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Resist Board Meeting, Jan. 24, 1992

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January 24, 1992

References for the January 26, 1992 Resist Board Meeting:

- 1) WINGS - I talked with Hayit Imam and Ann Barrett of the Boston Women's Fund. They had funded the group which they thought was "very good actually... very interesting work.. take over spaces to develop into transitional housing for women.. doing very well." I asked about service vs political organizing. Both said that this group does more grass roots organizing and advocacy than strictly service work. Ann felt that they have good political consciousness and a good organizing style. Recommended.
- 2) Asian Pacific/American Women's Conference - Ann Barrett of the Boston Women's Fund again: Also funded this. It grew out of the I Am Your Sister Conference. "It has turned out to be quite a good group doing good organizing.... encouraged about their possibilities for the future... definitely could pull off this conference... Highly recommended."
- 3) Womyn's Resistance - I first talked with Tom Boswell of the Wisconsin Community Fund. He didn't know of the group but knows the area, "west of the river neighborhood" where he knows "a lot of good things are happening." He recommended I talk with one of the WCF past grantees. I called Pat Gowens of the Welfare Warriors. She said that the group is in a mixed race, multicultural, poor neighborhood, but they're not restricting their work to just that neighborhood. They're just beginning, have had meetings and need start-up funds. She said "There are no other anti-rape groups in the area... a real good time to organize.... membership will be city-wide.... very well connected people.... already have 20 women signed up for classes and have a waiting list for future classes... There's an epidemic of violence against women in the city... The group is already getting much support and interest.... focus of the group is more than just self defense classes, but to get women active... use classes to organize for action... some of their projects so far: trying to start up safe houses, working with the police.... hot issue, hot group.... exciting that young women are doing this... this is creating a lot of controversy in the neighborhood among men." Pat has acted as a resource person for the group and said it's been hard for them to raise money so far, could really use a grant. She recommends a grant.
- 4) International Women's Day Video - I think that board members know of this but will get a reference also.
- 5) Second Thoughts - Larry G. is checking on this group.
- 6) Real Dragon Project - I called Rebecca Gordon in San Francisco. She doesn't know of this particular project, but said that she knows a lot of Prairie Fire folks, "great people... so much nicer than in the past." She does, though, "disagree with their fundamental politics." I then talked with Lynn of the Bay Area Pledge of Resistance. She said that the Pledge has done some work with this group and they all are part of the same progressive community in the area. This Project was involved in Gulf War events and the Quincentenary coalition for which they did guerilla theatre on political prisoners. Lynn thinks "their work is great... not a lot of consciousness in the area about political prisoners... they've done good education work on this.... work includes prisoners in general, not just political prisoners... they play an important role." I asked her about Prairie Fire involvement. She thinks that most of the Project are not PF, just a few.
- 7) JEAP - Louis suggested I talk with Bob Rosen in NJ. He didn't know of this group, but Bob said it is not negative for him not to. I then called Jim Burchell of the NJ CISPES (a past grantee). Jim said that this group does good work, he respects them. They're working in a hard luck, depressed area and live right in the

community. They also have worked on Central American issues. He's met Martin Sostre and found him not presently sectarian in politics (Jim B. said he personally is very wary of sectarianism.) "These folks are based in the community. He doesn't have a high profile and the group is not involved with sectarian groups." He recommends funding JEAP.

8) Hospitality House - This has come to us a few times in the past and been rejected. I had previously talked with a Haymarket Maine board member for a reference and this time talked with the current Maine coordinator for Maine Haymarket, Glen Frankenfield. Both the past and present opinions are the same: HH had come to them a couple of times also in the past years and weren't funded. They did site visits. Felt proposals were very unclear and it was difficult to find out what she meant or was doing or wanted to do. From the site visits, Haymarket found out that the organization is mostly Jan Lightfoot, there is a board of a few people who didn't know what was going on. Glen said that, as far as they could see, there is no grass roots support for this, no political work (or other) work being done.

9) CA Solidarity Round Table - I talked with Katherine Gonzalez of the Nicaragua Network in DC. She knows of this and thinks that it is an "interesting idea... there is a need to get the large organizations together for strategy... Nica Network would be happy if they can pull this off... not something one of the big organizations could do because of their overload of work with their own projects." She said this seems like a good idea but doesn't know if this group can pull off the logistics, finances, etc. to make this happen.

10) CAMMP - Rebecca Gordon didn't know about this project, but does know the Media Alliance, their umbrella organization. They've "done a lot of good work in public education on how to do media watch work.... They hold forums.... excellent resource and public education work... They've founded smaller groups within the Alliance to cover specific areas such as Central America MA has the skills to do this type of work... not a grass roots organizing organization.... good politics."

