

## Rise and Resist General Meeting - Zoom Edition – 07.06.21

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### Rise and Resist Contact Information:

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  - Meetings: Every Tuesday at 7pm on Zoom. To sign up for the Zoom meeting [click here](#)
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**Facilitators:** Stu & Jamie   **Notes:** Jackie O.   **Participants:** 31

### **Good News**

- Allan Weisselberg, CFO of the Trump Organization, indicted this week and hopefully something more will come of it

### **Report backs**

#### **Thurs., 7/1 morning -- Immigration affinity group action @ Ellis Island**

Jamie: Ten activists plus 2 photographers went to Ellis Island for the unveiling of “Little Sister” of Statue of Liberty. We immediately saw a phalanx of photojournalists on the boat which was good news. Unveiled two banners (including “When Did Yearning to Breathe Free Become a Threat?”) plus signs right near the site of the Little Sister. Ken read the Emma Lazarus poem. Cops tried to get us to leave but we said no. We were the most interesting thing happening there. The only media coverage we’ve seen is on NPR. It was a successful action.

Livvie, Heather, Katrina: Exquisitely planned action, and yes we were the highpoint! Everyone turned around with their cameras, and we gave them something to watch. Plus our timing gave us two boatloads of tourists who also saw our protest.

Katrina: I stayed behind and saw the banner drop off the boat as you all left, which some people also saw.

#### **Fri., 7/2, 5 pm -- Say Their Names @ 96th/Broadway**

Jenny & Alexandra: I’m struck by the different messaging and comments we are getting – the language of people’s reactions change in sync with what people are hearing in the media. “George Floyd the criminal” we didn’t hear two month ago, but now we do. One passerby came up very close to say that we were causing division and hate. Karen handled the situation by moving the man away to talk one-on-one, and mostly to listen to him, which seemed to work

very well. We discussed in Facilitation with Karen about what to do in situations like this. It's a strategy that we need to keep working on.

Robert: At this moment, when the floodgates have been opened and so much has been torn down, it's important to offer images of what we hope for, of the world that we want.

Brief discussion of sense of threat re street violence, racial politics of the responses, etc.

### **Upcoming Actions**

**Thurs, 7/8, 5 pm -- Immigration Vigil @ Grand Central Main Hall** [FB event here](#).

Jamie: We're returning to Grand Central, after looking for a break from South Ferry and the heat. We will use the same banners and signs that we used at South Ferry, highlighting Title 42, Stop Turning Refugees Away, etc.

**Sat., 7/10, 12 noon -- Beds Not Body Bags @ in Jamaica, Queens** (meet at NE corner of Rufus King Park -- near F line Queens-Hillside Ave.) [FB event here](#).

Mark & Ann: This will be our 7<sup>th</sup> vigil on this issue. After the last one at Kingsbrook Hospital (which closed its in-patient services at the start of this month), the issue did get attention in the Queens borough President race. So our initial goal, to call attention to these citywide inequities that no one is talking about, is being met.

This upcoming vigil will be held at the site of what used to be Mary Immaculate Hospital but is now the site of luxury housing. Eight hospitals have closed in Queens, over half the hospitals, and Queens has the lowest rate (1.5 per thousand) of hospital beds per population, of any county in the US that has a hospital. We'll bring tombstones for the 8 hospitals that are gone. And we will have a 15 foot scroll that will symbolically represent all the 225 hospital beds lost when Mary Immaculate closed. Event will last about one hour, starting with a tableau for 30 minutes and then opening into an open mic with folks speaking about their experiences. Speakers may include local electeds.

Brief discussion of the recent closing of Columbia Presbyterian's Diabetic Center, which largely serves black and brown communities. Jenny promised to keep us informed on that issue. Noted that the nearby communities who are losing the center have disproportionately high rates of diabetes.

**Wed., 7/14, 10 AM - End The Pandemic Everywhere rally and march** (starts from Dag Hammarskjold Plaza 47th St between 1st and 2nd Ave.) [Event details/RSVP here](#).

Mark: Our fourth action around the issue of global access to the vaccine. Last action focused on the UN missions of several countries who were against waiving vaccine patent rights. This action is being organized by national groups, and will be a bigger event. The goal is 500 people participating, with RAR and other groups working with nationals as the 'home team.' We will begin at 10 a.m. at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza and march two blocks up to the German consulate.

There will be an affinity group component of the action which may involve civil disobedience. Please contact Mark H, or Ann Rubin if you would like to learn more.

RAR folks can show up for the rally; and help with marshaling for this fairly large crowd (Jamie, Ann and Mark working with folks coming in to head the crowd control effort as a legal demo).

While the Biden administration has (finally) come out calling for the waiver of patent rights, they haven't done anything to support that. Dr. Fauci has suggested that we need people in the streets. Actions will be happening at German consulates around the country.

**Sun., 7/18, 10 am-1 pm -- Reclining Liberty/Filibuster action @ Morningside Park** (with food but not "The Picnic"). West 130<sup>th</sup> St. & Morningside Drive

Heather: The Reclining statue will be our photo-op backdrop for focusing on the Filibuster and how we feel about it. Bring props, bring food! It's a free-form Sunday a.m. bagels & coffee action. You can 'drop in' and don't have to stay the whole time: hang out in the shade, bring your camp chairs, and then also pass out flyers, get folks to sign postcards, and use the statue for photos. Any props or signs for previous Filibuster actions are welcome.

Nearest subway: 116<sup>th</sup> St on ABC or 125<sup>th</sup> St. on ABCD.

### **New Actions**

**Sun., 7/25, 12 noon, Save the MORE Act demo @ near Schumer's house**

Dana: Folks are going back to the same space (Schumer's place) where we did the Kill the Filibuster to support the MORE Act. Info re [MORE Act here](#).

