

Rise and Resist General Meeting - Zoom Edition - 12.15.2020

Rise and Resist Contact Information

- Website: www.riseandresist.org
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 - General email: info@riseandresist.org
 - Press email: media@riseandresist.org
 - Meetings: Every Tuesday at 7pm on Zoom. To sign up for the Zoom meeting [click here](#)
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Facilitators: Alexandra & Karin **Notes:** Jackie O. **Participants:** 40 folks

NOTE: No RaR meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 29

Good news!

- Electoral College affirmed the vote and Biden-Harris are officially elected
- Bill Barr is out

REPORT BACKS

12/10 Thurs., Casey Goodson vigil and march from Washington Sq. Park

Ray: About 7 RaR folks. Displayed banner “Stop Killing Black People” and “End NYPD Rioting” – good rally and inspiring speakers.

12/11 Fri., Say Their Names – weekly vigil action @ 96th & Broadway

Jenny: Had 2 new people, good action.

The next vigil is 12/18 at 4:30PM

12/12 Sat., March To The Mayor’s House - human rights crisis in NYC Jails

Jamie, Sandy, Donna, Jackie R.: About 15 RaR people joined – the most we’ve had yet for a decarceration action. Started at Metropolitan Hospital, marched down to Gracie Mansion where there was a second speak-out. A moving and well-run event, ending with names of people who have died at Rikers. Our banners were really right for the times. **Daily News coverage** [here](#).

12/13 Sun., Immigration Vigil at Atlas Statue / St. Patrick’s Cathedral

Ray, Jackie R., Sandy, Livvie, Rick: We are starting to hold Immigration Vigils earlier in the day, and on Sundays. About 50-60 people, with all our immigration signs. Had a good spot before we took the steps of the cathedral for at least 10 minutes. Lorenzo made a fantastic, beautiful donkey. Were joined by protesters in solidarity with the farmworkers’ strike. Joyful, powerful, safe action. Decided we will do it again. People walking by were really reading the signs. And people were supportive of the action. The process at Actions meeting re: designing this action was really wonderful.

12/14 Mon., Banner photos/action at Saks Fifth Avenue light show

Jamie, Ray, Jackie R., Jennifer: Took photos with our banners – ABOLISH ICE, STOP KILLING BLACK PEOPLE, TRUMP LIES PEOPLE DIE – during the light show, and also in front of Radio City Music Hall. Tons of police and security, but no hassle because we weren't blocking traffic. Some pushback from police when in front of Radio City but we knew that it was public property. A really good photo op and lots of photos taken, more available soon. Great to be at an action outside after dark. Several folks wanted to have their pictures taken with the banners – they liked the disruption. One driver stopped to say he's been thinking of George Floyd, and fist-bumped; a Latinx family asked to have photos taken in front of the banner. Something about doing it at the strange hour was attractive to people First time we had the banner out with 300,000 deaths, and it was a powerful sign in front of Saks, which looked like it was dripping in blood ...

NEXT MEETING DISCUSSION OF NEW YORK STATE TAX POLICY (TAX THE RICH)

Livvie: Excited to bring this to RaR -- [Tax the Rich in NY state](#) to pay for the disastrous situation we're in. The IDC used to block everything – but now it's Cuomo who is blocking. It's a campaign gathering strength around the state: climate change folks, health care folks, etc. We'll have people coming in to talk to us who are studying this and the origins of the crisis. NY State is the tenth biggest economy in the world. Budget justice folks are working to speak with Indivisible to get us all more informed.

Jackie O: Immigrant justice groups in Queens have been mobilizing for months around Tax the Rich in connection to the [Fund Excluded Workers](#) campaign, targeting emergency support for workers, especially undocumented workers, excluded from any federal emergency pandemic relief.

Livvie: Yes, that's part of it though we are not focusing on any one group or single issue to be funded.

ELEVATOR ACTIONS - Letter and updates

Jennifer: Elevator Actions met today w/Riders Alliance and also discussed how Cuomo is hiding all the money! Elevator Actions [signed on to a letter](#) with Riders Alliance, after getting them to include accessibility in the letter, calling for “reliable, affordable and accessible public transit.”

