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Resist Steering Committee Meeting, March 1978

Resist

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Resistance to many forms of illegitimate authority is necessary to bring health to this country and make it a constructive force instead of a terror in the politics of nations.

-- from A New Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority

GRANT APPLICATIONS -- MARCH MEETING

PUBLICATIONS

1. Western Coal-- several hundred $ requested by David Greene for distribution of pamphlet. Frank J supports this.

2. Black Liberation Press -- part of $2000 to help publish pamphlet containing 2 essays by DuBois on imperialism and Africa. We gave them $200 to help with a pamphlet on Southern Africa last year.

3. Abortion Action Coalition (Boston) -- part of $700 to help with publication of English and Spanish editions of pamphlet on abortion. Madge Kaplan works with AAC.

4. Boston Bail Project -- part of $2600 to help publish English and Spanish editions of pamphlet on "How to Get Out of Jail before Trial."

NEWSPAPERS, ETC.

5. Somerville Community News -- $300 to cover one issue of monthly community paper. We gave them $100 last June.

6. Against the Grain -- New York, bi-monthly, libertarian socialist, workplace concentration; $400 for 4-months rent for office needed to continue work; Grace and Bob Nichols work with them.

7. Community (Fresno, CA) -- $400 to pay off debt so publication of bi-monthly and community calendar can resume.

MILITARY

8. Fight Back GI Project (Germany) -- $240 to print newsletter and continue work against neutron bomb in Germany. We have given them money twice before, last in 1974.

TONY AVIRGAN, EILEEN BISSON, FRANK BRODHEAD, BELL CHEVIGNY, JUDY CHOMSKY, NOAM CHOMSKY, UNA CLAFFEY, MARGERY DAVIES, DONNA FINN, NORM FRUCHTER, MITCHELL GOODMAN, KENNETH HALE, HILDE HEIN, ANDREW HIMES, FLORENCE HOWE, FRANK JOYCE, DONALD KALISH, LOUIS KAMPF, MADGE KAPLAN, MARY-LOUISE KEAN, HANS KONING, PAUL LAUTER, DOUGLAS McCAY, RICHARD OHMANN, WAYNE O'NEIL, CARLOS OTERO, GRACE PALEY, CLAUDETTE PIPER, HENRY ROSEMONT, BOB ROSENTHAL, MICHELE RUSSELL, CAROLE SMITH, AMY SWERDLOW, JEAN TURNER, GEORGE VICKERS.
ANTI-IMPERIALIST WORK

9. NICH (Non-intervention in Chile) -- part of $770 to help publish bi-monthly newsletter, special 16 page issue.

10. International Association of Filipino Patriots (FAFP) -- part of costs of publishing two documents from Philippines. We (the Ferrys) gave them $1500 for promo w work for Philippine Liberation Courier two months ago.

11. South African Liberation Support -- South Africa white group doing anti-gov work among exiles and in military (?) -- Paul is checking this

EDUCATION

12. Commonwealth School -- non-graded, coop school for ages 3-12; need $ for scholarship help; (Bay Shore, NY).

13. People's College of Law -- part of $2000 to help with LA law school for minorities (many other sources of funds)

PRISONER/REPRESSION WORK

14. Prisoner's Legal Education Association (PLEA) -- Walpole prison; $400 for helping prisoner's law library do educational work among prisoners.

15. Prisoner's Visitation & Support Committee (Philadelphia, PA) -- Two requests of $500 each for a) support for workshop for prison visitors on east coast; b) for PVS "suffering fund" for prisoner gifts

16. Bert Gibson Committee -- $ part of $1000 to help with suit against Wellesley Mass police who killed black man during suspected burglary attempt.

NATIONAL LABOR FEDERATION -- (see separate page for background of this)

17. Coalition of Concerned Medical Professionals -- support work for LI farmworkers clinic; any amount for equipment for well child clinic

18. Klyda Fanner Community Law Clinic (Coalition of Concerned Legal Professionals), Sacramento -- legal support for California Homemakers Association; any amount for purchasing books for law library

19. Occupational Health project -- support for Northwest Seasonal Workers Association (Oregon); part of $700 for purchase of van to help organizing around occupational health.
CONFERENCES

✓ 20. Northeast Conference on Liberation of Southern Africa -- part of $3000 for univ. conference at end of March

✓ 21. Anti-Apartheid Conference on Human Rights (for March 23-26) -- general support

ETC.

✓ 22. Neighborhood Media Services -- $500 for maintenance for left media support/consultant/trainer.

LATE ARRIVAL --

✓ 23. Miners' Support Committee -- West Virginia; up to $500 for general support.

A note from Frank B.

I feel I'm still learning what our general guidelines are, what kind of applications I should discourage without bringing them to the board, and to what extent I should make recommendations.

