

Hi folks (and Ruth!),

I've been asked, particularly from folks from Quaker meetings, who can be written to and how can folks on the national Board of AFSC be contacted to express concerns about the proposed cuts that will be voted on next weekend (4/21) in Philadelphia. I am attaching contact information that I just received from a fellow staff member for those people – I have no idea whether contacting these folks will work, or if they're even receptive to anyone's views (after all, they're responsible for oversight and ultimately the steps that the leadership took in getting us into this crisis.)

I'm also attaching a copy of the Northeast union's counter proposal (which we are allowed, contractually, to offer before any decisions are made – although already AFSC has violated a few of those contract clauses already.) It gives you some thinking of the staff (many were pushing for much stronger language, but some staff feel a softer approach is necessary.) Again, legally, the management of AFSC must consider the proposal in good faith, but I think that horse left the barn awhile ago. It isn't perfect, but we've literally had a few days to pull it together, and we're STILL waiting for management to provide us with information we asked for literally weeks (months, at this point?) ago.

**This is significant:** One particularly poignant consequence of the proposed cuts that was only realized 2 days ago by a staff member in the West was that – if the management's proposed cuts are made - AFSC will go from having about 14 FTE (full-time staff equivalencies, i.e. 14 positions) dedicated to anti-war/peacebuilding work in the U.S. to about 3 FTE. Essentially, AFSC will no longer be an anti-war/anti-militarism organization. This is a radical shift within the organization that I (and other staff) do not think has been taken into account. Meanwhile, the mission statement of AFSC as well as the lovely centennial flags being flown emphasize the very legacy that will be eliminated in a couple of weeks (and it's not exactly that it's irrelevant, given that the "Mother of All Bombs" was just dropped two days ago on Afghanistan, a country we've been at war at for 16 years.)

I haven't talked to anyone who thinks this is intentional, but I think this makes sense:

1. As we have been geared towards more corporate-oriented efficiency guidelines/program planning, "successful" programs are ones that accomplish discrete, time-limited goals (i.e. representation in immigration courts, changing state policy regarding jails, etc.) Stopping war and challenging militarism is NOT something that happens in an annual fiscal cycle, and providing 200 articles of clothing to people every month doesn't have a pinnacle "long-term achievable goal". So therefore work like anti-war and material assistance has been set up to fail in the recent model of program planning and evaluation.
2. Programs that are funded through big grants, or large donors, are largely the ones that are surviving the cuts – the Newark immigration office has 15-20 staff people providing support to immigrants in the justice system, but a huge part of their work is funded through grants. Virtually no one funds anti-war or military counter-recruitment work. This is the "survival of the fittest" in the non-profit world – where the work that's most attractive to donors is what is retained (which

is also the rationale General Secretary Cretin gave for the creation of a brand new program office in Philadelphia.)

3. The “Wage Peace” network within AFSC – those working on anti-war organizing – has essentially been ignored by leadership for years now. We aren’t given, nor even asked, for any resources; the work that is done is rarely featured by the organization; we meet simply through the sheer force of will by those within that group. This is similar to the military recruitment staff (which has now collapsed within AFSC) – we used to struggle to have phone conferences once a month, but without any direction, and with no support from Philadelphia, we were doing the work in SPITE of AFSC, not with it’s help.
4. Most of the anti-war organizing – never rich with funding – has been done in 1 person (and occasionally 2 person) offices. Small offices are considered inefficient by current leadership of AFSC, and that means (a) because budgets have been frozen, single-person offices see program budgets eaten away by slight increases in rent, utilities, etc. and (b) we don’t start anti-war/counter-recruitment work anymore. And again, because anti-war organizing doesn’t have planning/evaluation “goals” that are ever fully resolved in our increasingly militarized world, those 1-person offices (often with older staff close to retirement) are the ones that get cut.

Folks can do what they want with this information – I think the leadership of AFSC have made these decisions so quickly and rashly that I’m not optimistic about anyone stopping them. But these trends I’ve described are, I think, some of the reasons why the anti-war movement is so anemic, given how difficult even organizations ostensibly charged with addressing militarism are getting by.

Jeff

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