as completely illegitimate. Despite this widely held claim of illegitimacy, it is neither the first nor the last time that groups have bifurcated (I just didn't want to use the word split, for reasons which I will explain soon-ish). Some say the environment collective was 'lost' to an external group uninvested in the long term health of campus environment collectives, but I think we gained a lot more than was lost, this is why.

Articulating what you need in a space is important. We could all do a bit better at calling out consistent destructive behaviour, even when it is our own. But when we do, lessons need to be learned, people need to change and take these concerns seriously, not merely rely on the false assumptions that these concerns relate to politics. My interpretation of the ASEN way has been to favour decision making processes that create pathways of involvement for the many different ideas, this has allowed campus collectives to be diverse and member driven, and genuinely 'bottom-up'. This can be uncomfortable and has drawn opposition from the left (Solidarity) and the right (NUS), mostly because this means they can't control students. What if people who get involved don't have our same commitments or priorities? ASEN affiliated collectives are characterised by their openness to accommodate people's

interests if other people share them. If we want student movements that are defined and shaped by students we need to preserve this feature.

When people intervene in a group in order to steer it in a direction that they think is a more correct one overall, it necessarily involves coercion. When coercion enters the political practice of a group in a collective space, it is time to act. Coercion necessarily means subordinating other priorities for your own, it necessarily means ending the idea of a group that is inclusive. Sometimes, this gets characterised in other ways, like 'quality over quantity', 'what we really need is a smaller group of activists that have the "right" politics'. For example, at Sydney University this political practice has involved often difficult discussions about forcing collective to take positions on x and y, rather than genuinely forming affinity or consensus about actions groups that can happen, instead trying to create situations of mutual exclusivity that suit their groups priorities:

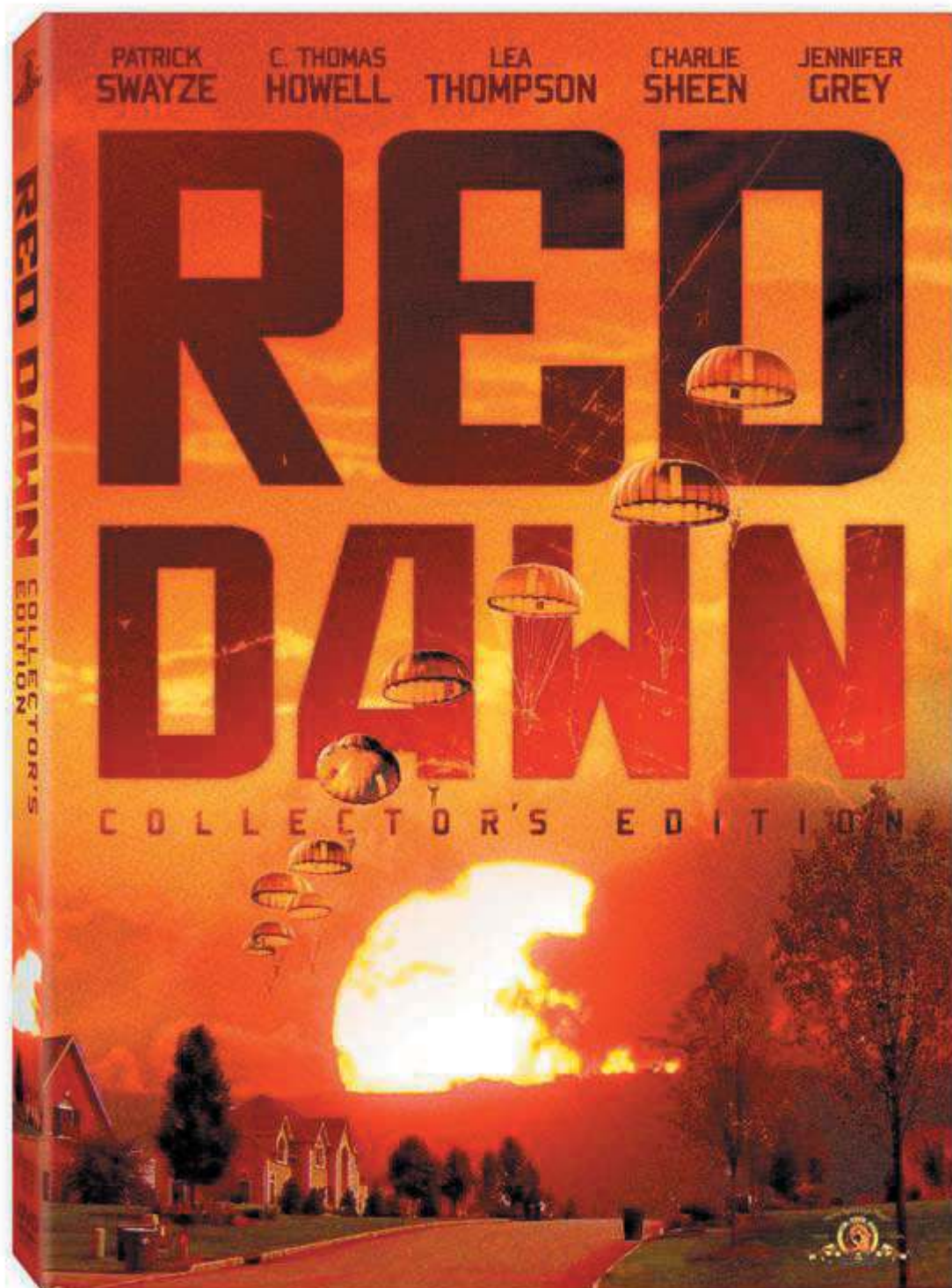
"Spending our resources and time campaigning to get the university to 'buy green power' will actually take us a step backwards and fighting for what really needs to be done."

It really means defeating and demoralising competing currents until they leave... but what if they refuse to be demoralised and defeated for not sharing their narrow view?

We don't maintain pluralism in our movements by walking away, tail between legs, hoping that even-

tually those involved in coercive political practice might stop. We maintain pluralism by declaring it, asserting the autonomy of the plural over the loud voices. This has been the SEAC experience. We decided not to drop out, but to start again, to create a space where we did what we came to do, to act. We tried to reconcile, but that brought only more pain, people thought that maybe after being so strong, we could negotiate on equal footing, but really, if you reject the pluralist idea, you will always reject autonomy, so why bother.

Sydney University now has two functioning autonomous environment collectives. There was no split. Conventional wisdom says that splits sap away all our power as a group in the things that we did and that all of a sudden we would all be useless. Well, both collectives have organised effectively, both have engaged new students. Everyone has got to work in a supportive space on things they want to work on, and the environment movement benefits from that. We can only define our success by what we actually do, not what happens in meetings. And if you have to bifurcate to do it, don't be scared, the only scary thing you have to lose, are your chains.



Reflections on our organising

In compiling a zine about other groups one might start to get the idea that we are the keepers of the truth, and know everything there is to know about social change. We aren't and we don't. We have never claimed to. The purpose of this article is to critically reflect on our activism and to discover some of our failings; not only in our organising but to provide reasons why Solidarity have been to some degree successful in their interventions (specifically in the Sydney University Environment Collective), strategically picking off first year activists and integrating them into their structures, often away from the scrutiny of the people they are attempting to illegitimise.

One of the claims consistently made by Solidarity of non-solidarity members of collective is that some people in collective are united as part of a friendship group, rather than being united in political action. There is rarely evidence raised to support this claim. But the claim requires further analysis. By virtue of people's political solidarity and common experiences, friendships form. It is no doubt that Solidarity would also have friendship groups. The question is, does the process of socialising with one another distract a collective from its goals? I think it can, under certain circumstances. However it seems highly unlikely that a group that has been able to organise and plan campaigns together, conduct high profile non-violent direct actions and work in solidarity with other community campaigns is necessarily hamstrung by the fact that the majority of people are friends with each other.

While friendships form, its important that the group does not appear clique-ish to new folks, that new folks are encouraged to come to meetings and participate and that people are engaged as activists or organisers whether or not we might be interested in a personal friendship with them. It might be worth interrogating our own behaviours in meeting spaces: hugging or catching up on what happened on the weekend may be isolating to a new person sitting alone with no-one to chat to before the meeting.

