

Rise and Resist General Meeting - Zoom Edition - 5.18.2021

Rise and Resist Contact Information

- Website: www.riseandresist.org
 - Email list signup <http://eepurl.com/cCzq1X>
 - Twitter: www.twitter.com/RiseandResistNY
 - Facebook: www.facebook.com/RiseandResistNYC/
 - Instagram: www.instagram.com/risenresistnyc/
 - 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 and Karin **Notes:** Heather

Good News!

*Science returns to official gov. websites; EPA will include climate change indicators on its website; this was shut down in 2017.

*COVID-10 Hate Crimes Act was passed by Congress. Also known as the Anti-Asian hate crimes bill.

*Also Joel Greenberg may be flipping on Matt Gaetz

Action Report Backs

*5/12 - AIG Demo

Cheri reporting - during the AIG annual meeting, a group of activists led by Rise and Resist came out to the AIG headquarters to tell AIG to stop insuring fossil fuels. There was an action outside the building and they delivered a petition. The security guards wouldn't open the building to accept the petition, which made for good video. The petition was eventually slid under the door, and the security guards wouldn't even pick it up. It was a successful action, AIG was called out in Tweets and knew that people were outside.

*5/15 - Say Their Names -5PM Fridays at 96th-Broadway

Jenny reporting - a picture of the action appeared for a second on the Joy Reid show. We don't know how it came to be on the show but from the clues in the photo it looks like it was taken on 5/15. 140 lists of names were handed out to passersby.

*5/17 - Tax Day Demo

Jamie reporting - This demo was sponsored by the War Resisters League. There was a march from Times Square to the old post office. Google "War Resisters League pie chart" for a great graphic. Their graphic considers the Homeland Security budget to be war, which Jamie thinks is appropriate, in that ICE and Border Patrol should be considered war. Jenny H. - this is the one time of year that different groups come together with an anti-war focus, and really talk about how our tax dollars are used.

Donna - it would be great if we would include our enormous military budget in the leaflets we create about meeting human needs.

<https://www.warresisters.org/catalog/federal-budget-pie-charts>

*5/18 - CCIA Action

Sandy reporting - This was an action in front of Cuomo's office to let him know we want to pass the Community and Climate Investment Act. They're having a hard time getting this bill out of committee. It's 100 pages and very complicated. It's a bill to make polluters pay to reach the climate goals laid out by the legislature last year. People upstate and on Long Island are starting to call this the "gas tax" and obviously energy companies are working against it. This was a coalition of several groups, and was a well-attended action. We hope the CCIA will garner more support as this will make a real difference re: climate change and renewable energy in New York State. There is a phone relay tomorrow. There are 29 sponsors in the Senate and we only need 32, so the phone relay will work on getting 4 more sponsors. Phone Relay tomorrow for CCIA

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mm7F3CS2jOWM7GJwHdZqfJyM1_nxucyTOljj6vOMNNY/edit#gid=0

Palestine Israel Conversation

Half an hour of the meeting was devoted to getting a sense of how people felt about Rise and Resist supporting pro-Palestine actions.

Andy - Andy, along with a number of RaR members have been working on solidarity with Palestine for some time now. Every year the violence enacted by Israel towards Palestine gets worse, things are not moving in the right direction, and nobody is optimistic. This is all happening under the collapse of the Oslo Accords. Andy's thought is that it would be wonderful if we started showing up as individuals to events in support of Palestine. To be present and listen to speeches and learn how we can plug in. If people like the idea of RaR promoting these events, we can help publicize them. Andy shared an open letter with a three-page long list of signatories that includes many groups that we have a history of working with. The list shows broad left support for Palestinian liberation and a free Palestine. <https://www.facebook.com/events/319268132914968>

Upcoming actions include May 22 in Queens, 1 pm - NY United For Palestine. If you've never been to a Palestinian-led rally before, this would be a good one to attend.

Sunnyside rally to defend Palestine.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/319268132914968>

Jamie - the letter went to the ERT, and the ERT felt that because we haven't discussed Palestine as a group, they were not comfortable signing it. That is part of why we are having this discussion tonight.

Andy - the letter was forwarded to one of the RaR inboxes, and Andy saw it. He didn't think it made sense to send it directly to ERT, so he sent it to the Action Working Group list. Some people on that list thought the ERT should sign it, but the ERT came back and said they would not sign onto it right now.

Wrolf - speaking for the ERT - they were only given a few hours to make a decision on it, and they were able to discuss it within a few hours. The ERT tries to make decisions as they imagine the floor would have decided. In this case, the ERT did not have any sense of how the floor would have decided to vote on this letter. So they chose not to sign before a Tuesday meeting. And now the deadline has passed.

