



But on the other hand we are growing not only as an organisation and organised force, but, more importantly, the ideas of anarchism, when engaged with in a proper and honest way, find favour with black working class people here. More important than sitting on committees in coalitions like the new United Front, promoted by NUMSA, or chasing political party dreams, is systematic back-to-basics work with grassroots working class people, to win influence and to develop a black working class cadre of anarchists who are involved in everyday struggles, community struggles, union struggles etc.

LM: And the left in South Africa?

WM: I have tons of respect, despite any ideological disagreements and differences in tactical and strategic choices, for others in the left and in the progressive movement.

There are real differences in terms of strategy and tactics. But we are not sectarians: our history shows this. I have been involved in the anarchist movement for about six-and-a-half years, and its clear anarchists have a long tradition of involvement in struggle with working class organisations, and this has included working with a variety of socialist and non- socialist groups.

We absolutely do not reject working with other political organisations, but we draw the line when it comes to what we are working for: if something goes against our principles or goes against the working class, we draw the line and do not cooperate.

We promote structured, democratic, mandate-based approaches to organising and reject the South African “populist” style. This is closely linked to the ANC and its offshoots, and centres on unelected and unaccountable leaders and self-appointed demagogues directing the actions of crowds who have no real say.

Fundamentally, there is no way we would consider a political party, whether left or right, to be of any use to revolutionary transformation or even reforms. This does not preclude the possibility that we will work, where needed, with political party people – and not just with independent or revolutionary socialists, because we would work with ordinary SACP and ANC members in struggles. These organisations have a big rank-and-file working class membership and those members can be engaged.

But as vehicles for a radical change? The SACP and ANC and indeed, all the other parties, including the EFF, cannot be these vehicles. Elections won’t and don’t help.

