

## Rise and Resist General Meeting - Zoom Edition – 05.25.21

---

### Rise and Resist Contact Information:

- Website: [www.riseandresist.org](http://www.riseandresist.org)
  - Email list signup <http://eepurl.com/cCzq1X>
  - Twitter: [www.twitter.com/RiseandResistNY](https://www.twitter.com/RiseandResistNY)
  - Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RiseandResistNYC/](https://www.facebook.com/RiseandResistNYC/)
  - Instagram: [www.instagram.com/risenresistnyc/](https://www.instagram.com/risenresistnyc/)
  - General email: [info@riseandresist.org](mailto:info@riseandresist.org)
  - Press email: [media@riseandresist.org](mailto:media@riseandresist.org)
  - Meetings: Every Tuesday at 7pm on Zoom. To sign up for the Zoom meeting [click here](#)
- 

**Facilitators:** Cherie & Jennifer   **Notes:** Jackie O.   **Participants:** 23 folks

### Good News

- NYS looking at criminal charges against Trump
- Trump's new social media platform, 'From the Desk of Donald J Trump', failed expectations massively. And the Trump brand has severely deflated online, along with a decades-low Republican party membership.
- Biden re-designates TPS Status to Haitian refugees in the U.S. who entered before 2017, and more recent arrivals are eligible (Trump refused to reauthorize TPS status for Haitians).
- ICE ended contracts with two detention facilities, one in MA and one in GA, that had been targeted by immigration activists as some of the worst detention facilities in the country. Awaiting changes from Mayorkas (director, Dept of Homeland Security) with cautious optimism re: changes to ICE detention policies
- Senators introduce bipartisan legislation to relieve financial burden on the Post Office by eliminating the requirement that they pre-pay pension obligations 75 years ahead (which was a Republican move to take down the PO and privatize it). Two recent Biden-appointed Postal Commissioners make it more likely that DeJoy, current director of the Post Office, can soon be fired.
- Tech firm working on the Arizona "audit" of 2020 elections [has pulled out](#) of the audit; they were the most legitimate firm working on the audit.

### Report backs

#### **5/20 Thurs., Chubb Climate Action**

Cherie: NY Communities for Change, 350.org, and RAR folks met at Chubb HQs on Sixth Ave w/banner demanding they stop insuring the climate crisis. Petition delivered.

### **5/20 Thurs., Immigration Vigil**

Jamie, Jenny H., Donna, Wendy: Successful vigil with lots of folks going to and from the ferry plaza. Displayed our banner 'US Immigration Policy is a Crime.' Got some push-back from folks, along with positive comments from other people. Push-backs can be read as what we're there to do—get people engaged. Length of the banner created a line of people trying to take pictures of the full banner. There was a good feeling in the air, even as there were critical comments.

### **5/21 Fri., Say Their Names – every Friday at 5PM @ 96th-Broadway**

Jenny H.: Last week's action continued as our ever growing action does. Image of banner appeared on Joy Reid show, and another banner as MSNBC backdrop

Jackie O: I stumbled accidentally onto the Say Their Names demo a few weeks ago, drawn by the sound of chimes and the chants as I was walking up Broadway. After hearing so many report-backs over the years, it was very moving to see, hear, and feel what this action is. Impressive and powerful.

### **5/22 Sat., BIPOC Youth 4 Solidarity**

Robert: Eight students from Brooklyn Tech plus Jamie and Robert, met at Juneteenth Grove in Cadman Plaza, a perfect staging that the young folks found for their march across the Brooklyn Bridge. Chants from BLM, Three Musketeers (!), and Stop Asian Hate. This small march was quite touching in a different way than a bigger march. Wonderful experience to be with young people.

### **5/22 Sat., Free Palestine**

Andy: Action in Sunnyside, Queens, a follow-up to major coalition actions in Brooklyn and Manhattan. March down Queens Blvd, positive energy. Signs read 'Health Care Workers for Palestine' "Jews for Palestine" etc. The ceasefire had just been reached prior to the march, but the movement is trying to emphasize that the status quo that remains is one of desperate devastation, even as it all drops out of the news. Quest for justice for Palestinians needs to continue after news coverage stops.

Jenny H: Occupation of Sheikh Jarrah continues. Settler colonialism continues with impunity even as the dramatic pictures are gone.

Elaine, Katrina: I don't think I've been at any event with such incredible energy, energy which lasts for a really long time. It was an amazing thing. During the Brooklyn rally a week before, we went on a freeway and did a prayer vigil at sunset. The drivers were so supportive when they realized what we were doing. Limited media coverage,

### **5/22 Sat., Black Rock protest**

Sandy, Cherie: Black Rock was a great action, good signs. Real coal was part of the event, which added atmosphere. Photographers from Reuters and NYTimes attended. Using coal to

block the doors was quite dramatic. The freaked out security guard didn't create too much trouble. No arrests even though we held the doors for about 30 minutes.