Membership structures of our groups continue to be poor. It is not exactly clear when someone becomes a member of most groups and what their obligations are. There is the widespread use of participants agreements - but do they go far enough?

When key items come up for discussion, and someone is brought along to the meeting to 'win' the vote, does their opinion matter? Conventional wisdom sees groups as open, fluid structures with few barriers, but can we leave our groups open to abuse? More consideration is needed on how we can keep our groups open to new people but prevent abuse.

Why is it that we leave deep theoretical discussions to other groups who recruit from collectives? Often whilst getting on top of the week to week discussions of collectives we forget to engage new people out of meetings in deep political discussions that can illuminate them to a diversity of theories. This often leaves more organised forces ready to whisk them away after meetings for theoretical development. Not that there is anything wrong with people exploring their ideas, it is just problematic that the forum in which they explore those ideas is geared towards a particular set of ideas. This space for exploring ideas will never be genuine, because it doesn't genuinely consider all ideas. Especially if it is dominated by old, rusted-on members of the left.

Often despite good attempts, our meetings are just not well facilitated. We fail to skill people up in the difficult task of effectively mediating competing interests in a way that keeps everyone partially satisfied and comes up with a good outcome. Using instruments of facilitation regularly enough rarely happens. This often allows loud voices to become further entrenched. We must take responsibility for our failures to make sure meetings are well facilitated and provide skillshares and support.

There is also something to be said about our willingness to create good spaces leading us to be nice to everyone most of the time even if we find their behaviour challenging. Anecdotal deconstruction of this reveals that it might be a 'middle class' value to be nice to people even when we disagree. The failure of this that we risk not effectively communicating our displeasure with certain people who don't do activism on that basis. We need to be strong, rather than nice, and recognise that not everyone has to like each other outside of formal meeting spaces, and that some conflict, provided it isn't distressing, might be required to protect our spaces

self defence for autonomous collectives

tactics that socialists employ and counter-strategies to stop entryism...

Entryism (wiki says!) 'is a political tactic by which an organisation or state encourages its members or agents to infiltrate another organisation in an attempt to gain recruits, or take over entirely. (We say) it is controlling, arrogant, vanguardist and disrespectful to try to manipulate, and take control of, another group against their will. It shows a lack of respect for the organising and ideas of others.

If you have a sneaking suspicion that there are some reds weaseling their way into the criso clean sheets of your autonomous bed... Here's a handy checklist of common entryist behaviours.

Behaviour	Definition	Effects	
Factionalism	People are working for the interest of other groups, and have no real commitment to making the autonomous collective work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- makes people work against each other, so destroys trust- wastes time politicking instead of activating- inflexible positions rather than a commitment to learning, discussion and working with the group	
Voting	Some groups use voting. Other groups use consensus and these are both political decisions. When Socialists consistently argue against consensus despite the decisions of the group, this is a problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- leads to weak agreements and less commitment to following through- lack of diversity- forces people to agree/act when they don't want to	
Insistence on unity at all costs	<p>People polarise debates</p> <p>You're either with them or against them, e.g. solar panels are lifestyle and protests are radical.</p> <p>Everyone must agree to the position (which is their position).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- leads to weak agreements and less commitment to following through- forces people to agree/act when they don't want to- less creativity because of lack of diversity- dogma blinds people to their mistakes	
Insistence on positioning rather than activism	Continually pushing the group to decide their stance on issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- inefficient waste of time- a weak consensus on positions creates a false sense of unity, when some people don't care or agree	

Unsafe meeting procedure, including interrupting and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People from one group speak many times and dominate discussion - People from one group all take issue with your group's processes, e.g. they hate consensus - People declare that the processes or participants agreement that they are breaking is invalid because it is beurocratic anyway... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inefficient meetings - discourages participation by making meetings awful, aggressive and frustrating - members of the group may feel less confident to develop their own ideas and analyses if themselves or others are attacked in meetings 	
Caucusing	Other groups disuss your group in their own meetings and don't tell you what they talked about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inflexible positions rather than a commitment to learning, discussion and working with the group - working against others in the movement wastes time and destroys trust 	
Stacking	People from one group come in increasing numbers, who aren't actively part of the collective. For example, ten new people show up to a meeting where a big decision is to be made; and you never see them again. People from this group will vote the same way before celebrating a successful stacking!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - weakens the strength and value of consensus. If decisions are made by people who have no long-term interest in the result, then there will be weaker follow up - disempowering for those who do care 	

In our experiences, Solidarity and Socialist Alliance activists rarely disclose their involvement in these organisations in movement spaces, preferring instead to say they are from a garden-variety community or student group. Other common behaviours are less destructive (though often fairly boring) include putting up motion after motion declaring positions; consistently nominating to be spokespeople for the group and authors of political statements; recruiting from the group for their own organisation; and taking up all of the time in the group/event by ensuring their hands are up first and often, ensuring their comrades also repeat their line. Certainly, it's possible for folks in Socialist Organisations to also participate in collectives, networks and movements respectfully - many do.

Wolverine kids HEART the riot dog in Greece! Solidarity against oppressive states!



So, it looks like you've got b(r)ed bugs...?

Here's a step by step self defence guide, based on some group work that happened in an anti-entryism workshop that we (the compilers of charts and checklists!) designed and ran at an activist training day.

Step 1: Building and maintaining strong foundations

Have strong and documented processes for decision making. For example, people might need to come to two or three meetings before they can block consensus. Run workshops on consensus and facilitation, so that all of the people in your group have access to, and confidence with, these skills.

Have a Participants' Agreement [google 'Bill Moyer Participants' Agreement for a commonly-used example]. You could also have a grievance procedure, an appointed grievance officer, and transparent processes for dealing with unacceptable and unsafe behaviour.

Consider having a closed group: membership by invitation only, with a trial period for newcomers. This goes against the ethos of openness but is quite appropriate when faced with overtly hostile infiltration, such as informers in repressive regimes.

Less formally, new people could express interest in joining your group, and need to meet up with someone already in the group before they come along to a meeting. You could use this meeting to get to know them, explain how the group makes decisions, and see if they are interested in organising in this way. Or, new members could be admitted with the agreement of the group. Other groups we know of require new members to come along to two or three meetings BEFORE they can block consensus on an agenda item: this easy and reasonable tool can help avoid stacking, and facilitate better and more consistent decision-making.

You could even rethink your methods of action so that they are less attractive to those who have other agendas. Our guess is that rallies, for example, are more attractive to takeover tactics than boycotts or neighbourhood organising.

Step 2: The follow through

USE the processes you have put in place. If people object to the processes, then you can discuss them, but be warned against long conversations about processes that drive away people who don't know what's going on. Also, the people objecting to your processes might be wasting your time by pretending to object to processes but actually just want to have their way in the group.

So, if people refuse to stick to processes, you can talk to them outside of the group to see what their real concerns are, and to stress the importance of safe meeting spaces. Try to convince them individually to stick to meeting procedures that the group has committed to because that's how you can



work together best in a way that makes everybody feel safe.

Following through on your safe meeting procedures might mean that the grievance officer brings concerns to people who break the rules and ask them to change their behaviour or else leave the group.

Step 3: The enforcement

If talking to people individually doesn't work, then you can try to talk to people as a group. Organise a meet up of people like you who want to have safe and fun meetings, and talk about they way forward. Don't feel alone! There's probably loads of others who feel the same way.

As a group, you could write a document or letter outlining all the behaviours you find problematic in your collective and the reasons why they need to change. Send this to your collective e-list, as well as to the organisation that is doing the entryism. Ask for behaviours to change and don't feel that you are being imposing for demanding a safe space to organise in.

Step 4: Declare autonomy

If things don't get better, and the people who are making meetings awful refuse to leave the group, then don't feel bound by history that ties your group together. Declare your own autonomy! Set up a new group and feel free to make new rules that exclude people who abuse your processes.

Make it clear that the new group requires everyone to stick to the participants agreement or automatically have to leave. Be explicit in your commitment to collective principles like consensus and non-hierarchical organising. People who don't agree with these principles should see that your group is clearly about collective organising hence they will not be welcome.