I think we should concentrate our discussion on proposals number 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 23.

Proposals number 2, 2x, and 4 come out of what seem to be groups doing good work also.

My understanding now is that proposals number 12-16 are outside our guidelines, but I wanted to check with the board.

We might want to give token support to one or both of the conferences.
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REPORT FOR THE MARCH MEETING

INCOME

Total income during January was just over $5000. Income for February was a little over $6000, but $3000 of this was from the Ferrys.

Because of the envelope delays and storm hassles, the January newsletter did not reach people until the end of February, so newsletter income was off substantially. Pledge income was up, because of the increase in the number of pledges.

A mailing I did to past contributors, and a mailing the NY people did to friends and acquaintances, were both disappointing. But returns from the RA and D&B mailing continued to come in, and they have more than paid for themselves. A friend in NY took up a collection of $225; and Liberation paid Resist $300 for three months rent.

I think we should expect the next few months to be better than the fall, because of the increase in the number of pledges and contributors, but I think that we cannot realistically count on getting more than $3000/month for the next few months.

A breakdown of income is:

- pledges (90) ........ $1331.00
- newsletter contr. (34) .... 647.50
- Ferrys .................. 3000.00
- contributor mailing (6) ... 191.00
- promo mailings (26) ...... 520.00
- Liberation rent .......... 300.00
- NY mailings (5) ......... 70.00
- NY friend (11) ........... 225.00
- misc. ................... 0.99

TOTAL ....... $6285.49
PLEDGES

Six pledges ($40/mo) were added during February. Twenty-seven ($205/mo) were added during January. Our monthly pledge income is now listed at $1300/mo.

EXPENSES

Monthly office expenses continue to be about $1000/mo, of which salary, taxes and health are about $660, and rent $85.

The newsletter now costs about $1000 per issue, of which about half is the additional cost of mailing to the Liberation list.

MAILINGS

As last month's report discussed in more detail, the goal of mailings is to break even and add names to our list for future contributions or pledges. Since the last mailing has achieved this goal, I plan to do more. Socialist Review is scheduled for next week, Safe Return for the end of the month, Working Papers for sometime in early spring.

Using the Liberation list to swap, I think a small mailing a month is a reasonable schedule. I expect the cost and income of the next few mailings to be about $500 each.

CORPORATE STATUS

I have spent some time with lawyers talking about our status. I want us to become incorporated. Our choices are:

a) to become incorporated as a non-profit corporation ("Resist, Inc."?). Our present (non) status does not limit liability, and non-profit would mean not paying some sales taxes.

b) to try for tax exempt status. The advantages of this are that we could hope for some larger contributions, savings on all taxes, and particularly cheaper postage. (Savings of $200 on each newsletter, $100 on a small mailing.)

There is no hope, say the lawyers, for getting tax exempt status as Resist. The only way is to start some new organization, "Progress, Inc.", which would be set up as a non-profit corporation, apply for tax exemption, and exist alongside Resist. When tax exemption is approved, Resist could be dissolved on paper, and "Progress, Inc." could then assume "Resist" as a doing business name.
(Corporate status, continued)

Possibility (b), the "Progress, Inc." route, needs to be investigated further with the lawyer. But this would almost certainly be foreclosed once we were incorporated as "Resist, Inc." And I am reluctant to continue too much longer in our current status.

So I think we should decide at least by the next meeting whether or not we want to pursue non-profit, tax exempt status.

ACCOUNTANT

A related problem discussed with the lawyer was the books. After spending a day at the IRS around a Liberation problem, I would like to get at least a thorough consultation about our bookkeeping; and I think it might be a good thing to have an accountant do our books quarterly.

LIBERATION

Liberation now has about $800 in the bank. Resist is paid $100 per month rent. Arrangements with known creditors is $165/month. We probably owe the IRS $65. So we could go for a few more months as is.

During my visit to the lawyers, we talked about the procedure of winding up Liberation, if that is what we decide to do.

As our total debt is very large, we would have to declare bankruptcy. The only money involved would be Liberation's; no money from Resist.

Bankruptcy would cost $400 in lawyers fees. They would deal with the courts and creditors, who would divide up all of Liberation's assets (essentially the bank account) according to some standard procedure.

A technical point is that before bankruptcy is actually declared, we can't pay out any money for the three previous months. (awk) The lawyer is checking to see if this includes rent.

Whether or not we declare bankruptcy, we will continue to use the mailing list. It has been pruned to 2400 names. I will use it to swap for one or two mailings per month. People who contribute will be removed from the Liberation list and added to the Resist list.

It's too early to tell about returns from Liberation people for the January newsletter. We should be able to tell something in another month.
GRANTS

We now have about $6000 in the bank. I expect income to exceed expenses by about $1000/month through June, to decline somewhat over the summer, and pick up again by mid-September.

