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MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 23 RESIST STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING IN NEW YORK CITY

ATTENDING

Steering Committee: Tony Avirgan, Noam Chomsky, Bill Davidon, Florence Howe, Frank Joyce, Louis Kampf, Paul Lauter, Dick Mumma, Dick Ohmann, Grace Paley, Dan Stern, Bob Zevin

Area People: George and Hilde Hein, Hugh Matthews, Wayne O'Neil, Saul Slapikoff

Office Staff: Carrie Hatch, Todd Manley, Bob Parsons, Arlene Siegel, Chris Stevens

MORNING SESSION

Area people and office staff came in at the beginning of the meeting. They explained that they had decided they should participate in the meeting because discussion of programs had always been open to everyone working in RESIST, because they felt they had a positive contribution to make, and because their futures were to be decided. Noam responded that he felt the Steering Committee had decided they needed to get themselves together, as area people and staff had done at their meetings.

Bob Parsons then presented his proposal, supported by the office staff and area people, that RESIST concentrate on and greatly intensify support of local organizing projects: We should supply local organizers with lots of printed materials and organizing kits on topics such as the draft, giant corporations, and the like. Area people should be in telephone contact with groups and try to help them through their crises perhaps by suggesting a shift in focus; this might be followed up with a visit by a RESIST person with experience that relates to the group's needs. This work will help us give local groups more political thrust; will provide area people with on-going political work; and will help us to push national programs, since we'll know which groups will find particular programs relevant to them.

Parsons added that this program probably could have been acted on in the past. Noam said that Bob meant that people should be doing their jobs - better. Ohmann asked what should not have been done in the past, in order to give area people time for such support work. Hilde responded that it's a matter of a change in emphasis, and that the proposal just provides a general guideline for where RESIST should put its energies. Grace said that area people are really talking about organizing rather than being contacts. Florence argued that one cannot be a problem solver for groups over the phone - one has to be in the field.

Paul said that Job's description of RESIST is really appropriate for a membership organization: RESIST was not conceived as such and has no members or chapters. In a membership organization people move in and out of the field and in and out of the organizational structure; the organization has a national office, regional travelers, and chapter members. RESIST is not such a group. But it has another set of functions, especially funding. To say RESIST should be something else avoids the problem. How can one have a democratic organization which raises money from liberals to give to radicals? Parson's paper really implies that RESIST should be a membership organization.

Stern said that the thrust of anti-draft work was over and that RESIST has to find a new thrust, since one cannot work on all fronts. Work against repression or against the giant corporations are two possibilities. If RESIST is to play a coordinating function, the movement must have a thrust. As for telephone organizing,

Dan wondered how politically sophisticated the area people and staff are. He suggested that an internal education program is necessary and that two area people and one staff person be added to the Steering Committee.

Saul noted that area people are not needed for fund raising. Paul demurred, saying that area people still have the role of establishing financial support bases for local groups. This is often done when, in checking on a funding request, the area person finds out who's real in an area; this is independent of program.

Frank stated that if Parson's proposal is taken as something new, it has no politics at all (just what groups do we support?), and we ought to do without area people and staff. If the proposal says "we should do what we ought to have been doing all along," then what is the discussion about?

Parsons said the proposal is an admonition to do things we haven't been doing. Only when we work at it will we find out whether it is possible, in terms of time and energy, to do both the type of work outlined in the proposal and that necessary for national programs.

Hilde said that the problem has been that RESIST has no political line or program: if it develops this, area people and staff will not be working on an ad hoc basis. Louis said if that's the case, area people and staff should be coming up with analyses and programs.

Bill Davidon asked what the staff and area people are ready to do: push the Panther petition, G.E. materials, new information on the NLF, G.I. legal materials? He felt that unless we are able to do these kinds of things and work on proposals RESIST should just be a fund-raising and funding organization.

The area people and office staff then left, so that the Steering Committee could meet alone.

PARTIAL REPORT ON THE CLOSED MEETING

The Steering Committee met alone for four hours. Paul has the minutes from this meeting; he will telephone Steering Committee members who missed the meeting to discuss it with them.

When the staff and area people returned to the meeting Paul summarized some of the points that had been discussed: Moving the national office to Philadelphia is being considered. The decision on this is partially dependent upon who is chosen as the new Associate National Director and on the availability of staff and area people. Louis wants to resign as Associate National Director and will arrange for either Doug McCay or Wayne O'Neil to become acting Associate National Director until a permanent replacement is found. (Doug McCay subsequently accepted this responsibility.) The new Associate National Director will be a person with a depth of movement experience, who will work full time in the national office and will be in charge of the execution of political programs at the staff level. A final decision has not yet been made as to who will fill this position; anyone with someone to recommend for it should be in touch with Paul soon.

Following this report the regular business meeting took place.

FUND RAISING

We will send a fund-raising mailing to the Newsletter mailing list. The covering letter should say that there is great ferment, people should be aware of it, and it needs money. We will tell them the total amount needed for funding requests waiting to be acted upon, say how much each person should contribute, and ask that those who can give more since some people won't be able to contribute. The letter should be positive and note that people have been giving generously - it's just that activity has been increasing so quickly and larger amounts are needed.

The letter will be drafted by Paul; he will also sign it. A list of the funding requests should be included; the staff will write a 2-3 sentence description of each one. People will be invited to become regular pledges and will be asked to send us names of other people to whom we could send this mailing. A return envelope will be included. The mailing will be sent on January 2.