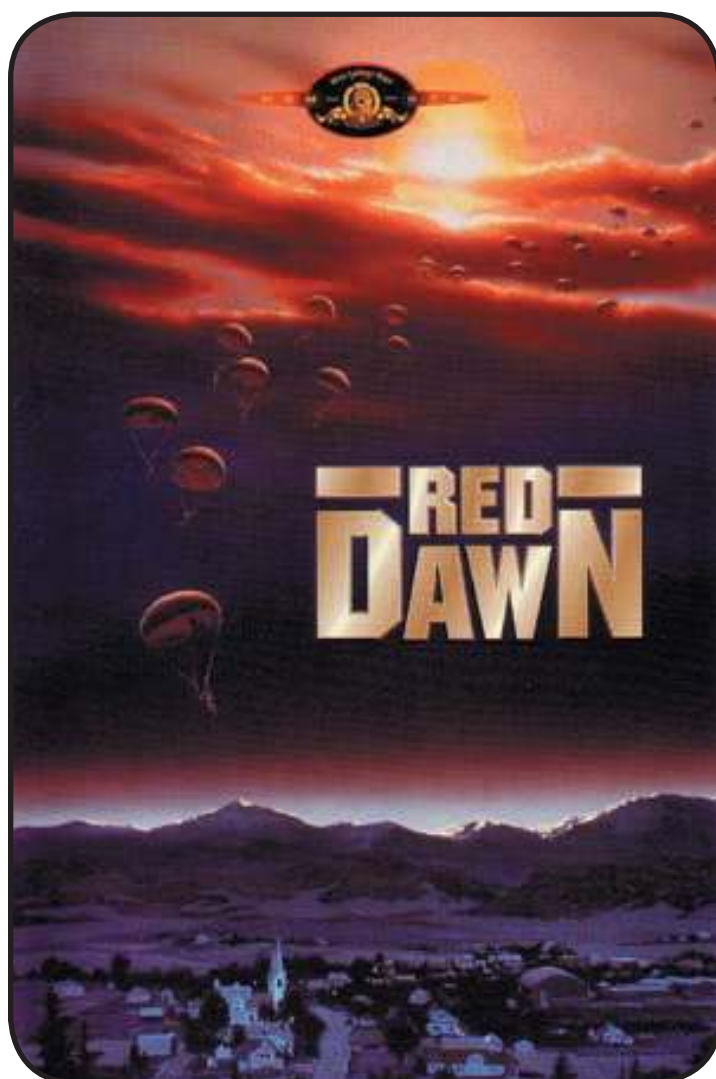
Tell everyone else in your network about what happened! You can ask for help earlier from the network too if you are stuck for ideas on how to move forward. That's what networks are for. Send out an email to the various groups that you are involved in to let them know that your group has changed and why. Ask for support for your group and you can even ask them to disengage with the old group because it was destructive and dominated by entryist groups with sinister motives.

Step 5: Celebrate!

Getting rid of entryist groups was probably stressful. So now sit back and enjoy your new and safe space, do the campaigns that you want to do and celebrate your victory in creating a vibrant space for strong activism.

Remember to keep watch in case the same thing happens again – stick to your participants agreement and make the space great.

These experiences are characteristically draining and exhausting, and take a huge personal toll. Don't give the conflict all your energy, and do what you can to support each other.



what are the politics?

Whenever the problems in Sydney Uni Enviro Collective last year were brought up in the wider world, people kept asking “what are the politics?” Supporters of the intervention into collective (by some members of the socialist organisation Solidarity) claimed that the implosion of collective was caused by the refusal of other collective participants to engage in “political discussion.” This claim spread beyond the collective, and various people who had never been to collective confidently explained that the “real issue” was this supposed absence of political debate. Paddy Gibson (who had not been to any of the relevant meetings, or in fact any meetings at all in 2009) claimed that “there has not been accountable and open debate about what the SRC should do about climate change” in collective.

But I think that this isn't really true. And I think that this claim is symptomatic of the lack of respect with which Solidarity as an organisation has recently treated other groups and individuals in the left. There was a political debate, and the rest of collective had a political response to Solidarity's positions. The fact that Solidarity members did not listen to or engage with this response in more than the most superficial manner is what I want to describe and discuss here.

The debate which Solidarity wanted to have centred around a couple of main demands. They demanded that collective concentrate all of its energy on one particular campaign. This campaign was,

chronologically, against the Nuclear Institute (2007) against Energy privatisation (2008) and against the CPRS (2009). They argued that, generally, no other campaign should be organised through collective (because of the need to build a “mass movement”), and specifically, that a “On Campus Campaign” about renewable energy would be lifestyle, capitalist, and wrong. They argued that collective should give up its commitment to pluralism and consensus decision making.

Collective members made coherent, political arguments against each of these demands. They pointed out that a “mass-movement” need not be mobilised on a single issue (especially where that single issue is as narrowly constructed as a particular campaign tactic against a single piece of legislation). If you want a mass movement against capitalism, surely the different aspects of capitalism which people are oppressed by are together capable of building a mass, anti capitalist movement. Do Solidarity members expect that we can only have a campaign on CPRS, and that Indigenous Elders on Muckaty station have to be mobilised by CPRS and not be motivated by their long struggle for sovereignty and the right not to be exposed to radioactive waste? Of course they don't. It would be cool if we can extend to non-Solidarity members the right not to have to believe doggerel. They pointed out that the collective could help to build a “mass movement” through continuing to campaign on their preferred issues: anti coal campaigning, anti CPRS campaigning (2008 and 2009), renewable energy on campus campaigning, anti-nuclear campaigning, forest campaigning, and others (including each of the campaigns Solidarity put forward). They pointed out that it wasn't a very strong argument to claim that increasing the number of people on a campaign from 7 to 20 would be the crucial step in showing our commitment to “mass movement” politics. They affirmed their political commitment to pluralism and diversity of tactics. They explained the political reasoning behind each of their campaigns, at length and ad nauseam, because Solidarity repeatedly asked them too.



As for the last two demands of Solidarity, let's look at some "political" arguments made by each side.

Consensus Organising:

Solidarity members argued that consensus organising was:

"Formalised consensus is, in real terms, enforced unanimous voting. Consensus puts people are put under bureaucratic pressure to alter their opinion. It is an 'exclusion principle' – i.e., reach consensus or block the decision or leave the collective."

The briefest examination of any kind of explanation would have set the record straight, let alone the long and carefully explained thoughts written by various collective members. Consensus does not mean everybody agrees, it is a process to work through disagreement. As is voting. Collective members explained the political basis for consensus decision making (that individuals should have a say in decisions that will effect them, and that majority decision making silences dissent). They explained how dissent should be encouraged in a functioning collective space, and how dissent was a means of expressing how proposals could be amended and improved. They explained pragmatic ways of making consensus as democratic as possible: coming to meetings with a real commitment to working things out, suggesting amendments, self facilitating and helping to make collective a supportive and respectful space. They acknowledged that any system is imperfect, and that consensus requires constant work and that there are important discussions to be had about it. But not "majority rules = democracy" and "consensus is forced unanimity." Because that's really boring. However, various members of the Solidarity intervention continued to make 2-dimensional and uninformed claims about what consensus was. The fact that the majority of people wanted consensus organising to operate in the collective, seemed to completely go over the heads of those claiming "majority is democracy."

"On Campus Campaign"

The key issue for non-Solidarity members of collective in this particular debate was a commitment to pluralism, and a belief that collective could support more than one campaign at once. But they also engaged in the political debate about the merits of this campaign that Solidarity insisted on repeating in every meeting,

Solidarity argued that fitting the University with solar panels was equivalent to energy privatisation and lifestylism. For example, one Solidarity member argued that:

"This strikes to the heart of the political issue – whether what is needed to stop climate change is a mass movement which confronts the government's 'false solutions' and demands structural change, or whether 'empowering' small scale projects that seek to get communities 'off the grid' should be our focus. The latter suggestion stems from lifestylism, which has been influential in the collective over the past few years."

They went even further, claiming that the Sydney Energy Co-op was a capitalist agent of the worst kind:

"Also, inviting and promoting the Sydney Energy co-op, a group that installs solar panels (as well as energy efficient light bulbs and green education), to speak at the forum, also indicates otherwise. Why would you give them a platform to speak at a forum about campus sustainability if you didn't seriously think that was possible way to 'green the university' or reduce carbon emissions?"

