

Tarka Accord

US Branch



Further Reading on Tarka Accord for GSUS Members

Author - Oscar C. Kelly

Contributors - Daniel G. Foster , Daryl S. Park

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Forward and Group Synopsis:

Tarka Accord is a UK-based international pro-democracy group with political roots in the 2019 anti-extradition protests in Hong Kong. Our aim is the establishment of governance that effectively and efficiently operates in the interests of the public; our means of achieving this being the continued improvement of democratic systems that already exist and the establishment of new systems where democracy has either thus far been absent or has been stripped from the public.

Currently, Tarka Accord's method of democratisation is the establishment of a well structured network of community unions - these being: groups that apply the principles of collective bargaining, mutual aid and organisation found in labour unions and apply them to geographic areas as opposed to specific trades.

Benefits of Community Unions:

Collective Bargaining:

When applied to a geographically bound electoral district, large enough community unions can wield a substantial amount of influence locally by threatening incumbent representatives with election defeat. Even without putting forward candidates to run for election, this sort of organising can pressure incumbents from other political parties to implement the will of the community union out of fear of expulsion from power.

Mutual Aid:

Alongside engagement in the democratic process, the nature of community unions allows for the exercising of mutual aid within geographic communities. With the current political volatility in the United States, a history of poor or absent public services and the rule of an attempted bourgeois autocrat, mutual aid is more important than ever to provide the public with the basic amenities of life.

It should also be considered that a community union committed to collective bargaining can keep itself relevant through mutual aid as it can allow the union to constantly remain in contact with its members and maintain good faith in the union to then better follow through with the threat of competing in elections.

Benefits of Organised Networking:

Breaking Gerrymandering:

To individual community unions that operate within single electoral districts, gerrymandering can pose a significant threat. Recently, it has become clear that Donald Trump is leveraging his power in the Republican Party to pressure state governors to gerrymander their states in order to acquire more loyal members of Congress. Organised networking that brings smaller scale community unions within the same organisation or in a caucus with that organisation across an entire state can help to elevate the threat of gerrymandering - the reason as to why this could work in doing so is that it allows equally as strong community unions to form within the newly drawn district lines with the same amount of power as before.

Expanded Collective Bargaining:

Organised action with the support of multiple community unions within one organisation or in caucus with that organisation can expand the potential for collective bargaining by applying it to the national level. Although this would require the collaboration of hundreds of powerful community unions across the country, preferably in all 435 electoral districts that exist, this kind of bargaining could threaten incumbents with election defeat in much the same way as it would on the local level and - with the leverage of that threat - force incumbents to adopt demanded policies as a means of appeasing its opposition in order to remain in power.

Expanded Mutual Aid:

The organised collaboration of many community unions, alongside the potential for improved collective bargaining, can allow for various new forms of mutual aid. Two important forms of this being the following:

Resource Exchange:

In terms of collaborating between community unions within a greater organised structure, the category of 'resource' includes a diverse range of elements. These include, but are not necessarily limited to: finances, people, materials and information. Exchanging these resources can allow for cooperating community unions to counter the deficiencies of one another to allow both to continue existing.

Shared Initiatives:

With the sum of the resources available to an organisation made up of what can be contributed by its subsidiaries, shared initiatives can be developed that may otherwise not be available to those subsidiaries if operating individually outside of a cooperative structure.

The Structure of Tarka Accord:

Branches:

Each sovereign state that Tarka Accord operates in - currently the United Kingdom and United States - has a unique branch assigned to it. Branches have near full operational authority over their own territory, with the exceptions existing to ensure that democracy remains within the branch's structure. Currently, no branches have a formalised constitution.

The Director's Office:

The Director's Office of Tarka Accord is an internal institution separated from the branches that operates somewhat above them. However, the elevated position does not mean that power is concentrated with the hands of the Director as branches still hold near ultimate power within their territory and, additionally, have the right to appoint members to the Director's Council - a body within the office that shares power with the Director.