Mark: New legislative session in NYS starts on Wed., Jan 6. We face the issue of raising new revenues that the state desperately needs, not only re: pandemic but after a decade of austerity and pent-up needs that have historic roots. On Tues. Jan 5 (probably around noon) there will be a big multi-issue Tax the Rich demo in front of Cuomo's office – put it on your calendar for a RaR presence.

Mike: Transit workers union looking at taxing the wealthy, including Wall Street trades. This is a general battle. With a supermajority in the senate, we can override Cuomo now.

Wroff: Need caution re: use of the word 'efficiency' since MTA has been undermined by efficiency talk. Better to focus on the layers of management hired to transform MTA, rather than saying anything that might be code for cutting workers—like “efficiencies”.

NEW & UPCOMING ACTIONS

Beds Not Body Bags – tentative date: Sat., Dec 19 at 1 PM -- Sunnyside Arch (Queens Blvd at 46th Street) – may be postponed due to weather

Mark: This would be our 4th action in Queens highlighting hospital bed inequity in NYC. Queens has the lowest hospital bed rate of any county in the US that has hospitals. Hour-long vigil staging tableau with body bags, distributing leaflets with info and names to call, ending with time for people to speak publicly about the issue. In the past, have had media coverage and are growing support from local electeds. [FB event link here](#). For updates on this action email: kirschnj@gmail.com

May have to postpone due to a snowstorm coming? We will make the final decision Thurs afternoon or Fri a.m. at the latest. If we postpone, we plan to reschedule for one week later, Sat., Dec 26. Keep your eye on [FB event page](#).

Alexandra: I think people in Queens, an epicenter of the pandemic, are feeling seen through these actions.

Leon: Carolyn Maloney (D-12) wrote back to us and we may have her involvement, as congressperson.

Immigration Vigil – Sun., Dec 20 at 2PM -- Meet at the Atlas Statue in Rockefeller Center (50th/51st St. - West side of 5th Ave.)

Jamie: Because first vigil event went well, we're planning to do it again – basically repeating the same demonstration over again. Looking for any suggestions re: best props to bring to make it most relevant for people driving by.

Maryellen, Ray, Lorenzo, Jenny: We could alternate people, facing the sidewalk, facing cars. We could alternate signs and which way they face. Maybe we could do some jingle bell-ringing. Maybe use the 'US Immigration Policy is a Crime' banner?

Jamie: We decided there will be no FB event posted for this action.

Call/Tweet/Put a fire under NY Republicans who signed on to Texas Lawsuit

Jamie: Nationwide, 17 AGs plus 126 Republican congressional Republicans publicly supported the Texas lawsuit. The two NYS Republicans who signed on are Elise Stefanik and Lee Zeldin; neither of them has yet recognized Biden as pres-elect. It's important that they know we are watching them -- that they must represent NY State and respect the vote, and not participate in the upcoming Jan 6 effort led by Mo Brooks (R-AL) to challenge Electoral College results. Use these phone #s and Twitter handles to pressure them:

Lee Zeldin R-NY (202) 225-3826 (631) 289-1097
@RepLeeZeldin
@LeeZeldin

Elise Stefanik R-NY (202) 225-4611 (518) 743-0964 (518) 561-2324 (315) 782-3150
@RepStefanik
@EliseStefanik

Mourn the Dead, March for the Living – POSTPONED January 1 action until a later date.

DECARCERATION WORKING GROUP

Donna: We signed on to two letters. The first letter requests that the US incarcerated people 1) be considered high priority Tier-1 for vaccination, and 2) be vaccinated only with full consent and no threat of punitive action. The second letter demands that NYS legislators call the vote on Humane Alternatives to Long-term Solitary Confinement Act. This legislation is being held up. [Virtual town hall](#) to End Mass Incarceration this Thurs., Dec. 17 @ 6:30 pm.

Stu: Prison guards are being given priority for the vaccine, but not incarcerated people. This is one of the most inhumane policies around.

Donna: More awareness is growing that prisoners and detainees are vulnerable to COVID. So while it requires pushing, the conditions are good now for making change.