And, "There is the issue of whether the renewables are bought from private companies, rather than demanding government installation of solar. I don't think that getting the uni to purchase solar from the co-op will go any way to exposing government inaction on climate change."

With everybody in collective for the past few years liberally stamped with big glaring "lifestylism" trademark, Solidarity supporters went on to argue that ONLY a campaign which LOBBIED the GOVERNMENT could be successful. ONLY the GOVERNMENT has any kind of power or could have any kind of power. For example, they wrote:

"What are people meant to do with this power once it is realised? If it is not to oppose governmental policy, then what is it?"

The ONLY POWER we have then is to oppose government policy. The only other conceivable action is consumer power ("lifestylism"). WHAT ABOUT REVOLUTION, PEOPLE? Have Marxists moved on? Or did recruiting numbers in the war on collective become more important than actually explaining Marxist politics?

what are the politics? (continued)

Revolutionary Marxism circa 2009:

"I think the point is to work internally to change parts of the system, the point is that the voice of the working classes must be heard over the loud lobby of the big businesses- in direct unequivocal opposition. The point is not, on an individual level, to kid ourselves that by consciously abstaining from the system we are helping to change it.. It is desirable in our everyday lives and for our sanity- sure!"

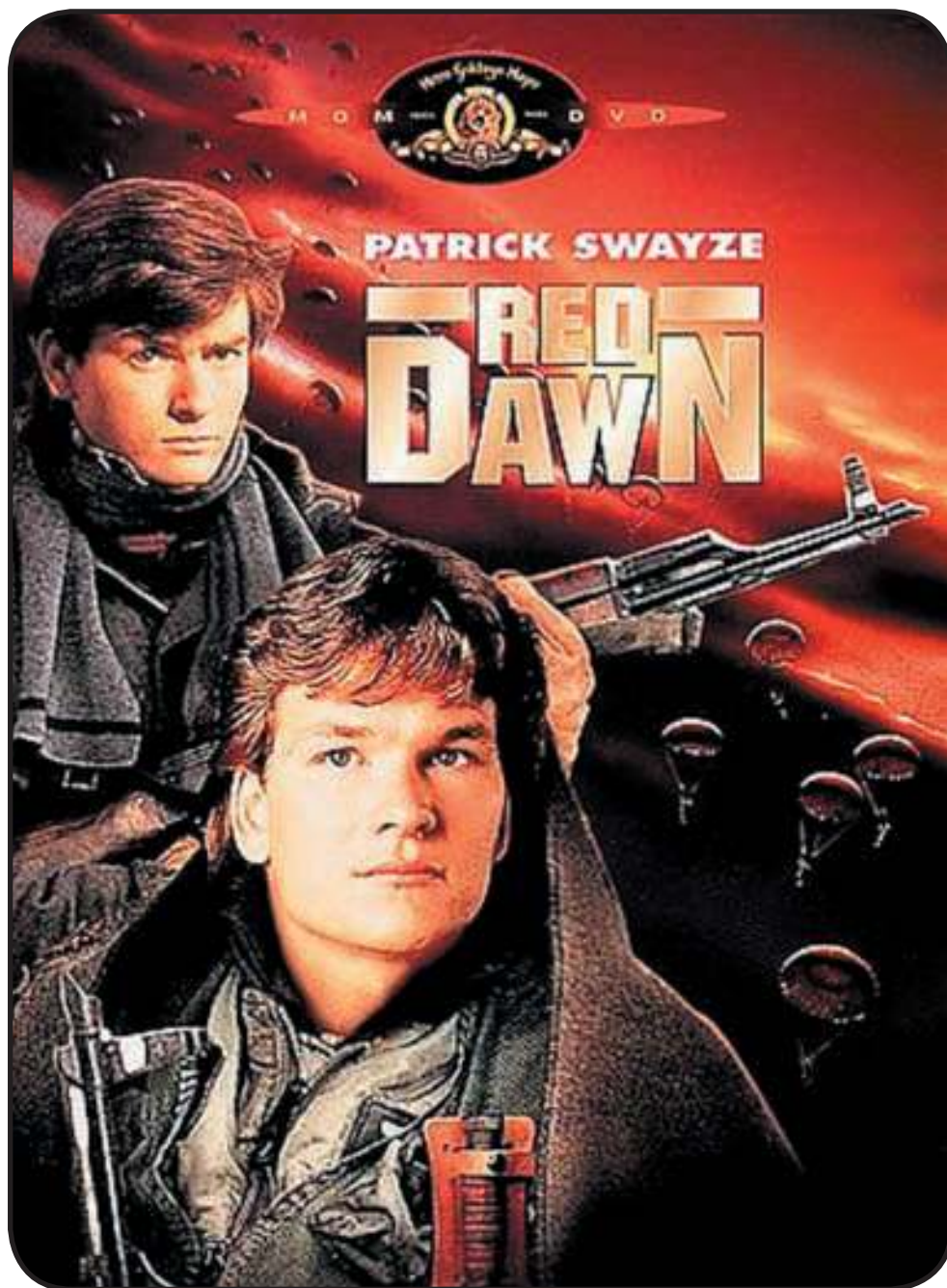
"In response to taking direct action against the coal and other industries- Katherine [sic] you seem to have promoted this. We agree of course that this is a strong mean of action (climate camp etc), however I find it hard to believe that with the billions of dollars- and counting- proposed to be thrown into these industries under the CPRS, these businesses are going to pack up their stuff and leave! It is the policy itself that must be targeted! It is the policy itself that is targeted when we reach out to workers

and students and tell them why, under the CPRS, they will be the ones affected."

So, without a policy, there is NO WAY that change could ever be achieved through action of the people. Its gotta come from the government. The working classes no longer revolt, they simply talk loudly and the system changes from within. Is that what Marxism has become? Please government, revolutionise US.

Marx must be a grumpy grumpy dead white man. If only he had realized, all along, that it would be THIS EASY.

Ok, back to the historical debate. Did collective members quake before the strength of these arguments, panic, shut up, and run around in circles of distress? The e-list history suggests not. Collective members explained that they were not "lifestylists" – if this was taken to mean a political position which places personal, lifestyle choices at the heart of the struggle against climate change. They explained that while for some people these actions could be empowering,



they did not think that they would alone stop climate change. Instead they talked about the potential power of community action to disrupt polluting industries and demand renewable energy. They pointed out problems with using the term “lifestylism” so broadly that it seemed to include any action of personal choice. They gave long and thoughtful analyses of power in the modern world, and gave various reasons as to why government lobbying was not their chosen avenue of achieving social change and environmental justice. They explained, so so patiently, the difference between “lifestylism” and community direct action.

They pointed out that the university is funded by the government, and that forcing a large government funded institution to install solar panels would be a good step in the fight for government support of renewable energy. And that a Coop is hardly a “private company.” (One young solidarity member was concerned that Stuart Rosewarne “might not want to speak at a panel” with Maurice from the Energy Coop). They pointed out that really, at some stage renewable energy technologies do need to be built and put on buildings. And that, while the government should pay for this, it doesn’t make sense to suggest that it would be wrong for engineers to actually put them on buildings. Cos probably, actual politicians would be pretty incompetent at this kind of caper.

Their main arguments, that solar power was privatisation, was even given up after a senior member of Solidarity pointed out that it was dross. Unfortunately, we cant all wait around for Paddy to get with it and let people know if their arguments make sense or not.

So, looking back, I don’t think its true to claim that collective refused to have a political debate. Collective members defended their campaigns and their politics thoughtfully, intelligently, and patiently. The same cannot be said for most of the arguments presented by the Solidarity intervention and its supporters. I don’t think that this was because Soli-

darity members are stupid, or because they aren’t committed to radical politics. I think that the lack of intellectual rigour in these arguments stems from a lack of respect for the people to whom they were being made. Solidarity said collective had to be political, but then when push came to shove they didn’t like the politics it had, and so went on to disrupt it with distinctly undemocratic tactics. Because those involved in the Solidarity intervention did not respect the politics of collective or its members, they did not listen to the arguments other collective members were making. Members of the intervention showed a similar lack of respect for dissenting voices with Solidarity itself. This intellectual snobbery is counterproductive. It didn’t make collective “more radical.” It didn’t build a mass movement. It reduced capacity in collective. It hampered real political discussion. It shut down space for constructive disagreement and creative, alternative solutions. It worsened Solidarity’s reputation amongst people who would have liked to be supportive of its goals.

