

Prison Activist Resource Center

Fall Update 2001



PARC's Core Collective on Fall 2001 Retreat.

Anti-Racist Organizing Challenging White Supremacy in our Activist Organizations.

Racism works on many levels and it is important to be aware of it both in our every day interactions and its structural manifestations. We have an opportunity to dismantle racism through incorporating anti-racist practices and principles in our work and lives. By looking at the work we do through a lens of how race and racism affect it, we can begin to analyze who has historically held power, who has it now, and how we can work to redistribute that power.

PARC has become an actively anti-racist organization since the summer of 1999 when PARC staff and volunteers began discussing the need to develop an on-going focus on anti-racist work. In October of 1999 PARC held its first workshop focused on racism with the People's Institute West. From this workshop we began having an anti-racist organizing committee that organized ongoing workshops on racism for our collective as well as worked on developing systems to incorporate an anti-racist focus into all of our projects.

In 2001, we hired Yvonne Paul and M.E. Deuker as consultants to help us

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We Oppose the War.

The PARC Collective would like to express our grief and respect to all peoples suffering from the political changes taking place in the world. We recognize that the events at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon are not isolated occurrences, but a direct result of the united states' racist and violent policies enacted domestically and abroad.

It is important to recognize the effects these events have already had on prisoners across the united states. Most prisoners have had difficulty receiving and sending mail. Political prisoners have been placed in solitary confinement and have been denied visits. These affronts against prisoners' civil rights can not be tolerated.

PARC'S PRISONER SUPPORT PROJECT

The Prisoner Support Project (PSP) supports prisoners nation wide through correspondence and phone calls. We currently reach over two hundred prisoners each month with vital information.

All requests for information from prisoners are answered with a personal letter from one of our PSP volunteers. Because many questions address similar concerns, PARC has developed a Prisoner Support Directory that catalogs the different groups throughout the country that provide support services for prisoners.

Prisoners that write to us with specific questions which are not addressed by existing groups cataloged in the Prisoner Support Directory are handled individually. Each question is researched by a volunteer and answered accordingly.

Prisoners who have contacted PSP volunteers about abuses taking place inside may ask us to have their case publicized. This request is usually answered by writing an action alert. Alerts are posted on the PARC web site and on the prison-act list (an internet list-serve hosted by PARC that has over 700 subscribers). These most often involve cases of serious human and civil rights violations. Bringing attention to the public and to other prison activist about what is happening to prisoners is an important component of the project.

PSP volunteers are encouraged to take this project as far as people power and resources allow. PSP volunteers contact prison officials, doctors, counselors, and other officials or activists in order to advocate on behalf



A Prisoner Support Project volunteer responding to a prisoner's letter.