The Director's Office exists for a number of reasons:

- To be a counter to potential overreach by the administration of branches by being able to directly work with branch members in order to replace them.
- To establish a means of formal collaboration between branches.
- To provide a structure for working outside of the confines of branches.
- To maintain a single position at the head of Tarka Accord for the purposes of maintaining a clear vision and diplomacy with other groups on behalf of the entire organisation while simultaneously - through the Director's Office Constitution - limiting the powers of the Director internally and making them accountable to the Director's Council through elections and votes of no confidence.

Bipartisanship:

The Necessity of Bipartisanship:

In order for the mass community union proposal from Tarka Accord to succeed, achieving bipartisanship will be necessary. Without being bipartisan, many of the means of how Tarka Accord aims to achieve progress will become unviable or highly restricted - these include:

Gerrymandering:

Not allowing for the general integration of all people of good character irrespective of voting habits will fail to counter gerrymandering within politically split states.

Mutual Aid and Collective Bargaining:

Rejecting other people on the basis of voting habits, especially in a country so evenly split, massively restricts the amount of personnel available to commit to mutual aid within their communities and how many people Tarka Accord can represent when bargaining with political figures. This would be caused simultaneously by the loss of those of particular voting habits and of non-voters who may be put off by aiding a partisan organisation.

Democratisation:

The efforts of further democratisation both internally within Tarka Accord and externally with the success of Tarka Accord can be damaged by the rejection of bipartisanship. This is because:

- It can be interpreted as inherently undemocratic.
- It undermines the formal institutional democratisation objectives of Tarka Accord by making them less achievable.
- It doesn't expose members to a more diverse range of opinions from people of good character, increasing the risk of demonising the opposition and losing sight of common humanity in practice - even if not on-paper.

Maintaining Bipartisanship:

Bipartisanship, although deemed as essential by Tarka Accord for our mission, is hard to achieve within an organisation while firmly acting upon positive change. Poorly implemented bipartisanship, rather than unifying people around a common goal, can simply implement pre-existing political rifts internally within an organisation - the resulting strife leading to the ineffectiveness of the organisation. For this document, Tarka Accord has identified a number of factors that can lead to a better implementation of bipartisanship.

Some Mandated Principles:

Despite seemingly being counterintuitive to the concept of bipartisanship, a small set of mandatory principles need to be demanded. For Tarka Accord, these principles are the following:

- Democracy
- Freedom
- Human Rights
- A Standard of Civility
- Upholding Truth
- Upholding Empathy

Democracy, freedom and human rights are founding principles of Tarka Accord that originate in the group's political roots in the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement; a standard of civility, truth and empathy are what Tarka Accord has deemed to be necessities of ensuring the implementation of our aforementioned founding principles. As these principles are central to the goals and means of achieving the goals of Tarka Accord on a basic level, we believe that they are necessary for members to uphold - even if demanding them may exclude some people from the organisation.

Embracing Commonalities:

Finding and embracing commonalities between people is essential to the creation of a united organisation and ideological identity. For Tarka Accord, these include the aforementioned mandated principles - shared by all members due to being a prerequisite for membership - and the highly likely proletarian status of members. By keeping discussion within the bounds of shared principles, the issues that affect all of the proletariat and the ventures of Tarka Accord, we believe that a sense of common identity and a common mission can be achieved.

Bipartisan Presentation:

The presentation of Tarka Accord will be essential in drawing in members into the organisation. Even if Tarka Accord is bipartisan internally, attracting members into the organisation and accurately representing that bipartisan nature will require a carefully curated aesthetic. Regarding this, all iconography used by Tarka Accord to represent Tarka Accord is owned by the founder and current director. The ownership is due to be transferred from the founder to the Director's Office, not Tarka Accord as a whole. This lack of transfer of authority to branches was decided upon to allow for rogue branches that fail to abide by the principles of Tarka Accord to be properly expelled by the other branches and to remove the ability for a larger political group within a branch or between branches to have authority over another in terms of aesthetic presentation.