Solidarity have always prided themselves on their sweet sweet analysis. And that’s cool. It’s cool to analyse things, to pick apart the universe and imagine how to put it back together again. It’s cool to understand the theoretical underpinnings of our daily oppressions. But its not cool to think that your analysis is so good that you literally stop listening to people that you haven’t already decided that you agree with. Is the Left really that disparate that there is actually no point talking about politics with each other? If you listen, maybe we could have better debates. If Solidarity wants to be a productive part of the left, then it is going to have to respect other people in it. It is going to have to deal with the fact that while people on the left have a lot in common, NOT EVERYONE AGREES ABOUT EVERYTHING. And that’s okay. It’s how you deal with that that matters, that’s political, that’s radical, that’s empowering. If we are gonna keep with the debating “winner takes all” model, that’s just not radical at all, frankly. That’s what we already have.

Recent interventions in the Community Climate Network

I have not been extensively involved in the Community Climate Action Network, and there are probably many others who have more to say about their experiences of socialist interventions in that network. However, from reading a report written by one of the organisers of the network, Wenny Theresia (who has not been involved in writing this piece), it is clear that there are many parallels between the entryism and interventions experienced in the Community network, and my own and others' experiences in the student environment movement.

The Community Climate Action Network- the network of local Climate Action Groups (CAGs), first met on a national level at the Australia's Climate Action Summit (ACAS) in early 2009. Wenny Theresia expressed concerns that the Network Facilitation Group (NFG), conceived as a mechanism for communication and sharing support, would become a decision-making space used to exert control over the grassroots climate movement. She states:

"I have particular concerns that specific groups in the climate movement, namely the Socialist Alliance and Solidarity, may come to dominate representation on the NFG, and then informally use it as a vehicle to wield influence over the rest of the movement."

She also states:

"[I]n my experience, I have not found people in groups like Socialist Alliance and Solidarity to be completely honest and transparent about internal organisational decisions that may impact group members' involvement in the rest of the movement."

The report points out that larger organisations such as the Socialist Alliance have the ability to 'assign resources' in the movement, as the organisation sees fit. Dishonesty about internal organisational decisions that affect participation in the movement, and dominating spaces that "are or are may be pro-

moted as 'authoritative' or influential" are behaviours we have seen in many other groups including student movements, not just the grassroots climate movement.

Another behavior common to student and community climate movements was acting as a bloc to stack out a meeting and get the group to decide on the position of the bloc. An example from the community climate movement is that of the Socialist Alliance in the organising of the 2009 Climate Emergency rallies:

"[M]embers of Socialist Alliance, in favour of including [a demand for 100% renewable energy by 2020] were very vocal in arguing for this position, including in the national rally coordinating space where Socialist Alliance members comprised the majority of representatives to this space. Indeed in Simon Butler's report, it is mentioned that 'we (the Socialist Alliance) waged a successful campaign to keep [100% renewables by 2020] as the chief demand for the June 13 rallies.'"

As a solution to the domination of Socialist (or other) groups in the community climate movement, the report advocates self-facilitation, for individuals and groups, as a way to ensure that no one interest dominates a movement. This is a particularly relevant point for the Climate Action Network, which is largely comprised of Climate Action Groups, as the members of these groups are mostly not involved in other groups. Their involvement in the CAGs and the network is their main way of being involved in the climate movement. This is also the case for many members of campus environment collectives. Often, the environment collective is the only political group members are involved in, apart from state and national level student environment organising. Members may not have an outside space to debate, discuss and agree on policy and tactics before attending meetings - in fact, members may think that the meetings of these groups themselves are the space for this! But members of socialist or-

ganisations have participated quite differently, pre-caucusing and deciding on positions before attending meetings.

Autonomists, anarchists, unidentified lefties and all people who want to fight for climate justice should continue to participate in the environment movement and in open campaigning coalitions such as the Climate Action Network in good faith and with open minds (if we are not bloody exhausted by working with people who show a fundamental lack of respect for your ideas and ways of organising— if this is the case, good on you.) But we should be aware of socialist (and other) organisations' superior resources— in terms of time and money— and their ability to 'assign' them to certain campaigns. There have been cases of senior activists in socialist groups being paid for their work, the main

component of which appears to be intervening in and recruiting from social movements. This is particularly problematic in university environment collectives where full- and part-time students, who are often also workers, have to compete with full-time activists in a dictatorship of the most committed.

We should be aware of pre-caucusing and decision-making in outside organisations that affect movements we are involved in, and call for greater accountability and transparency. We should be aware of, and develop mechanisms to guard against, the stacking of meetings— such as strong membership processes. We should be aware of the centralisation of decision-making and power in our movements such as the example of the Network Facilitation Group in the Climate Action Network.





... and it's all just a little bit of history repeating.

**They say the next big thing is here
That the revolution's near
But to me it seems quite clear
That it's all just a little bit of history repeating**

**And I've seen it before
And I'll see it again
Yes I've seen it before
Just little bits of history repeating**

- Sung by Shirley Bassey and The Propellerheads

I have been active in social movements for about a decade – in student groups and community climate justice networks – and have faced a variety of strategies from Socialist organisations. Sometimes we have been able to work together, and some members have been our friends and allies; but I have found their behaviour as a faction in collectives – or as an organisation at conferences, summits and large actions – to be difficult, disruptive and destructive.

Sometimes it's hard to pinpoint exactly what it is, or understand why they might be interested in our groups. It's been helpful for me to talk to people in Socialist organisations/factions about their organisational structure, and understand how they think change happens. [Mostly, the response is: 'building the revolutionary workers' party that can get masses of workers onto the streets'].

It's also been helpful to know these tactics and interventions have been happening for decades (and longer!): there are lessons to be learnt. [In fact, resistance to organised "entryism" has been around since Trotsky's first proposed the strategy in his essays on "The French Turn" in 1934. The intervening French Trotskyists faced some resistance as they attempted to dissolve their organisation into the French Socialist Party, however they still managed to significantly raise their group's membership. But, soon after, the French Socialist Party began to expel

the Trotskyists. Hooray! ...Or not? Anyhoo, I think the take home message here is, "You are not alone. This has been happening since forever."]

Currently, the strongest 'entryist' organisations in the burgeoning climate movement in Sydney are Solidarity and Socialist Alliance (which is mostly made up of people from the Democratic Socialist Perspective (DSP) and their youth wing, Resistance). So far, Socialist Alternative have participated very little in Sydney-based climate organising.

But interventionist or 'entryist' strategies are not new to these organisations and political tendencies. Sourcewatch describes entryism as "a political tactic in which an organisation or group enters a larger organisation in an attempt to gain recruits, gain influence or to take control of the larger organisations' structure. Characteristically, these groups intervene in single-issue campaign groups, and sometimes cause folks to spend more time on dealing with internal wrangling, than with organising work itself.

Beyond individual groups, both organisations currently prioritise participation in 'peak' decision-making spaces, in which many groups participate (campaign alliances, national network committees, committees to organise major rallies or large movement events like Climate Camp). They also prioritise student spaces, which they identify as the

key grounds for recruitment to their organisation. Student environment collectives – some of the only active networks to survive the Howard Government's gutting of student unionism – are seen as the largest and strongest student movement, and have faced sustained and sometimes aggressive entryism.

Recently, Wenny Theresia wrote of participation in the growing community climate movement, "An organisational philosophy of groups like Socialist Alliance and Solidarity seems to be seeing highly-charged, lengthy and (deliberately) polarised debates – dominated by a few, pre-caucused positions of these organisations – as 'politicising' and beneficial for the movement. Personally I've generally found these methods patronising, counter-effective, frustrating and often predictable: not a method that supports critical, grassroots discussion of ideas and consensus decision-making."

To be fair, I know many ordinary, new or younger members are completely unaware of the entryist tactics and strategies their organisations employ, while others don't take issue with manipulating other groups for their own agendas (but see this as useful work to 'politicise' or 'radicalise' what they see as 'liberal' groups). I acknowledge members of these organisations have a right to put forward their views, act around their beliefs and join social change groups. But such groups also have the right to defend themselves – and defend consensus-based and non-hierarchical organising structures – against those who undermine them by participating with ulterior motives and hidden agendas.