Virginia - the letter is very circumscribed, it is contained to what is happening now and the current violence. She thinks we should have signed it. In case anyone didn't see Bernie's excellent op-ed
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/14/opinion/bernie-sanders-israel-palestine-gaza.html?smid=tw-nytopinion&smtyp=cur&fbclid=IwAR1rZcHMy3mVrqp3fLLFeU73345zudVotYjXCXaKMMw8J8eFs90rtlpIHSM>

Alexandra - since the deadline for the letter has passed, this half hour is for open discussion on how RaR will act re: this conflict in the future.

Jennifer - out of respect for Andy and for the crisis, we need time to talk about this. RaR has many issues that we don't work on for reasons of bandwidth, time, and our own personal desires, and we don't really work on issues overseas. But this is really a US issue because the Biden administration is supporting Israel, and we are paying for this. She urges people to look at the Icelandic news and European news for a different perspective. Iceland was on the verge of boycotting Israel but ultimately realized it wouldn't benefit Iceland or the issue. She would like to see RaR consider getting involved.

Wrolf - posted an article from the NYT about how both sides are committing war crimes. As an organization committed to non-violence, we should talk about how there are war crimes on both sides.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/16/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-hamas-civilian-casualties.html>

Mike D. - on the issue of internationalism, it's all inter-related. The US is funding these governments - Israel and in Latin America. We can bring this back to the matter of the budget, that our government is funding these governments. We should condemn violent

attacks against civilians, but that doesn't mean we can't stand up for Palestine. As far as our focus, we can relate this to our domestic situation, as it is our government interference that is causing a lot of the issues we face re: refugees at our borders.

Jamie - we have to look at self-defense somewhat differently. We can't hold whole communities to non-violence in the face of attack. Since Israel has been very aggressive, we might want to stand up about that. There is a large handful of RaR'ers who have worked with Jews Against the Occupation and other long-standing activist groups against the occupation. So there are a fair number of RaR'ers who have spent a lot of time thinking about this and working on this in the past. Jamie wonders if people have avoided this meeting because this was on the agenda. Jamie supports Andy and what he's proposing and thinks we should sign on to these actions. We should not take a lead, we should let other groups who have been doing this work lead, but we should be able to sign on.

Donna - personally, agrees with participating in supporting events in support of Palestine. It's true we haven't worked on this before. But we also have not worked on similar conflicts in Latin America. She's concerned about setting a precedent. But then again, maybe we should just participate, and if it does lead in a way we don't want to go we can talk about it.

Ann Rubin - we have to address and incorporate these things as they come up and we grow. Just because we haven't discussed this in the past, that's because the group was very honed into Trump for the last four years. That was a dominant filter. This is part of the process to expand, learn about, and work on these issues. So many of the groups who signed onto this letter are our co-supporters of the Poor People's Campaign.

Jenny H - Palestinians are explicitly called out as a supported community by Black Lives Matter. We have called out other countries in the past, and we need to start talking about Palestine, as it is starting to be erased from history as ever existing.

Cherie - it seems that nobody tonight is taking a pro-Israel stance. She would like to redirect the discussion to whether we should endorse pro-Palestine actions. But tonight we have about half the number of people who would normally attend a Tuesday night meeting.

Wroff - should we then have a sense of the meeting vote and report that result next week, rather than a full vote, since so few people are here tonight?

Elaine - it's interesting that this is being considered controversial. If many people are not on this call by choice, do we really have to be careful about voting, since perhaps the people not here tonight are choosing not to participate in a vote?

Donna G. - doesn't think we should commit to supporting demonstrations with a blanket agreement. She would like to decide on specific demonstrations.

Jennifer B. - Sara Schulman's book party is right now, which might be part of the low attendance.

Andy - to reiterate, his request is to follow Palestinian leadership, which has been asking repeatedly that we amplify their voices and promote their events. We have a large platform on social media where we could promote the event in advance, and post photos and videos after the event. The vote would be for RaR to endorse and promote Sunnyside Rally to Defend Palestine organized by Within Our Lifetime, a group that started as mostly CUNY students and has become one of the main organizing groups for pro-Palestine actions in NYC.

Vote to support this event: Passed with votes only for and abstaining, no votes against.

Upcoming Actions

*CHUBB "Stop Insuring Climate Disasters" Tomorrow, Wednesday, May 19. 12:30pm @1133 Sixth Avenue

Cheri - this is very much like the AIG action we did last week, with signs outside and delivering a petition. This one was spearheaded by New York Communities for Change. This is also timed to coincide with a board meeting.

*Immigration Vigil Thursday May 20 @ 5PM Staten Island Ferry

Jamie - this is the regular Thursday Immigration Vigil. We will bring "US Immigration Policy is a Crime" banner. We've been using other banners and messaging, this banner is an attempt to bump up our messaging to something stronger.

