Strategy & Campaigns

Strategy is your plan to win. Strategy is choosing the ground on which to engage the enemy

Strategy means:
- Looking at the big picture
- Knowing who has the power to make the decision.
- Concentrating the right resources in the right place(s) at the right time(s)

In Ancient Greece…
Strategos = General
Tacticas = Foot Soldiers
Strategic campaigns are an important part of building a movement. They focus our energy on the forces that need to be changed, and can often result in some victory (big or small) or mitigation of damage. These efforts require participation and creativity. As we build power through campaigns, we model what can happen when we work together inspiring others and igniting imaginations that feed more and more organizing. The momentum of success attracts people who in general want to be aligned with those they believe have power. When we organize campaigns we build momentum and power.
Over the generations, people power movements have effectively used the concept of “Pillars of Support” to understand the institutions/forces that prop up unjust systems/power structures. From a strategic point of view, if you can erode or remove those pillars, those unjust rulers/state will not be able to continue. People Power understands that power is a fragile relationship that depends on the compliance of the people. Thus we have the power to alter that relationship at any time. The art of this process is to pull support away from the pillar, which means persuading those people inside that institution/pillar to leave, stop or change their behavior. This means looking for strategies of mass noncooperation, corporate campaigns, creative direct action and community organizing.

A few key elements that can make a People Powered strategy succeed:

**CLEAR “WHAT” AND “WHY” LOGIC:** Shut down the Financial District to impose a cost on going to war to both deter the invasion and future ones.

**BROADLY PUBLICIZED:** Front page news stories, repeated lead up actions and press conferences, street posters, tens of thousands of flyers, a widely utilized website and broad community mobilizing made sure a huge portion of the city knew what was planned and why.

**MASS TRAINING AND MASS ORGANIZATION:** A few thousand people received trainings, at schools, churches, at rallies, well over a thousand people were directly involved in the organizing-in affinity groups, working groups, public meetings.

**DECENTRALIZATION:** Mass organization does not mean the groups need to be part of one organization or network. Allied can support the strategy, and participated in the action without coming to an organizing meeting or bothering to identify as part of the organizing nucleus. We can work across sectors by developing relationships of respect, negotiating agreement on time and space of activities and strategizing and collaborating whenever possible on a common framework of action.

**Key Elements Of Strategic Organizing**
Strategic Planning Methodologies

**Identify Problem** – assumptions, facts, root, source, stories, get clear

**Establish Strategic Objective or Goal** aka the SOLUTION or Remedy

**Assess Resource and Situation** – look at all factors in your world and your opponents’ world

**Know Your Opponent** – strengths, weaknesses, history, interests, resources, plans, VULNERABILITIES

**Know Your Supporters** – strengths, weaknesses, history, interests, resources, plans

**Map your allies and political environment**, Vulnerabilities

**Web Analysis of Opponent** – look for opportunities for leverage, what we can bring new into the situation or relationship that is either a carrot or a stick. Focus more in there capabilities than intentions. Intention change, but what can they really do?

**Public Participation** – get people participating in small easy steps first that build success and confidence and keeps people in motion.

**Dilemma Actions** – actions, which cause your opponent to look bad if they try to stop what you are doing. They must either allow an action to continue, meet the demand or act in a way that may lose them their allies and/or credibility.

**Containment** – we need to be mindful of our own internal problems, weakness, vulnerabilities, abuses lies, corruption, violence in leadership, etc. Certain levels of violence/corruption/oppression will destroy movements internally and externally.

**Developing a Plan**
Once you understand your opponent’s world you can more effectively begin developing a plan. To begin with, zero in on who has the power to decide. You want to focus on them or the institution they represent, focusing on the behavior, policy, etc, but not the person. Over time, however, if things are not shifting you can then escalate more personally. If one chooses to go after the person, possibilities for settlement may be more difficult. The high road is often a good choice, but if over time they do not change, escalation toward a period of compression and crisis is critical.