I tracked down a handful of people's stories of a range of entryist strategies. I called folks who were involved in the group at the time for a conversation. All of them are still grassroots activists. I've not doubt there are other interpretations of history and I haven't done in depth historical research – these are just snippets of people's experiences.

Nuclear Disarmament Party 1985

In the 1984 federal elections, 642,435 people had cast their primary vote for the Nuclear Disarmament Party: it was a new political party, hastily put together and fast gaining thousands of members. They won one Senate seat (Western Australia's Jo Valentine, with Peter Garrett almost winning their second).

Before the Conference – defending the NDP

The March 1985 Newsletter of the Sydney branch of the Nuclear Disarmament Party reported that members of the Socialist Workers Party (later called

the Democratic Socialist Perspective, and today forming the Socialist Alliance) were trying to take over the NDP by entryism and block-voting. The November 21 issue of the newspaper of the SWP and Resistance announced its entire staff had joined the NDP.

The letter (available here: <http://mailstar.net/NDP-March85-p8.jpg> and here <http://mailstar.net/NDP-March85-p9.jpg>) said:

...SWP members organise themselves tightly outside NDP circles to ensure their interests as a group are pushed with maximum effect within the NDP. Many members in Sydney and in other cities have become aware of a "block" which always argues and votes the same way. Of course, there is nothing wrong in principle with NDP members getting together to advance their views on what's best for the NDP. It happens all the time. It's a legitimate part of any democratic organisation. But when those people organise tightly to pursue the interests of an outside group, whose interests are separate from those of NDP, that is another matter!! For example, the SWP stands its own candidates in elections, and one of its primary purposes in working within the NDP is to recruit members to the SWP. Flowing from their view of the need to work within other groups, the SWP has a history of "takeovers" of other organisations. SWP members portray themselves as loyal members with no desire other than the well being of the host group. However, whenever it becomes possible the SWP assumes control of the host group and uses it for its own ends.

...The Nuclear Disarmament Party is and must remain a broadly based popular movement which will not be viable if it polarises to the left or the right.

If we were to allow members of the SWP to become, or to remain, leading members of the NDP, we should lose, or fail ever to gain, the support of the great body of the Australian public. Of that there can be no doubt.

There are compelling reasons for the view that members of other political parties should either be proscribed from joining or remaining as ordinary members of the NDP; or at least should be proscribed from being appointed or elected as spokespersons, office-bearers, delegates or committee members of the NDP.

.... and it's all just a little

...Our cause is peace, and it cannot go forward if we are constantly at war with those who choose to use the NDP to pursue their own political ends and recruit from our membership.

*Gillian Fisher Wentworth Electorate
Rob Britten North Sydney Electorate
Edward St John Warringah Electorate
Sean Flood Sydney Electorate*

Later, the *Peace Studies* journal, Edward St John wrote, "Once it became apparent that the SWP was making a major and moderately successful effort to assert itself prominently in the affairs of the NDP, some sort of split became inevitable. Internally, the SWP was an organised, parasitic minority bent on gaining factional advantage, the better to pursue *its* objectives."

At the Nuclear Disarmament Party Inaugural Conference

Anyone with an NDP membership card issued freely for a nominal charge, could attend the conference. Of the 170 people present, it was estimated that 70 were SWP or Resistance members.

There were three proposals at the conference that the Socialist Workers' Party in particular, objected to:

1. Proscription: a standard clause that members of the NDP could not be members of another political party. The SWP objected: they wanted to be members of the Socialist Workers Party and the Nuclear Disarmament Party, as they planned to build the SWP through the NDP.
2. Ratification of conference decisions: it was proposed to send the conference decisions to a postal ballot of members. SWP preferred that the meeting of members had the final say – meetings they were already 'stacking' with SWP members.
3. A proposal that the NDP call for nuclear disarmament in the "East and West" – ie. the Nuclear Disarmament Party call for worldwide nuclear disarmament. The SWP had a relationship with Socialist parties in the 'East' / Soviet leadership; and wished to only call for the United States of America to disarm. Socialist Alliance's newspaper Green Left Weekly claimed the proposal "equated Soviet and US responsibility for the nuclear

arms race" and was "unnecessary concession to the US war machine."

The Socialist Workers Party created an untenable situation: the Nuclear Disarmament Party was unable to call for global nuclear disarmament.

At the conference, the Socialist Workers Party blocked voting on any resolutions proposed, particularly those most in dispute. Out of frustration, people moved that proposals not voted on be submitted to a referendum of NDP members. This was opposed by the SWP, and defeated 87 votes to 86.

NDP Senator Jo Vallentine, Peter Garrett and around 80 members then walked out of the conference, and split from the party.

After the conference - what people said about entryism in the NDP

Western Australian NDP Senator (later Greens Senator and lifelong and ongoing grassroots nuclear-free activist) told media: "The conference was dominated by members of SWP, who attended in order to block a proposal that would have barred members of other parties from membership of the NDP."

Another member, Ms Melzer said, "We wanted a party that was not dominated by anybody. The SWP members are cuckoos. They wait until an organisation is formed, and then they plonk themselves in that organisation's nest."

Jabiluka Uranium Mine campaign 1997

Thousands of people, in scores of groups across Australia, were part of a huge and successful campaign to support Mirrar Traditional owners to stop the Jabiluka uranium mine in the Kakadu National Park.

As actions began to take place in cities, the Mirrar Traditional Owners, and their organisation, the Gundjemi Corporation, created a framework for people to act in solidarity with indigenous people. This protocol was set up specifically to manage the emerging situation of Socialist organisations beginning to intervene and direct the campaign.

The Mirrar's protocol applied to groups wishing to

bit of history repeating (cont'd)

call themselves 'Jabiluka Action Groups' for planned actions and media releases to stop the Jabiluka uranium mine on Mirrar land. These groups needed to agree to the protocol that included Traditional Owners being informed of and supportive of any planned actions and media releases. Traditional Owners could suggest amendments for the media release, or reject an action proposal outright.

The protocol aimed to give Traditional Owners agency of the solidarity campaign and actions done in their names and about their country. It was created for people acting in solidarity to be accountable to the affected Traditional Owners. This was a new and exciting model for solidarity organising – and certainly, it would be challenging – for Traditional Owners as thousands of people wanted to be 'active' to help win their campaign, and for solidarity activists.

Western Australia Jabiluka Action Group

In Western Australia, activists were beginning a Jabiluka Action Group, after travelling to the Northern Territory for the first action camp at the Jabiluka uranium mine in 1997. At this time, Socialist organisations, particularly Resistance and the Democratic Socialist Perspective (who now form the Socialist Alliance) began to take notice, and by 1998, party members were attending Jabiluka Action Groups meetings across the country.

Socialist Alliance members began attending – and stacking out – the meetings of the Western Australia Jabiluka Action Group. They refused to work under the Mirrar Traditional Owners protocol. They 'stacked' meetings with many party members, and put forward proposals to reject the Mirrar protocol and understanding. One member described their political approach as: "This is our campaign, and we're going to do it our way."

