

Rules of engagement - Antifa



Tactics and organisational rules adopted by the militant London Antifa group which had a number of successes against the far-right through the mid-noughties.

Our tactics and our organisational rules are the product of long experience. We believe that to be an effective direct action force some basic ground rules need to be laid down – and adhered to.

We regard discipline as essential to the success of any anti-fascist venture. Self-discipline and group discipline enable us to get the better of our opponents, both the fash and the filth. We expect people on our actions to be mature enough to be punctual and to temporarily subordinate their autonomy so that together we can achieve our shared objectives.

Punctuality is not merely a courtesy to other people, it is also essential on anti-fascist actions to minimise the dangers of being spotted or picked off. Too often people turn up when they want for an action, sometimes almost an hour late. This is unacceptable. Being late means exposing those anti-fascists there on time to potential danger, and also risks fucking up the entire operation. Should you be unable – for any reason – to get to a meeting point on time, then don't bother! Phone them and let them know you're not coming.

To achieve success, and to minimise the danger of arrests or beatings, we believe that it's best for someone to co-ordinate an action. This entails keeping an eye on everyone, sending out spotters, getting everyone moving at once – and calling an end to the action when the task's completed – or if it's been compromised. We find if we temporarily cede some of our personal autonomy to someone better equipped to 'run' the operation on the night, we are more likely to succeed.

A few words about security. Never discuss on the phone something you wouldn't discuss in the pub: you are going to be overheard. It is not paranoia, but simple acceptance of the fact that every phone conversation you make is either going to be monitored, either by ECHELON, the American National Security Agency, GCHQ Cheltenham – or Special Branch. In any case, phones are not secure and should never be treated as such. Don't discuss actions on the phone – far too often we've seen actions compromised by loose talk on them, when police turn up mob-handed to prevent any chance of an operation being a success.

Essentially, use your common sense. Don't tell people about actions unless they need to know, and don't brag about them afterwards.

Finally, we advise anyone who's had too much to drink to go home. Drunk people are far more likely to be arrested or beaten up – and far more likely to get other people nicked or smacked, too. Contrary to popular belief, anti-fascism is not some sort of cosy drinking club. It is a serious pursuit, and one which should be approached with a sober attitude. Apart from the obvious security risk, a drunken anti-fascist is hardly the best example of the movement! No, one has been press-ganged into anti-fascism. If you cannot do the struggle the honour of your service, do not do it the dishonour of a disservice. It is as simple as that.

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