DISCUSSION OF RECENT VIOLENCE AT NYC ACTIONS

Jamie: Many of us know about the car that drove through a group of immigration protesters on 12/11. We are making decisions to minimize counter-protesters. Actions committee concerned about tensions that are high due to both to the pandemic and the election. We need to find a way to both be out in the street together AND recognize what's going on in the city around us -- with NYPD, with hecklers, with people driving through protests. We invite a space here to talk about our concerns.

General Discussion (anonymized)

--When I go out now, I'm aware that Proud Boys are assaulting people in the street in DC, I'm quite aware of it -- I'm not as secure in it as I was a year ago -- de-escalation is valid but some of these people are nuts & violent -- for the first time I'm not feeling 100% safe here in NYC

--Pandemic conditions are also congruent with staying safer: doing smaller, quicker actions that don't have us out long or in large crowds right now

--You can't de-escalate a car

--We know what we do, we are trained, we have good instincts -- just keep a watch when we are out, whether for a short or long time -- trust your gut and check in with your comrades -- look everywhere, be vigilant -- use everything you have, which is a lot -- it's not clear when things will change and when there will be a general de-escalation -- keep our eyes and ears and hearts open when we are in the streets

--There is a bigger reason to not have FB invites now: to keep our numbers manageable as COVID is spreading in the city -- the things we do to protect ourselves from COVID will help protect us from these new conditions -- we've been making good decisions re: timing and safety and that will go a long way to addressing both these struggles: the increased violence and the pandemic

--Different people have different ways of keeping safe, even as we work together -- I'm always scared and I remind myself why I'm there, remind myself I make choices and have choices while being aware that others may be in a different situation, and with fewer choices -- I'm always afraid but taking action really helps me, and holding on to why I'm there

--We're used to dealing with the fascists by outnumbering them, and I expect there may be massive numbers again in the spring to outnumber them -- but not so much now and so I agree with the strategy that people are stating

--Is there something RaR can do (for ex., use our pull with the non-IDC guys we elected) now that people are threatening our First Amendment rights? -- like talking to electeds or writing editorials or blog posts so that these incidents are taken more seriously by the press/public/police? -- The people getting targetted are younger, on bikes -- can we use some of our power and know-how to come up with strategies, to tell NYPD to pay attention -- what can we do?

--In NYC, 95% of violence against protesters is done by NYPD -- we've had maybe 3-4 incidents since June involving other people, but the # of folks injured by NYPD is huge -- when people do demos they need to be visible, they need to have marshals, if you're in the street the risk of traffic is always there -- for ex., we go out with the orange mesh cuz when folks sit down in a traffic intersection, they are not visible, so we think about that, we think about how to best use our bodies -- especially as demonstrations get smaller, we think about how to use our props to make ourselves visible

--Are we encouraging and organizing the video-ing of these incidents and making sure things are going into the cloud? -- it's the main way people learn about what's happening

--Yes, our internal position is we keep ourselves safe, but I also want to make a claim on law enforcement: they are bound to protect me -- our internal position is 'we don't expect anything from the police' but our outside position is that it is their job to not harm us

--"All lives splatter" is a phrase being passed around in right-wing circles

--How do we support groups that are more the targets of police than we are, and that don't have the same experience around marshaling or inclination re: non-violence?

--We've seen things change from April to now re: how NYPD deals with demos -- we go out and don't know what to expect because they keep changing their strategy -- this discussion is part of our ongoing process of evaluating what's going on and how we feel -- we go one demo at a time, re-evaluate and keep moving and keep working together -- we can all imagine ourselves in the way of that car so it's important to talk that through --

FINANCE AND NEW FINANCE PITCH

Susan: Here is the link to help fund Rise and Resist's actions. Please give what you are able to -- we'd appreciate it: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/riseandresistny>

Mary's tote bags are now available. Four 'collectible' tote bags up for Auction now. All proceeds after eBay go to RaR. Link here:

<https://twitter.com/riseandresistny/status/1338977342685843457> . Spread the word via social media, etc.

NON RISE AND RESIST ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sandy: Good news from Georgia: 1.2 million Georgians requested ballots for the senate run-off, and 85,000 of them are folks who did not vote in the general election. They skew toward young voters, and people of color voters.

Vince: Postcard group I work with – join us? It's 6 30 on Tuesday so right before this meeting. We've sent close to 3,700 postcards. Email me if you'd like to join (email in chat not copied here).

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