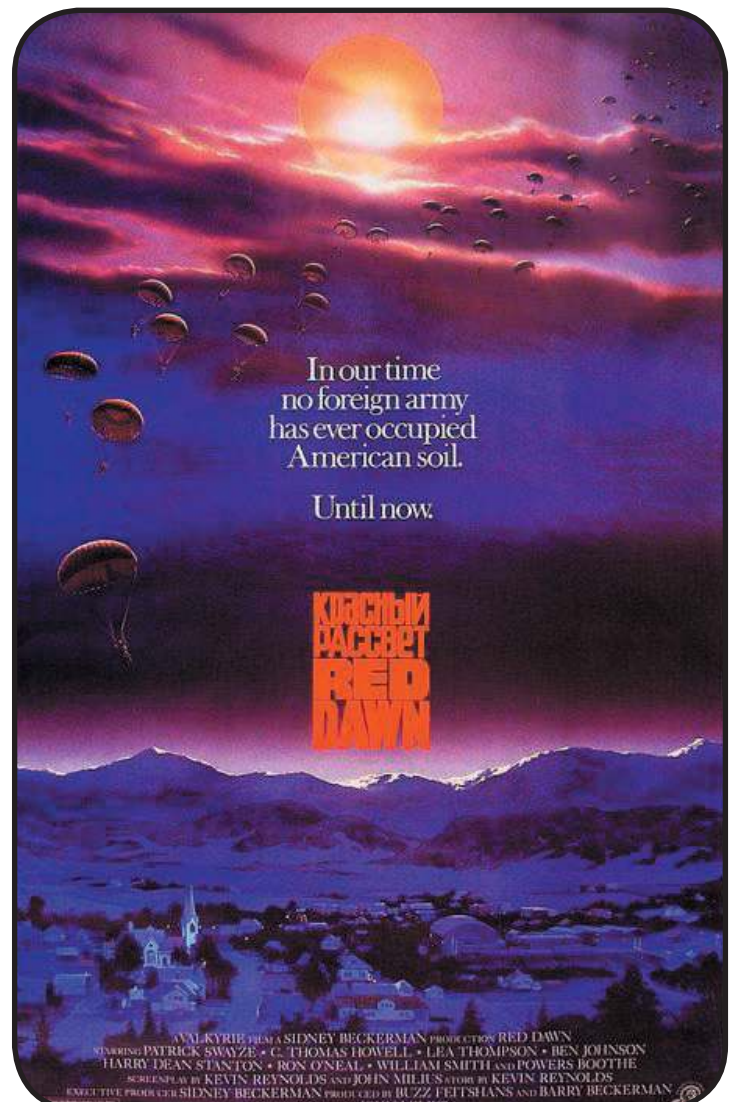
In response, members of the group simply "out-stacked the stackers" and who voted them out of the group. In a meeting, they stated the rules of the group (including the Mirrar Protocol), and asserted that if someone could not abide by those rules, they could not be in the group. This conflict in Western Australia went on for eight months "simmering", and three months of "horrible" conflict.

Melbourne Jabiluka Action Group

In Melbourne, too, there were significant conflicts. An organiser said, "The Jabiluka campaign became an organic beast that grew and grew and grew. JAG meetings in Melbourne would have 100 to 150 people at them. There was an uneasy alliance that ended up developing for the groups involved, but eventually we were able to recognise and respect the roles that people played."

One organiser credited the involvement and leadership of local Aboriginal leaders such as Gary Foley (who also had an existing relationship with Mirrar Traditional Owners). They described his role as to "hammer home the fact that indigenous sovereignty issues were at the heart of this campaign. Many people came to the campaign with other goals: peace and anti-nukes, or the general uprising-workers-mass-movement-on-the-streets... The leaders of those groups were tamed into submission. He helped to frighten [the DSP] into the most respectful route."

As the movement grew, activists took the threat of



.... and it's all just a little

entryism, stacking, takeover and other forms of political opportunism seriously. An organiser said, "There were significant issues we considered: how are we going to deal with this? how are we going to make sure the don't take over? There were a lot of people to buffer it, and they were determined to buffer it and not just let them take over."

There were clear ways and processes by which people were inducted into the campaign – which generated understanding of protocols and processes people needed to follow and respect. They believe the diversity of groups involved was crucial – church groups, student groups, etc, who approached the campaign from many different angles.

The NSW Greens Party 1991

For some time, the Greens had been a loose alliance, but was growing rapidly and developing into a national political party and a potent political movement.

The DSP (now forming Socialist Alliance) upped-the-ante in their participation, and even changed the name of its weekly newspaper from "Direct Action" to "Green Left". They indicated they were prepared

to "dissolve" their organisation and work through the Greens as their primary political vehicle.

At a regular administrative meeting in NSW, twelve DSP members turned up (when generally one DSP member usually attended). Stacking the meeting to have the majority vote, they made organisational changes, including electing a DSP member as Registered Officer (the person recognised by the Electoral Act as the party representative able to endorse candidates), and almost gaining access to membership database. In the end, there was a court hearing [adjudicated by the Electoral Commission] to determine who were the 'real Greens'.

The response

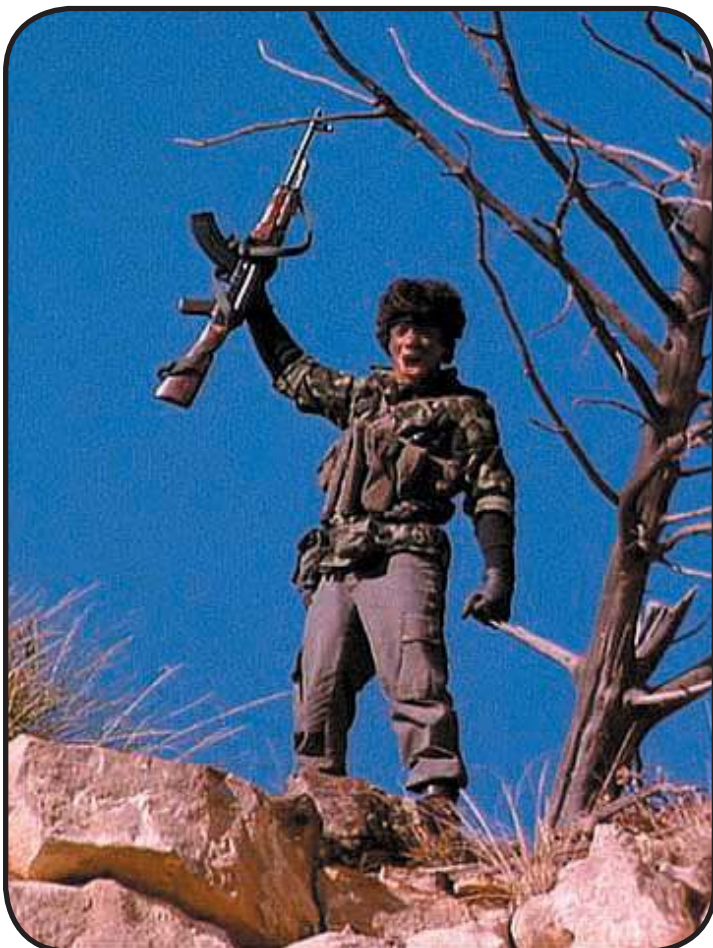
Having been a fairly open and loose alliance, the Greens decided to insert a clause into their constitution that banned members of all other political parties [a standard clause for other Australian political parties]. One member added, "We should have included their junior organisations too".

They agreed to ensure local groups and state branches were free of members from other political parties within six months. Another Greens member said: "Once that decision was made, the DSP went feral and started organising to stack a meeting in NSW to prevent this change from happening. They really went into action and made it hard; but did it in such a heavy-handed way, people realised it was the right decision.

"They were grabbing positions, or [already] held positions and had not disclosed they were DSP members. They always kept a couple of "sleepers" [DSP members who didn't disclose their membership] - which is a dangerous situation. The local groups just rebelled, and quickly a number of them kicked out their DSP members. Three or four groups wouldn't - they faded and within a few years there new groups in that area.

"It was volatile for a few months, it was really well worth it."

"We shed the DSP – it was a real battle we managed to win. It hurt us momentarily, they were so active, and had officer bearers in positions; but we quickly recovered from that, people became involved as soon as they were gone."



bit of history repeating (cont'd)

One member says, "Since then, our strategy has been to not have an argument with them and not get into bed with them - and keep our distance. To be courteous and respectful, without getting too close. I guess our strategy is to side-step them, politely, and to never be part of alliances in which they can dominate."

Some Lessons Learned

One member says, "Socialist Alliance are quite tenacious – they real tenacity and commitment, they work quite hard. It sounds like they have their teeth now in the community climate movement to a similar extent that that they did with NSW Greens in the early 1990s."

"[Socialist Alliance's] strategy is, if there's an organisation that's on the move in terms of rapidly growing membership, or getting media, or growing assets, they try to move in to control and capitalise. But it has the opposite effect: the broader membership gets annoyed at the domination and unethical behaviour and practice, and they leave."

"When they're moving in on your group, it's very difficult, you might need to develop some rules about who can and can't be office holders. Because, once they're in there as full members, it's very difficult. You could confront them and the issue directly, put it as an agenda item at meetings, and talk about how it is affecting the group. If people start speaking openly about it, maybe they will need to pull back."