11) NHCAN - The last time this group came to us Arnie Alpert of AFSC/NH had a "totally glowing reference." Extremely good work/ no paid staff = great volunteer staff, very responsible. Network does good job of mobilizing for events & projects. Recently had an event with NH Coalition of the Homeless (work closely with them), made good connection of issues (an event on refugees was held in a homeless shelter). Very supportive of Middle East work also. They were part of founding meeting of NH Coalition on the Middle East. Recently (2/91) worked with NECAN on a tour of Nica. labor leaders, had events with NH labor unions. In general, though, Arnie has seen a real drop in enthusiasm by the general public there for Central America work with corresponding drop in funding. They really do need to do this fund raising project. Recommended.

I checked with Arnie again. He still agrees with the above and added that this is still "a great organization... continues to keep Central American issues alive in the state.... good at linking local issues with C.A..... They're forming a social issues groups delegation to Nicaragua to link those issues." Recommends funding.

12) Artists for Survival - I talked with Nora Lester of Cambridge Ramallah Sister City who knows of this group. She thinks their posters are good. "The artists build a very particular niche (not education and not broad) but it is unique for the people they reach, particularly children.... important work.. nobody else is doing this stuff... reaches a community that solidarity people don't reach... work with synagogues... They are very organized, competent people, well connected, committed to the long run. They work well with other groups... good group." When the Sister City project went to the West Bank, this group gave them "tons of buttons and posters for the kids..great gesture. There are lots of people helping in this but Mich (Kamen) runs this... I hope you fund them."

13) Voice from the Deep -

14) Vets Education Project - This group has come to us for grants several times. We've always received very good references. Some of the comments from Peace Development Fund have been: quite effective at getting into schools including some big high schools which have been targets of the military recruiters; powerful work and presence; a model for other projects of this kind; there are women vets involved who do speaking engagements; highly recommended.

This time I called Frances Crowe of AFSC/Western Mass. She said that the group is doing good work, particularly now that they've broadened their base to include a lot more older vets from World War II. Very effective since they have talked about Hiroshima and made connections. The group is planning a panel on "Gulf Crisis Plus One" and bringing in some of the veterans who opposed the war. Frances said that she is "happy they're (VEP) there." Highly recommended.

Note: Louis Kampf is reviewing the book for which VEP wants funding and will give a report at the board meeting. I looked at it also.

15) Washington Peace Center - We've always gotten good references for this group. They work on quite a few issues, work well in coalitions, have progressive politics, a good newsletter, initiate projects, are a diverse group. This time Hank R. checked on this group with two of his contacts. They said that the Center continues to do good things and were very favorable about the group.

Hank Rosemont said that he talked with three of his contacts who all gave "good marks" for the group. the Center is moving out of strictly peace issues and into local ones as well, such as the Save Our Cities Campaign. They still work as a clearing house for peace issues. Very good group and recommended for funding.

16) NH Action for Peace - For their last request in 11/90 I had talked with Arnie Alpert of AFSC/NH. He said that they're doing well in a conservative state. Real range of politics in leadership - liberal to radical/ this group and C.A. network fill real need of smaller groups around state to relate to each other in state- wide campaigns. He feels that the group is moving in a good direction/ takings leadership role in the Gulf crisis situations - had events, demos, resources. AFSC worked closely with them but since NH Action was taking leadership role in Comp. Ban project, AFSC could do more of a support role. AFSC/ NH is focusing more now on racism & local domestic issues. AFSC's major goal in the '80's was to develop a strong independent disarmament movement in NH - this group is one of the results of that work. He recommended funding the group.

I talked with Arnie again for this request. He said that they are "doing just fine." Doing a lot of peace dividend work and the Citizens' Budget Campaign (CBC), which looks at the federal budget as far as social issues is concerned. He feels that the group is moving in a good direction and taking on a broader agenda while still working on peace issues. They've been forming a coalition of different issue groups. Arnie said that the CBC is the broadest progressive issues based campaign that he's seen in New Hampshire and NHPLS is playing a central role in it. He recommends funding them again.

17) Piedmont Peace Resource Center - I first talked with Jack Beckford of the Fund for Southern Communities who didn't know of the group. He suggested I talk with the former chair of FSC, Marvella Peeples of the SC Women's Consortium. Marvella did know of the group: "real strong organization doing great work.... proud of them.... organized around the Persian Gulf War.... do work on nuclear waste and plants... bring in resource people.... good at turning people out for events and rallies... work with other grass roots and social change groups." I asked her about diversity in the organization. Marvella said that she had a workshop in Colombia that a rep of the group attended. In talking with her, Marvella said that she said that they are reaching out to include Black people and women. Marvella didn't know exactly how diverse the group in general is. She recommends the group.

18) VVAW - I talked with Betty Kapitanakis of the North Star Fund. The NSF had funded them last cycle for a counter recruitment program. Betty said, "They're

good!... did a lot of stuff around the Gulf War... also go to high schools and community colleges... impressive.... good newsletter.... their mailings are informative... primarily white membership but work closely with Black Veterans for Justice (a lot of Black vets join this group)... VVAW has women in membership... They're thoughtful in how they approach projects. We have a lot of respect for them." Highly recommended.