### **Interruption to discuss comment in chat about ERT and Palestine-Israel conflict**

- Concern about our very positive discussion (above) of May 22 Free Palestine action vs. the ERT email thread today, where some folks suggested that the organizing group (WOL) is committed to "the destruction of the state of Israel."
- Both the issue of Palestine-Israel and the structural issue of ERT members who do not often come to Tuesday meetings needs to be addressed. Facilitation will take this up and try to frame a focused discussion for our general meeting.
- ERT didn't have a sense of what the floor would say on this issue, and that was why they asked for a floor discussion last week.
- The website of Within Our Lifetime [WOL, the group that co-organized the May 22 Free Palestine event that RAR endorsed last week] states four principles. The principles are not committed to non-violence, and call for the violent overthrow of Israel. In general, RAR has always been in favor of non-violent protests.
- The structure of ERT is a real issue. The subject of Palestine-Israel is something really critical that deserves more than 10 minutes. If it comes up again at ERT we still don't know how to proceed. I'm a Raging Granny, and they almost broke apart over this issue. We couldn't resolve it. I think this is a much more tender issue than a lot of people here get. If we brush concerns aside about non-violence, our numbers will diminish. This issue tears people's hearts out.
- We devoted 30 minutes last week to discussion.
- The issue with Raging Grannies occurred 10 years ago, this is now years later. And the issue is how untalkable it is, how very difficult this is to talk about.
- We need to bring any endorsement that involves this issue to the floor, so we can discuss it and the values of the organizing group. We cannot put it on the ERT.,

### **5/22 Sat., Beds Not Body Bags**

Leon: This event was held at the Eastern Parkway location in Brooklyn, protesting the proposed closure of in-patient services at Kingsbrook hospital. Good turnout, 7-8 RAR folks plus 25+ folks from the local community group [Kingsbrook Community Action Committee, KCAC] including people from the area and health care workers, doctors, nurses, from the hospital itself. A few local politicians spoke. We handed out 500 fliers. They did have less success at getting press than we have.

Next action date (TBA) will be in Jamaica, Queens, at a hospital already closed. Good site for presenting the problem, since a luxury condo is going up in this neighborhood of predominantly black and West Indian folks.

Mark: Patch did an advance story on the Kingsbrook event.

## **Upcoming Actions**

**6/2 Wed., 1 pm @ Chase Bank Times Square (Climate group), Seventh Ave & 42<sup>nd</sup>**

Cherie: We have a gigantic banner, 20 x 30 feet, made by Rainforest Action Network and sent out to groups around the country, asking activist groups in different cities to organize an action at Chase bank. We're going to the Times Square Chase.

### **Vote to endorse passes**

**6/3 Thurs., Immigration Vigil @ location TBD 5PM**

Jamie: We are meeting this Thursday 5/27 to discuss this action and possible alternative sites to Staten Island Ferry. Please contact Jamie if you want to participate in the meeting, all are welcome.

**6/7 Sun., Transform Transit (Elevator Action) @ Hostos Community College 11:45 am**

Jennifer: One of our allies, Riders Alliance, is putting on an [action in the Bronx](#) which will include a press conference and rally. Calling for more transit accessibility. No endorsement vote needed. We will be bringing RAR signs, etc. Tammy Duckworth (US Senator, Illinois) trying to [pass a law to increase funding](#) nationally for transit accessibility. Info re: Bronx action [here](#)

**5/27 and 6/1 and 6/7 : Several actions re: Campaign for NY Health (Health Care Action)**

Ann, Mark: As NYS legislative session moves toward its end, RAR and the broader Campaign for NY coalition that we are a part of, are demanding passage of the NY Health Act, which has been put aside from consideration. We need to make noise that we are not happy, even if we can't get legislation back on the agenda for this session.

- 5/27, Thurs. 4 pm – [Action at State Office Building](#) (125<sup>th</sup> St and Adam Clayton Powell Blvd.) as part of a statewide Day of Action. Information re: action [here](#).
- 6/1 Tues. 11 a.m. – [Follow-up action](#) outside Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie's office in the Bronx (1446 East Gunhill Road). Information re: action [here](#).
- 6/7 Mon. 9:30 a.m. @ Albany – [Culminating action in Albany](#). Our Jen will be a featured speaker at the action. There will be a planned CD toward the end of the action. Can any RAR folks marshal? Other groups involved include the NYS Poor People's Campaign. In terms of risk, arrests in Albany in pandemic times have been limited and pretty quickly processed. Information re: action [here](#).

Jamie: I can do a small zoom marshal training for folks, since it's going to be hard to find RAR people who are going to go to Albany.

**Vote to endorse 5/27 action passes**

**Vote to endorse 6/1 action passes**

**6/5 Sat. 12 pm RAPP (Release Aging People in Prison) action @ NYC Cuomo's office**  
Donna: RAPP is organizing a [rally and march](#) to pass NYS legislation to promote elder care and elder parole in prisons. Many have joined to support these bills but NYS senate majority leader Andrea Stuart-Cousins & assembly speaker Carl Heastie are not acting. March begins at Cuomo's office and ends at 250 Broadway. Information re: action [here](#).