FUNDING

Since we really don't have any money, very few grants were made. Most requests will be held over until the January meeting; by then we hope to have raised much of the needed money from the fund-raising mailing to our Newsletter list. Those requesting funding in December will be sent brief notes explaining why they'll have to wait until mid-January for a decision.

The following grants were made. They will be sent as soon as the money is available.

A Four-Year Bummer: \$25/month for January February and March
Richard Chase Defense Committee: \$100
Youth Interest Program (YIP): \$25 if they can't raise it locally

The request for the C.C.C.O.-Fort Dix Counselling Center was turned down.

REPRESSION

Frank Joyce reported on the Mobe Cleveland meeting, at which the Mobe decided to move into anti-repression work. Their anti-repression task force is Alan Brick, Mary Moylan, and Rennie Davis-Frank Joyce (sharing one position). At a subsequent meeting in New York City the following actions were agreed upon: The task force will work around genocide, the Panthers, and a related action at the United Nations. A letter will go out about this, and there will be a press conference to announce it. Trudi Young will be added to the Mobe staff as coordinator of anti-repression work. The task force will also encourage the organizing of activities focusing on the end of the Conspiracy trial: when the jury goes out people on campuses and in community centers could have various events such as juries about the 60's, festivals of life, etc.

Bob Zevin described Schoenmann's Commission of Inquiry and Clergy & Laymen's and the Law Center's idea of taking depositions about war crimes and filing law suits against the U.S. government for damages and war crimes. The two might be combined, and the Steering Committee agreed that Zevin will continue trying to bring about such a merger of these projects.

Grace described the political prisoners' vigil taking place in New York City Christmas week.

Todd mentioned the trial of Jim Hayes, scheduled for January, and the mock trial to be held at M.I.T., which is a possible model for those trying to plan an event coinciding with the end of the Conspiracy trial.

PANTHER POSTER

Distribution centers for the poster will be PAR, RESIST, someone in Chicago (NUC?), and someone on the West Coast. The petition on the poster calling for an investigation is no longer appropriate. Noam will write a letter giving it another interpretation; this will be circulated with the poster.

We will prepare an anti-repression kit organized around the Panther poster. It will include Noam's letter and all or some of the following materials: suggestions on how to use the poster, a reduced version of the Conspiracy's people's juries proposal; background papers on repression by Frank Joyce; a write-up of the white community's reaction to the Los Angeles police-Panther shoot-out; Dick Flack's model for anti-repression teach-ins; and Howard Zinn's course outline on repression. (Other materials are also welcome - send us any you consider appropriate - immediately if not sooner!) Arlene volunteered to be responsible for getting the kit together; she will work on this with Dick Mumma, who is also coordinating anti-repression organizing on several other fronts. The kit will be sent to RESIST and PAR contacts. It will be offered to the Mobilization, Moratorium, and NUC offices. The area people and steering committee will do some follow-up work to see how those who received the kit are using it and to encourage organizing around relevant local issues. PAR will be invited to co-sponsor the kit with RESIST.

The Panther poster will be sent to each person on the Newsletter mailing list with a special Newsletter on repression, which will try to outline some of the things that have been done and could be organized and will include some of the materials from the anti-repression kit.

ANTI-DRAFT WORK

The Philadelphia Resistance is planning to take to the Justice Department in January the draft cards it already has and those it will be receiving in response to its "Call to Resist Military Conscription."

At its Cleveland meeting the Mobe appointed a draft and G.I. task force; it will be meeting in Philadelphia on January 3, and RESIST will be represented.

People agreed that by March students will really understand that the lottery is a fraud. We should have a program that responds to that realization. Mitch, Tony, Bill, and Wayne will work out a proposal on the draft to be considered at the next Steering Committee meeting. Paul will work on the text of an ad about the lottery.

THE LYND PROPOSAL

Dan spoke against the part of the proposal recommending attendance at shareholders' meetings which he sees as unresponsive to the needs of workers. Florence replied that this is not the emphasis of the proposal: pickets outside the meetings are more important, as is organizing among people in their places of work and educating those at colleges and universities about their school's investments.

Liberation is sponsoring a meeting in Boston on December 27 to discuss plans for work against General Electric. Dan and Arlene will attend.

The Committee of Returned Volunteers is planning to concentrate on Gulf.

The Mobe has chosen April 15 as a central date for its activities around the Lynd proposal.

NUC has asked RESIST to fund a person working in their office as Lynd project coordinator and researcher. After some discussion about relative priorities in our present financial situation, people agreed that we would guarantee \$150 for January and discuss further funding of the coordinator at the January Steering Committee meeting. At that time we will also have a more complete discussion of the ~~entire~~ Lynd proposal than has been possible to date.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE IN NEW YORK CITY ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

15 Jan 1970

Peoples court in
Harvard

Peoples court permanent
i. BJS shot
ii. Flynn & Horman
iii. Blacks (from New
Haven) take
iv. Plamen

Hynd proposed
Arkent

Antin rep 58 k 7

- (i) Noam's letter
- (ii) Suggestion for Bill for poster
- (iii) Frank's suggestions
- (iv) Background papers on repression
for Frank
- (v) write up of white reaction to LA Panther
- fun kalish
- (vi) Flacks' suggestion for teaching
- (vii) Zinn's course outline

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DECEMBER 1971

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