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Resist Board Meeting, April 1980

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R E S I S T

38 union square · somerville, massachusetts 02143 · 617/623-5110

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 Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority*

April 23, 1980

Dear Friends,

The April meeting was held at Frank B's. A small, friendly group attended: LOuis, Frank, Amanda and Dorothy. We decided to let the Free Press use the Resist mailing list at their own expense, as requested.

The next meeting will be on Sunday, June 1 probably at Louis' at 11 a. m.

Grant Decisions

✓ 1. Service Employees for a Democratic Union (SEDU) -- \$200 to help publish their newsletter and inform their membership of the election results which are being challenged. They also received \$1000 from the Ferrys. Our grant letter reminded them that Resist funds are limited, and encouraged their efforts to become financially self-sufficient.

✓ 2. Buffalo Newsletter -- \$200 to continue publication after losing three key members, for reasons unrelated to the magazine.

✓ 3. Coalition for Direct Action at Seabrook -- \$100 only, since they have many other funding sources.

★ 4. North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) -- \$350 for their Women's Project publication which will be a result of their trip to Mexico.

★ 5. Alarm -- \$600 as a loan to help publish their academic statement in the New York Times, keeping in mind that their mailing list would be useful to Resist.

✓ 6. Puerto Rico Legal Project -- \$200 to help with Pedro Juan Soto's visit to Boston. He is a poet and novelist and the father of the slain independentista Carlos Arrivi Soto. The PRLP held speaking engagements and a reception for this writer.

7. Feb. 2 Mobilization -- \$100 to repay the bus costs for their Greensboro activity.

★ 8. Coalition for a People's Alternative in 1980 -- \$350 to help with their Call to the activities at the Democratic Convention.

★ 9. The Boston Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression -- \$175 for

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the slide show portion of a Docudrama 1970 - 1980.

★ 10. The Newspaper (Lynn, Mass.) --\$170/mo. for two months to cover deficit.

✓ 11. Boston Mobilization Against the Draft (BMAD) -- \$200 for leaflets
and salary for staff person.

There were no rejections.

Best wishes,

Dorothy

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445 Bloomington Ave.
Wooster, OH 44691
March 28

Dear Frank,

I was sorry to have missed the last meeting at the last minute. It got to be too much of a hassle, with Florence just back from Europe and having to stay on to Monday, etc. I liked all the proposals, as I recall, and expect that we did a good deal of funding.

I'm enclosing a letter I wrote to Hilda--she doesn't seem to be far from where she has been.

When did you set the next meeting? I will be in New York April 25 or 26 through 29. We (Louis, Ellen, Florence, I) have a Feminist Press Reprints meeting on April 27, which is Sunday. So if you were thinking of a meeting for Saturday in NY, I don't see why I couldn't make that. In May, I'll be coming to Albany for a union meeting May 8-10, but there's a Radical Teacher meeting (I don't know where) May 11. The following weekend is NWSA in Indiana. I think we're coming east around June 6 or 7. June 8 isn't impossible. June 14 is out.

I wasn't dissatisfied with the \$445 or whatever it was--that's a good return on the investment, which wasn't that great. And more may come. Anyway, it's good to keep those contacts alive. Tell me who the people were, and I'll send a personal thank you.

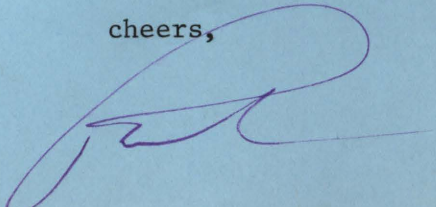
I want to pick your brain, if I might, since I said I would prepare a plan for Radical Teacher to increase subs. It seems to me that the only way one really does that is to use other mailing lists, maybe combining that with an ad (exchange if possible) in the mag whose list you are using. Does that conform to your own experience? We can, of course, also go to conventions and meetings, and we do do that. No doubt, such efforts need to be integrated, but they are less predictable, and I suspect less productive than mailings (why is it radicals always claim to have neither money nor check books?). If these assumptions are accurate, do you have any good sense of mailing lists that have been productive for RA? Obviously, we don't have quite the same audience, but it's helpful to know. Also, do you have a sense about the best form for returns? A self-mailing? With or without return stamp (my general belief on principle is without)? Or tear-offs? And have you done double mailings--i.e., an original, then a reminder-type card? I asked Walter Cronkite for a plug as a retirement present, but....