Climate Camp 2008

A broad collective mostly from Sydney and Newcastle (but also Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth) faced disruptive tactics from various members of Solidarity (who were also simultaneously disrupting the Sydney University Environment Collective).

Whilst invited consistently, Solidarity members failed to attend a single organising or working group meeting in the nine-month organising period.

Solidarity took issue with the target – the largest coal port on earth, set to triple in size. They wrote, "Rather than focus on concrete demands that could mobilise large numbers on an ongoing basis, the focus of the Camp is once again on coal exports and Newcastle

as a coal port. By labelling this as the number one priority of the Camp and the climate campaign, the Camp has taken the focus off the domestic polluters." Solidarity preferred "the action... targeted state government offices or power stations, as well as corporate vandals in Newcastle." (Not sure who that would be, aside from say, the companies running world's largest coal port?)

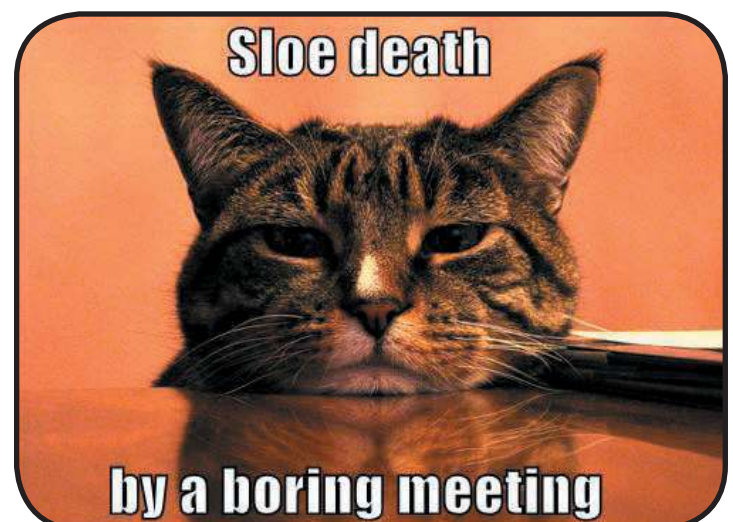
At Climate Camp 2008, Solidarity attempted to organise against the Climate Camp decision-making space (spokescouncils), arguing ad nauseum over the meeting process, and taking up a lot of time (there were only a handful of hours available for the entire camp to meet – Solidarity forced much of this time to be wasted debating the merits of mass voting versus spokescouncils).

Solidarity also pushed hard for groups to approve their statement/demands at Climate Camp, which restated existing event propaganda (but eventually people just approved it to be able to move on). Solidarity claimed their statement "injected a much-needed connection between the tactics of the day, and the inaction of the Rudd Government," [because, uh, maybe people hadn't made that connection themselves?]

The behaviour of Solidarity was strongly resisted and condemned by most at Climate Camp. Facilitators of the spokescouncils had a very difficult time (which in the Climate Camp 2008 evaluation, participants overwhelming complimented facilitators on a good job under difficult circumstances).

One spokescouncil facilitator and long-term community activist wrote to the organising collective after the camp:

"Socialists were difficult to deal with. We need to



prepare for more belligerent tactics as the climate movement grows. Their version of democracy doesn't integrate the idea of action teams and the autonomous organising (that, in my view was extremely effective at the camp), and that was an important part of climate camp.

"We need to be prepared for tactics that will try and impose their mode of operating, as well as being completely accountable and clear about decision-making processes.

"[Also, as facilitators], we should have called them on trying to send multiple representatives for the spokescouncil for what was essentially the same action teams." [Solidarity scattered themselves around a meeting of hundreds of people so they could speak more often.]

Climate Camp 2009

In 2009, Solidarity again did not participate in any organising, but did criticise Climate Camp before the event: "As a focus for climate activism it is somewhat disorienting... Lots of the coal mining in Australia is for export to China and India. Opposing these exports can play into the common argument that China and India's development needs to be held back... China and India have a right to better living standards and we should not shut off their steel supply." After the event, Paddy Gibson wrote on Solidarity's website, "Targeting coking coal mines digging for export shoots yourself in the foot."

Socialist Alliance was involved and supported, to some extent, the organising of the camp, particularly because of the location near Wollongong, and the 'strength' of the party there. Activists (some of whom were paid) attended monthly all-in organising meetings. Disappointingly, no Socialist Alliance folks helped with the multiple days of work setting up and packing down the camp; nor the maintenance of the site throughout the camp. At the camp, they prioritised attending workshops to dominate workshop spaces, and put forward their proposals/resolutions/analysis.

Some tensions stemmed from Socialist Alliance folks acting as a bloc in meeting spaces, and a great deal of time and energy was wasted with attempts to create 'debates' around the core messages and principles of Climate Camp. One organiser wrote, "It took 2 months plus to decide one sentence for the front of an invitation... I felt frustrated. Rather than moving on and working on things we could agree on, we were just continually presented again and again

[with the same proposal]. That is the antithesis of good consensus process."

Some organisers were concerned when Socialist Alliance identified Climate Camp as the lead 'priority' for the latter half of 2009 to 'assign resources'. One organiser wrote, "I assume this is the time of paid staff and core activists, as there have been no financial donations... Climate Camp - last year and this - has been committed to grassroots, non-hierarchical decision-making. Strategic interventions from national political parties, with demands/resolutions formulated weeks before Climate Camp, will undermine this, and has done so in the past."

In response, Socialist Alliance claimed they had no paid staff. However, some people participating in Climate Camp were paid full-time by Resistance and Green Left Weekly – respectively, the youth wing and newspaper of Socialist Alliance.

Climate Emergency Rallies 2009

[See the previous article.] A heated dispute arose around a particular demand of the rallies, to be held across Australia in June 2009. At the NSW rally organising committee meeting to decide their position, more than 7 members of Socialist Alliance, most of whom had not been to an organising meeting previously, attended to 'stack' and subsequently 'won' the vote. Socialist Alliance activists also secured the majority of representatives to in the national rally coordinating committee. Simon Butler's report to Socialist Alliance (see www.dsp.org.au/node/227) celebrated that, 'we [the Socialist Alliance] waged a successful campaign to keep [100% renewables by 2020] as the chief demand for the June 13 rallies.'

Reflecting on the rallies, the DSP congratulated Resistance activists for their "significant commitment" to the climate movement, noting "[t]his is already bearing fruit for the movement and winning new youth activists to the socialist movement" (see <http://www.dsp.org.au/node/233>).

Simon Butler on behalf of the Democratic Socialist Perspective (DSP) National Executive asserted, "We need to relate to local groups where we can, but assign resources to city-wide committees and organising for climate camps and the pre-Copenhagen protests."

Socialist Party Bingo

Instructions:

PREPARE: Before the mass meeting / conference / forum, print out different cards for each participant. Distribute cards to participants.

DECIDE: Collectively decide your pattern for winning: full card filled? One line straight/diagonal filled? T-shape filled? U-shaped filled? Hammer or sickle-shaped?

LISTEN: Listen to speakers / participants / audience members.

MARK: the square with a red cross (or a sickle) when you hear/see the described action.

WIN: Once the pattern is made, call out “BINGO” or sing the Internationale.



We need to get people on the streets...	Mass movement	Crisis	[Hand gesture: one hand is a chopping board, the other is the meat cleaver.]	This approach lets polluters/capitalists off the hook.
We are at a crossroads.	Workers	Struggle	Do you want to buy a magazine? OR if in forum [gesture] holds magazine toward sky	The majority of people think...
We need to nationalise X (bonus if with reference to Cuba or Venezuela)	Ordinary people	Lifestylist	We need to make demands...	This is outrageous
Build alliances with workers	Bring people into the movement	[Hand gestures of “socialist sprit fingers”]	Political clarity	We need to make this the focus of struggle
The class	We need to send a message to the Labor Party ...	We need to build a movement...	XX is bureaucratic.	Draw in wider layers of people



In this zine you'll find some reflections on our experiences of 'interventions' by Socialist Organisations in collective spaces working on environmental justice.

You'll also find some ideas on dealing with 'entryism', some common behaviours, pictures of Patrick Swayze, and an incomplete history of 'entryism' in the Sydney Left.

Don't miss the tongue-in-cheek 'Socialist Bingo': those boring forums and meetings will never be the same again!