Policies not Labels:

When engaging with people of a different perceived political persuasion, labels can be harmful to productive conversation and collaboration due to the difference in understood meanings and emotional attachments to those labels for different people. Examples of this could include 'socialism' and 'Christian values'. Because of this, labels should be mostly avoided when talking with people of a different perceived political persuasion where possible and should be replaced with discussion of policy as detached from the names given to them. Although this form of discussion is more time consuming, it is valuable to avoid needless argument over different understandings of political labels to better foster a sense of political unity.

International Collaboration:

The Internet has provided an unprecedented opportunity for international grassroots coordination on political aims with its introduction of fast and meaningful communication between members of the public around the World. With this new theatre of political engagement, there are a number of opportunities to take advantage of, with them being listed below:

Aid Across Branches:

The branches of Tarka Accord across the whole organisation, in much the same way as community unions within a branch, can exchange resources and collaborate on shared initiatives. This can be done in the following ways:

- Cross-Legitimising: the successes of a single branch can add additional legitimacy to others internationally, accelerating their potential for growth.
- Resource Exchange: branches can exchange resources with one another to both counter deficiencies and accelerate the construction of new branches from scratch.
- Shared Initiatives: branches and the Director's Office can pool resources and logistics in order to establish new initiatives that otherwise wouldn't be able to exist.

The Power of a Sovereign Government:

As opposed to national politics where positions subordinate to national leaders typically don't have incredibly extensive powers, international politics is unique in the sense that the leaders of sovereign states - especially Western sovereign states - have a considerable amount of power. Although American politics is high impossible for any party that isn't the Democratic or Republican Party to obtain the highest office of power, British politics is more manageable - this being relevant to Tarka Accord due to being present in both countries and headquartered in the UK.

The International Approach in Practice:

Tarka Accord aims to use an international approach and take advantage of the political climate in the United States, the attention on American politics in English-speaking online culture and the political structure of the British House of Commons to forward the goals of Tarka Accord. The way that this can be done is the following:

1. Progress with the goals of the US Branch of Tarka Accord by officially allying with other like-minded groups and movements (eg: GSUS) and bringing their members into the fold.
2. Establish a good social media presence as a part of the US Branch's mission to directly recruit more people into the organisation.
3. Advertise the UK Branch through the US Branch in order to recruit Britons who are active observers or online participants in American politics.
4. Establish community unions across the UK through recruited British members.
5. Grow all community unions in the UK to the point of political prominence and effect policy by being a threat to established parties.
6. Contend in general elections when it becomes clear that success can be achieved due to the size of Tarka Accord.
7. Use the position as the British government to enact Tarka Accord's mission in the UK, international projects and to aid other branches elsewhere in the World - including the US Branch and GSUS through affiliation.

Benefits for GSUS:

Specifically GSUS and not generalistic

Broadening Appeal for a General Strike:

Tarka Accord's more active position on establishing and maintaining bipartisanship, as opposed to the more reserved attitude held by primary GSUS organisers as observed in a meeting between the Director of Tarka Accord and the GSUS outreach team, could allow the organisation to attract members into Tarka Accord that may have not joined GSUS. This, combined with the presence of GSUS members within Tarka Accord, could normalise the idea of joining or otherwise supporting a general strike as a means of advancing proletarian goals within Tarka Accord and with non GSUS members. As a result, this could have members of Tarka Accord sign strike cards for GSUS who may have otherwise not done so.

In addition to the more active bipartisan position, Tarka Accord's headquarters in the UK and deeper familiarity with British politics, government and culture would provide a more established foundation and better direction for expanding the general strike movement in the country - benefiting the internationalist goals of the outreach team as expressed in the aforementioned meeting.

Expansion with Diluting GSUS' Mission:

Tarka Accord's position as a different organisation with different leadership introduces an aspect of detachment from GSUS that allows GSUS to maintain a more particular stance on ideological, structural and methodological positions while - still - expanding the base of people committed to involvement in effective public improvement through Tarka Accord if not joining GSUS outright after being introduced to the organisation by GSUS members in Tarka Accord.