What about libraries? That was, as I recall, a backbone of Liberation. Have you tried sending them copies for review and order? And if so, which? (Which libraries, that is).

Can't think of what else I want to ask now, but if you think of other details, I'd appreciate having them. People have promised to get this together for a while, but I think I'll have to,

Phones here: X 216-264-1857 (home); 216-264-1234 x-377 (office--which is actually where I mostly am).

cheers,



445 Bloomington Ave.
Wooster, OH 44691
March 27

Bear Hilda,

I missed the last Resist meeting and am only now catching up with the packet--too much moving around. But I did want to respond to your letter.

I wrote most of the draft statement, and I left out all reference to women and the draft quite deliberately. It seemed to me that the issue was being raised by Carter folks deliberately (and, as it has turned out, unsuccessfully) as a red herring to divert attention from the main issues. And they were relatively successful for a little bit, as was evidenced by the fact that all the TV quotes and newspaper quotes and the like from woman's organizations concerned that issue, and not the issues of the draft and militarism, no matter what people said.

No surprise: for there isn't any way that the matter can be anything but diversionary. It's always a losing game to say, "we're against X, X but if X should come anyway, we want to be included." That's a sure loser. It seemed to me better not to deal with the issue directly, but simply to assume in language, as we did, that women, like men, would be affected. Of course, the situation isn't exactly the same, but it does seem to me that the matter of resistance, if it comes to that, will be the same.

In all, I don't think the statement was an evasion--quite the contrary, it was a way of avoiding diversion and taking head on what the real issues are.

As for national service, I'm persuaded that the extensive case Florence and I made against it in The Conspiracy of the Young (now ten years ago) is still quite valid. Like all such ideas, it has its element of idealism--just as the Peace Corps did. But like all such ideas put into practice, one immediately encounters a struggle for direction and control. For whose benefit would such a plan operate? For the young people, two of whose years of life and earnings would be expropriated by a State which is ever more clearly committed to the interests of capital? For poor people, whose lives have not significantly been improved by any such program in the past, and who would immediately be thrown into competition for already low-paying jobs with masses of national service conscripts? Federal bureaucrats, who have been so creative in education and in selective service, and who would now administer the most massive personnel program in history, at incredible cost? You get the drift of what I'm saying. If this were a society which did, in fact, institutionalize social concerns and idealism, instead of institutionalizing private greed and selfishness--and I mean the word "institutionalize" quite concretely--sure, service would be expected, respected, anticipated by most. But that's hardly the case, and I think one would have to be pretty far gone to assume that we could trust Carter or Reagan or the like to make appropriate use of such a resource.

It was nice to see you those few moments; I hope you're enjoying SF (how could you not?).

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April 10, 1980

Dear Paul,

Thanks for your letter. I thought your letter to Hilda was a good one; I'm sending her a copy of a statement done here by Women Opposed to Registration and the Draft, and something that I wrote on national service for the Mobe newsletter.

Our last meeting was a pretty good one; the ~~x~~ minutes are over at xerox, and if I don't enclosed them in this letter you should get them in a day or so. The next meeting time is a real mess, and I'll probably be calling you before too long; a meeting time that was tentative is now out, and I'm not sure whether any weekend before June is convenient for 3 or more people. ~~x&x&x&x~~

One more success on the staff mailing: Bob Stover sent us \$1000, which is \$500 more than his usual annual contribution. Based on the money received so far, at the last meeting we decided to hire someone to work afternoons until the end of June, and then see. Stover's contribution would cover us through the end of the summer or so. I've hired Dorothy Martin, who I think you met at that inaudible movée a few months ago. She has stopped working full time as a nurse to do peace and anti-draft work. Though she hadn't done any political stuff until about a year ago, she's very organized and has a lot of energy and enthusiasm. With Amanda and Dorothy both working, I've been able to do some work at home each day, and think that we're within spitting distance of being able to dig ourselves out of the work backlog that's built up around draft, etc. stuff.

Our financial situation is pretty good; and we've received about \$1000 along with signed statements.

On the question of mailing lists: in general this is very cumbersome, particularly starting up. But there really isn't any choice; and I think ~~xxx~~ that there are a lot of people who would subscribe to the Radical Teacher if they knew about it, so the first round or so of mailings should bring in a pretty good return.