### **New Actions**

**6/3 Thurs. 5:30 pm Vaccine action @ location??**

Ann: This is a follow up to Pfizer action a few weeks ago. It will be a vigil, walking from one consulate to another with tombstones, and probably a die-in. We are putting pressure on the six countries that have not yet endorsed the TRIPS patent waiver for vaccines, which the US finally endorsed. We will give another update next week!

**Vote to co-sponsor this action passes**

### **Acknowledging the anniversary of the murder of George Floyd**

People invited to discuss how they have marked the day, their feelings and thoughts:

- I have many friends in Minneapolis, and this was a meaningful and important case for people in Minneapolis, even those who are not very 'political.' News that there was violence today around the site of George Floyd's death made me sad.
- The families are just amazing. With all of the history in the present moment, their ongoing attempt to connect and raise consciousness is amazing. But also the ongoingness of what our money supports ....
- It is also the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Tulsa massacre. Racism is built into the fabric of this country, sometimes a needle just comes out and sticks, and George Floyd's death was that needle.
- I'm also from Minneapolis, and when the Chauvin trial decision was delivered, the families thanked the activists for this reckoning. So I'm proud to be part of this organization that didn't just sit down.
- I think the Say Their Names actions have been very important, spiritually important, to many of us. I've been thinking a lot about Darnella Frazier, the young woman who filmed George Floyd's death, and about the young people who don't think of themselves as activists who have changed the world. Darnella should be appreciated today.
- The good part, if there can be one, is that the activism that came from this, the visibility of the racism that exists and always has, is being revealed. I don't think it can ever go back to what it was. Beyond the protesting, TV programming has changed and we see the visibility of black people now on the screen. Young black children now can see themselves .... I'm trying to draw out what I can in terms of what came out of this horror.
- The reaction was around the world, and the US was shown as what it is, and the idealization of the US was stripped away. That helped people face what is going on, the depths of racism in the US that white people have not understood.

## **Discussion of masks at RAR demonstrations**

Jamie: Let's try to see where people are at in terms of feeling comfortable at outdoor RAR demos if masks were optional? We're not making a specific proposal, but looking to hear how people are feeling about this right now.

- I feel like I'm crawling out of a cocoon, not ready to spread my wings. A number of people, especially in communities of color, feel we are moving too fast. White folks have much higher vax rates. Out of respect for everybody, I think we need to keep wearing masks for a while yet. In the HIV world, after everyone got used to safer sex, then the new drugs came online. But we knew there were risks out there and we needed to keep EVERYbody safe. So I think we should model our best behavior.
- As someone who is not yet vaccinated due to health issues, I agree. If we want to be in solidarity with everyone in the city, we should hold off. Following our discussion of the George Floyd anniversary, let's keep in mind there are New Yorkers who have not had the same access to the vaccine as others.
- In my neighborhood, mostly immigrant communities of color, so many people are still wearing masks and I'm moved by that. I'd like us to be in solidarity.
- Can we make a statement that our strong preference is to keep in mind the number of other folks who are not vaccinated?
- Have there been folks who haven't been coming out to actions because they don't want to wear a mask? I don't think so. Or will we lose people at actions if we loosen the mask restrictions.
- At Say Their Names, and at the last immigration vigil, people have sometimes not had a mask, then looked around, and put it up. So I think it's important to see how people are most comfortable. I think it should be a conscious decision on people's part to wear a mask, and I think we should be explicit about that so we can message it clearly.
- We've been saying 'follow the scientists' and the scientists are saying it's safe to be outdoors without a mask, especially if you're vaccinated. So if we keep wearing masks, are we saying we are not "following the science"?
- It's been evolving by itself ... if we don't publish that you have to wear a mask to be a part of our actions, can we just address the situation as it comes up? If there is a sign attached to every action that you must wear masks, then it's confusing?
- A lot of people have made the case that they don't feel comfortable taking off their mask, so I think we should honor that. I still keep mine on, I'm just used to it. Until more people are comfortable with it, I think we should stick with what we are doing.
- Re: the science – I believe in it. But in this case I feel that the science is a little off, and is vaccine-motivated. They want to push that if you have a vaccine you're safer. They took them down really quickly, too quickly. I think the science is a tiny bit prejudiced right now. I think you should keep the masks on, for now.

Cherie: I think we have an answer to the question for now, we will revisit it in a few weeks or months. But we have our answer for now.

### **Future Discussion about fighting Trumpism**

Jamie: I have an increasing unease about what's going on in the country, and I would like us as an organization to talk about it. What's happening with the Republican denial of the January 6 insurrection, the mid-term elections in 2022 and the possibility of Republicans winning, and also in 2024? This is something we may want to act on. Can we put a large chunk of time aside next week for a meaningful discussion, like an hour? Even though some other things might get short shrift because of that ...

Straw poll shows clearly that folks want to have discussion.

**### RISE AND RESIST ###**