**Vote to endorse action PASSES**

### **4 Action Dates upcoming – Poor People's Campaign**

Katrina: PPC has four upcoming actions, all of them leading up to the August 6 anniversary of the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. PPC is demanding an end to the filibuster so that Congress can actually do stuff: healthcare, minimum wage, disability and economic justice, homelessness, harm reduction and decriminalizing drug use.

July 12 – national call-in to all Senators

July 19 – Anniversary of Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, NY (1848). Direct action in DC planned. More info next week, save the date.

July 26 – Event involving Senators' offices, may or may not be in both NYC and DC

August 2 – Clergy with low-wage workers will march arm-in-arm to the Senate. Some risk of arrest.

**Discussion: Summary of last week plus more discussion of Trumpism**

Sandy: We had a robust discussion last week, with more questions than suggestions or answers. It's clear from last week that we need to continue talking about this. There are some big philosophical and strategic questions, as well as tactical questions:

- What are our goals, how do we think about who we are and who are our allies when we say we are concerned about Trumpism and voter suppression?
- Suggestion: maybe we should start to spend more time in Wash DC to most effectively address this
- How do we address white privilege and white supremacy in our own backyards, including re: attitudes toward the homeless on UWS.
- How to call out the media for the role that they play, esp Fox News
- Should we engage more on the electoral front? In light of 2022 midterms, perhaps this should be more of a focus. If we lose a majority in the House then it's all over. Suggestion: targeting Congresswoman Malliotakis (Staten Island) or Elise Stefanik (District 21, upstate NY)
- How to keep building multiracial coalition?
- How can we balance optimism with the pervasive pessimism? How to sustain our spirits and our energy?

### Discussion

- Republicans are aiming to get Republican Secretaries of State in all the states, we could focus on that fight.
- What is the 'path of most resistance' these days? And are we up for what that means? (That seems like its own discussion.) By path of most resistance I mean confronting what's really taking place at this moment.
- In our mission statement we say "with all the joy we can muster..." For young activists that's especially important. Do we want to think about a kind of Training Academy for young activists perhaps?
- Re: electoral work and having a positive vision: Obviously this transition Trump-to-Biden is trippy. We have a limitation on what we can do. Should we change so that we could endorse candidates? Our positive vision is through grassroots action, but there are limitations to just being resistant.
- In designing the Students for Justice program to strengthen democracy, we've decided to give primary attention to electoral work. But we combine that with teaching about the role of direct action. So maybe we can do that even more effectively? A workshop we have given twice to our interns re the role of direct action in getting rid of IDC in NYS has been great. I am very worried about the politicization of election officials at the state level, which will chase Democrats in swing states and red states from stepping up.
- As much as I like positive visions, this reminds me of discussions we have among climate activists: it will scare the shit out of people to talk about what is actually happening. It's hard to be positive when a major political party and the majority of their voters are willing to back an insurrection. That is a real moment that we are at -- and I think we have to accentuate that, even if it's negative. It's easy to lull oneself to sleep

because you don't want to see it. I think we need to point out how democracy is in danger of crumbling.

- If I think about Jenny's question about the 'path of most resistance,' it seems obvious to me that what's happening is the re-introduction of political violence as central to politics. And that's hard to reckon with. The threat of violence and actual violence – since Trump's 2016 campaign it's been clear that he's all about that, it's at the center.
- I'm reading Sarah Schulman's *Let the Record Show: A Political History of ACT UP* which is better than a novel. This is such a great text for students and the next generation of activists so they can understand why and how ACT UP did things right. I recommend everyone read it, there's so much of Rise and Resist there, so many folks from ACT UP now running Rise and Resist ... I agree we are in a terrible place right now, and what we've been doing with direct action is really important. We are so fabulously wonderful at graphics at this point, and whether the press is there or not, we should keep going with that. I really am proud when I see our reflection in this book.
- There's so much we could be working on. My own view shifted this week when I saw the interface between fossil fuel dollars and S.1 [For the People Act of 2021]. It was a shocker and an alarm for me, that Manchin's blustering about bipartisanship is really just about him doing the bidding of his fossil fuel masters. That's important for us to keep our eyes on.
- Democrats are still playing slow methodical softball, moving slowly through the judicial process. But it'll be like Mueller and by the time it winds its way to fruition .... people have forgotten. Why isn't the DOJ moving on the 10 indictable [Mueller report incidents]? Why isn't Biden calling for the court martial of Michael Flynn for calling for the overthrow of the government? We're gonna lose cuz 'they' will do anything and we're not playing hardball. While not diminishing the idea that we need to fight for voting rights laws, it shouldn't be accepted that vast numbers of Democrats won't vote if it isn't easy. The assumption should be that everyone on our side should vote no matter what .... It's scary, we have to raise the temperature.
- Not passing S1 is the greatest threat to our democracy, and I think we need to go all in for the next month, and we need to find new ways and be creative and things we haven't thought about before. S1 is the only way we're going to get our democracy back.
- I also think we need to go after Fox, cuz they're here in NYC. Those 80% of Reps who don't believe Biden won--it's from the disinformation from FB and Fox and One America News. That's the second priority after S1.
- Going after Malliotakis and Elise Stefanik also seems important, to campaign against them, just like we did with the IDC.

## **Finance**

Susan: We have pretty much what we had last week.

Here is a link [to donate](#) to support Rise and Resist actions!

**Non Rise and Resist announcements**

Katrina: This entire month of July is devoted to [homeless justice](#). Saturday, 7/10 is the next upcoming event and I'll share more with Actions.

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