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The going rate of expected returns these days has dropped down to about 1%, but your first round should be better. The main question is really getting the front money for printing the stock and paying the post office. The way we figure it on Radical America, if the money returns cover the cost of the mailing itself, the 50% or so renewals at the end of the first year will cover the cost of the additional subscribers for the first year and the renewals for the second year. Since our sub price is \$10, that means that if the cost of a single ~~expensive~~ piece in the mailing is 15¢, we need a 1.5% rate of return to break even. (RA isn't tax exempt, so our postage is 8.4¢; I think RA is tax-exempt, no?).

We have done both one-piece mailers and the traditional several inserts stuffed into an envelope with a return envelope. The trend last year or so was toward one-piece mailers, which are much cheaper than the several piece package. However the trend is now the other way, because everyone (the Richard Parker - Mother Jones world; Dollars and Sense, and Radical America) have found that rates of return are ~~dropping~~ dropping so much that ~~even~~ even with a cheaper package we are losing money. So next year everyone will be doing several inserts. But it's hard to tell if market saturation and the recession aren't the real main causes of the decline in rates of return.

In general, the best lists are on the smallish end, from ~~g~~ magazines that do less promotional stuff and don't get into "bill me later" business, which is poison. So magazines like Mother Jones, In These Times, Seven Days, etc. are not ~~a~~ strong lists, though you could probably get a "sample" of one or two thousand names to try out. The lists which work seem to be RA, SR, Dollars and Sense, and the Guardian; and Monthly Review is probably a good bet. That would total about 25,000 names, and should produce for RT from 250 to 400 or so subs. Moving On (c.1000) also did well; and Marxist Perspectives did ok last year. Working Papers is starting up again, and might be a possibility. ITT did ok for D and S this year. D and S has also experimented a lot with slightly off beat lists, and with purchasing lists from brokers (e.g. junior college economics teachers); these don't usually pay for themselves, and my own feeling is (at least for RA), that it's best to stick to the major lists for the first 50,000 names or so, and then to experiment with bigger lists (Nation, Progressive, Seven Days,) if you're tax exempt and can lower the cost of your mailings to 8-10¢ or so. RT might also be able to use lists like ~~Black Scholar~~ Black Scholar, Feminist Press, Feminist Studies, IPS book buyers, etc. I'd be glad to check with D and S, ~~which~~ which keeps very accurate records on returns, to let you know how they did on a particular list.

As for libraries, it's hard to break into them, esp. now that many libraries have ~~an~~ policy of no new subs. Sooner or later they will start to subscribe on their own, and it's probably a good investment to try to get a review in Library Journal, and to make sure you're listed in the catalogs of the major subscription agencies (Faxon, Ebsco, etc.). Since a high proportion of your readers are probably college teachers, a mailing to your own list asking people to be a) sustainers b) ask their college libraries to subscribe would probably have the best results.. To my knowledge it is not useful to do a mailing directly to librarians or to send them samples; though it would take so long for a sub order to work its way through the purchasing bureaucracy that it is probably impossible to know this one way or another. ~~RA~~ tried these things a few years ago with no visible response. RA gets a fair number of European subs from libraries now, and it would be a good idea to make contact with European subscription

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agencies. I have x visions of getting RA into about 100 Chinese libraries, and RA has about 5 subs from Soviet libraries. But probably the most efficient thing to do is keep pestering readers to get their university library to subscribe (and also to get RT indexed in the various indexing publications).

The toher thing to mention is that the best list to keep mailing to is your former subscribers; RA is now doing a 4th renewal letter, and getting about a 10% rate of return.

The above reminds me to inquire about how you are keeping your mailing list, because renewals are simplest if the list is on a computer, and esp. because Dollars and Sense is planning to buy a small computer, with shares owned by South End Press, Working Papers, and a small share by Resist (our total cost on lists, etc. should be about the same, with the extra convenience of having the printer and terminal on the spot). Anyway, if RT isn't on computer and would like to be, Resist and D&S will be running a small commercial operation on the side, probably hiring the other half of Amanda's time to run it (she's done x computer x stuff in the past). The data entry costs x will be about 10¢ an operation, with a \$9/1000 cost for printing gummed labels. What we do on RA is code our subscribers with expiration date, and print 4 sets of labels for those expiring with the next issue, do an early renewal letter as soon as x people get their next to last issue, a second renewal after they get their last issue, a third renewal a month so so later, and a fourth renewal a month after that. This should be in operation by the end of the summer.

Well, that's enough for now. I'll probably be calling soon about trying to straighten out this next meeting time business.

Best wishes,