19) BAN - Hank R. talked with one of his contacts about this group. That person mentioned that this is a rare group. Had a poster project in the inner city that received good response. Hank Rosemont's contact said that the activities of the group ebb and flow which depends on the contact person's time. He definitely is able to recruit people for particular endeavors. It can't be considered a one-person operation because he does get lots of folks to work on projects. Hank suggested they get in touch with the Washington Peace Center (who'd heard of the group) to use their resources. Recommended for a grant if we have the funds.

I also talked with Anthony Parker of Dollars & Sense who knows of this. He said that basically they do this small publication when they can afford to. I started in the late '70s and goes to students, political activists and Black civil and political leaders. Anthony likes that it's geared to younger people in junior high and high schools also. It includes special features by students and has a lot of information that they wouldn't go out of their way to read elsewhere. The newsletter has been well received. Gregory has done speaking at campuses. Anthony feels that this is unique, no other group like this on the issue. They make good connections around the country and know the key people and groups to send the newsletter. Recommends.

20) WI Network for Peace - Tom Boswell of the Wisconsin Community Fund said that the initial idea for this came from the WI Community Fund and Jobs with Peace about a month after the end of the Gulf War. The groups who met developed a more ambitious and, he thinks, good strategy to organize on a grass roots level in the state. Tom said that he supports the idea of the national conference even though he has some criticisms: he would rather see more grass roots organizing in the state first, with all kinds of issues and constituencies which would lead to a state-wide conference with a platform and caucuses in order to pressure their legislature. He said that this sort of strategy would take years, though, to do it right. The Network has been doing a lot of good networking, in any case, in the state. They've also been working with progressives in the Democratic Party: going to speak to local chapters about progressive issues. He's positive about the Network and recommends funding this project.

21) Nukewatch - We've funded them many times in the past. I've always gotten good references for them. This time I asked Tom Boswell of the Wisconsin Community Fund for a reference. He said, "Of the peace groups in the Midwest, this is one of the best... high profile... do a lot of direct action and civil disobedience... during the Gulf War, this group was one of best in area.... now working on ELF project which is one of the more visible signs of war (mentality) in the state... (Nukewatch folks) are good organizers... in forefront of issues... do good work and are worthy of funding."

22) Univ. Conversion Project - Louis K. checked with Prof. Vera Kistiakowsy at MIT on this. She said that this is a one man organization. He gives it a lot of thought and care. Their information seems accurate, go to Department of Defense documents rather than secondary sources. (Also work with IPIS (left info /think tank (?) started by Pam Solar, now Paul Walker is involved in that.) The Project has established a mailing list. It's basically an information gathering service which, she thinks, doesn't do a lot of direct work with groups. Vera said that she can't tell how politically useful this project is but it might be.

I also talked with Debbie Dover of Dollars & Sense. She said that she knows "They're doing really good organizing on campus.... organizing around the involvement of universities with research for the military.... They seem to be doing

inter-campus networking nationally. Rich Cowen is traveling a lot, going to conferences, etc.... group works on bare bones budget... main focus is providing information and helping in organizing... good left critique, looks at power in society, class and race... They seem to have good research skills." She recommends funding.

23) MHA/Ithaca L/G/Bisexual Task Force - I called Ann Peters of CUSLAR in Ithaca. She knows some of the group who "have worked a long time effectively... work cooperatively with other groups.... progressive politics... individuals in group work on other issues but the group doesn't co-sponsor or work in coalitions, not because of politics but because of feeling the need to focus on gay and lesbian issues. They do have good relationships with other groups... have had some strong achievements, such as housing rights.... not as radical as Queer Nation."

24) Centro del Obrero - Delia Gomez of Las Americas Refugee Project in El Paso said that she has good contacts with them. Among other things, they do presentations to groups about maquiladora issues on the border, investigate working conditions with a focus on women workers and families. Delia is impressed at their understanding on all levels, an excellent organization. They do good outreach to many groups in the area. This is an advocacy organization which is definitely trying to change conditions. Recommended.

25) ME Philanthropic Fund - Louis K. talked with Nora Lester about this. She said that a couple of people do this. Their main activity is a once-a-year concert of a Lebanese political singer for fund raising. They also have an annual newsletter. Nora doesn't think that all the money collected goes to Lebanon (?) but this is a charity organization.

26) VT Children's Forum - Will Miller of the Green Mountain Fund said that their fund had turned the Forum down for a grant, mainly because this is a service project with no radical politics or organizing component. They do advocacy for legislation to protect children, a good thing but not a GMF priority. This is a mainstream group which should get funding from liberal foundations. (Will also talked about how the Fund has been getting fewer requests from progressive groups lately, but more from service oriented organizations because of funding cuts. He asked if we are seeing this also and felt strongly that the Fund has too keep to its guidelines.)

Nancy Moniz
Resist staff