I think we can plan on giving $1500 to $2000 in grants per month from March through June; have one meeting over the summer for emergency grants; and 

MEETING SCHEDULE

It would probably help if we had a regular meeting time, say the first or second Sunday of the month. That way people could plan ahead, and schedule other things around the Resist meeting. It would also make it easier for me to plan my work.

ACCOUNTANT

We need a bookkeeper for Resist. We are planning to incorporate Resist to protect the personal credit of the individuals, and to ensure that Resist has 

CORPORATE STATUS

Resist, Inc. (formed under New York State Not for Profit Corporation law), is a non-profit corporation, does not have liability, and

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THE NATIONAL LABOR FEDERATION

At our December meeting, George brought three applications from affiliates of the National Labor Federation. These were deferred for checking, and then postponed so that George could be at the meeting.

The NLF is a network of some 25 organizations on the east and west coast. Two of them have been given Resist grants in the past. There is a high level of ignorance and/or antagonism toward the NLF, as I have found in the last few weeks talking to activists and foundation people around the country. Some of the hostility is due to direct contact; and some to an article in a recent Public Eye, linking the NLF with the NCLC.

I think this is a difficult problem for us because: if we treat the applicant organizations as separate service projects, it seems to me that the kind of services, sources of other funds, and extremely low political content of the service would make them ineligible for a grant; on the other hand, if we acknowledge that these are service outreach and support organizations of a larger, political organization, then we must make some judgment about the NLF as a whole.

I talked to the author of the Public Eye article. I do not think that the article succeeds in establishing a link between the NLF and the NCLC, or with the IWP which is sort of the missing link in the connection.

On the other hand, people at the Haymarket and Vanguard foundations, who have dealt with other affiliates of the NLF, are very antagonistic to the lack of directness and unwillingness to explain the higher reaches of the NLF. At this time, they will not fund affiliates, nor (as I understand it) will the Stern Fund.

Friends at NAM headquarters in Chicago, and SR in California, stated that they thought there was a lot going on with these groups that seemed at least suspicious. SR was very negative on the California Homemakers.

There is uniformly the report that there has been no working relation between NLF groups and other left groups.

I had a long visit with the Boston organizer. They are "organizing" low income (the "unrecognized strata") people in the South End. The Boston organizer seemed very capable, good with people, willing to explain quite a bit about their local work, which is just beginning. I asked about connections with other left groups, about the NCLC, and the IWF. The answer was that the allegations about the NCLC and IWF were false: that they at most "answered a call" put out for conferences by these groups, and that did not continue to work with them when they saw what was going on.

The fact is, though, that these are the only two "left" groups "who" whose "calls" they have answered.

I had an interesting talk with two people who worked for a while
National Labor Federation (continued)

with the Boston group. They confirmed some of the things that the Public Eye reported, and that are other people I talked with had claimed. In particular, the NLF affiliates seem to have a general pattern of two-tier organizing: once or twice a week, canvassing is done in a low-income, multi-racial area to sign up "members," people who want to receive benefits from the benefit program. A house or block meeting is held, and if possible someone is recruited to the "Workers' Benefit Committee," which meets to discuss the distribution of benefits and creation of program. Staff -- volunteer, part-time, or full-time -- is generally recruited from a different group, in Boston colleges. It seems that normally these people have had no prior political experience, from this latter group, more than the "members," is recruited the cadre who are sent as colonizers to other cities, etc.

Above the level of the individual organization, I do not get much sense of the NLF as a whole. I have not talked to any experienced former cadre. The Boston organizer presented a picture of the NLF as barely existing, beyond an information exchange network. Some of their literature refers to the "Organizing Committee for a National Labor Federation." But I am extremely skeptical that a disciplined cadre organization at the base does not reflect a cadre structure at the top.

My own view is that the opaqueness of the higher levels of the NLF, their lack of contact with left groups, their lack of interest in establishing such contact, their refusal to be open about a national structure, their principled refusal to publish some kind of statement about the Public Eye charges, their pattern of recruiting inexperienced cadre, and the lack of success that other foundations have had in satisfying themselves that these organizations should be supported -- all of these makes me think we should be very cautious about supporting them.

As for considering the support services as separate organizations, etc., it is very difficult for me to see the relationship of benefit work and professional support work for political change. I think that people obviously benefit from benefits; and it is to the NLF's credit that their work is primarily among non-whites. But it seems to involve little political education -- either in the formal sense, or in organizing confrontation with the state, etc.

I think it is likely that the NLF will continue to grow. Their separateness from the left also insulates them from many of the pressures that split other organizations. There will probably be an NLF affiliate in most east and west coast cities before too long, and I think we should continue to try to find out more about them.

Frank