Elaine - the immigration group discussed what they're hoping to do with these vigils going forward. We want to humanize people seeking asylum. And also talk about Biden's use of Title 42, just as Trump did, with very little change. This prevents people from crossing the border to seek asylum. The Immigration group would like to work with the Climate group, as climate change and climate events drive some of the refugee crisis. We want to make a strong statement that Biden is continuing Trump's immigration policy, because it doesn't seem like people know that. ICE and private detention services and deporting people back to Mexico are causing the most harm. Elaine will be working on new signage with this messaging, and also new locations for vigils.

*Beds Not Body Bags Saturday May 22, Noon, Action to prevent shutdown of Kingsbrook Hospital, East Flatbush - Utica Ave. & Eastern Parkway - (take 2, 3, 4, or 5 trains to Crown Heights-Utica Ave.)

Ann Rubin - this demo is in conjunction with Kingsbrook Community Activists. This hospital provides critical beds in the community. This action is a little different in that this

is about an imminent hospital closure. It's happening as the result of a consolidation that Cuomo put together. They are moving forward with it even though there's a pandemic and East Flatbush cannot afford to lose its hospital. Even if we don't stop it, we may be able to influence what's happening and get a modification. Kingsbrook Community Activists approached RaR because they know us from our Beds Not Body Bags actions. This is the kind of healthcare racism that we've been fighting.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/3794058577371366>

Request for Marshals/Participation BIPOC Youth for Solidarity - Saturday May 22

Robert - 12:30 PM, starting at Tillary Street @Cadman Plaza East. An action with a list of demands regarding police violence. They actually do have their marshals (as trained by Jamie!). We will bring our vests, and at least Robert and Jamie will be there in case they need more marshals. All of Rise and Resist is invited to come. Contact Robert for more info, he has a copy of the flier. rcroon@gmail.com

Actions Committee

More filibuster actions are being discussed. There's a request for \$250 for a designated Filibuster banner

Donna - the Actions Committee wants to further promote the death of the filibuster. The banner will say "Kill the Filibuster" and will be accompanied by a series of signs highlighting the bills that are being blocked by the filibuster. Right now the ask is for printing the banner, the committee will come back later to ask for money for signs.

Virginia - Owen has finished a rough cut of his movie from the 24-hour Filibuster action.

Jamie - if you're interested in promoting the video when it was finished, let Stu know.

Vote for the \$250 passed unanimously.

Request for a discussion/planning group on SSDI/SSI

Jennifer B. - her SS Disability Insurance was taken away from her in October, after she's been on the financial benefits and healthcare most of her life. She was kicked off without notice and sent a bill for \$80k. She's tried lawyers, politicians and activists to help her fix this situation. No one has offered to help, she worries that many people who are on SSDI are afraid to talk about what really happens.

But now she realizes that long-haul COVID survivors will want to go on SSDI. We will have to convince the government that this is a valid disability (the same way HIV activists did). Then they will have to try to get SSDI, get denied, get lawyers, get their back pay, and then the lawyers can take up to 25% of this backpay. Then they will be limited in how much money they can make to keep their SSDI.

She would like to form a working group with the goal of changing the SSDI system, a system that able-bodied people don't know anything much about. But now with long-haul COVID, a lot of previously able-bodied people are about to find out how abusive this system is.

People who are interested in reforming this should reach out to Jennifer.
rejennifer@gmail.com

Ann Rubin - Katrina, an RaR member has been organizing with a national group of long-haul COVID survivors

Finance

There was no representative from the finance committee present tonight. If you are able to make donations or buy from the store, we always need money for banners and such.
www.riseandresist.org/donate & <https://store.riseandresist.org/>

Health Care Committee

Save the date June 7 NY Health Action

A culminating event to get a vote on the New York Health Act this year. RaR may be organizing a local action. There will be more info next week. It has been taken off the committee's agenda, and needs to be put back on. Here's how to make calls demanding that it be back on the agenda. <https://p2a.co/wb2p2G6>

Non Rise and Resist announcements

Donna - 5/20 and 5/27 at 7:30 - two sessions of the Beyond the Bars conference by Columbia U. A yearly conference on incarceration. It's an excellent conference and is virtual this year. <https://centerforjustice.columbia.edu/events/beyond-bars-2021>

Andy - The Stonewall Protests - every Thursday at 5:00. Almost always starts at the Stonewall Inn, though the location is not announced until the night before. It's been going on for over a year, organized by Black queer and trans activists. The evening always starts with speeches, which provides an opportunity to hear from this community. You need to check Instagram the night before to make sure of the location. It's great to join and show solidarity and witness this action that's been going on for a year now.
www.instagram.com/thestonewallprotests/

Robert - Gays Against Guns is commemorating the Pulse Massacre on 6/12 and is looking for more volunteers to be Human Beings - people who dress all in white and represent a victim of the massacre. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Robert.
rcroon@gmail.com. <https://www.facebook.com/events/1063348014188482/>

Maryellen - there are a lot of actions happening in Minneapolis against Line 3 that we can amplify. <https://treatypeoplegathering.com/#faq>

RISE AND RESIST