

## Rise and Resist General Meeting - Zoom Edition – 02.08.22

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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:** Karin & Livvie    **Notes:** Jackie O.    **Participants:** 30 folks

**New ASL services protocol:** please request ASL in advance of the next meeting and we will get someone on board! Contact [media@riseandresist.org](mailto:media@riseandresist.org) as soon as possible if you know someone who is interested.

### **Good news**

- North Carolina court rejects Republican gerrymandering.
- Ex VP Pence rebukes Trump for saying he could overturn the election results.
- McConnell publicly breaks with RNC saying that January 6 was a “violent insurrection.”

### **Upcoming/New Actions:**

THURSDAY, FEB 10 @ 5 pm – IMMIGRATION ACTION -- main floor in the Oculus  
We will have signs and banners, including “Seeking Asylum is Not A Crime.” Our last time there, we were threatened with arrest, so as many people as possible who can be there from the start, will be a strong presence. Oculus is a good place to connect with people. Will be doing Immigration Actions every other week at indoor locations including Oculus and Grand Central.

MONDAY, FEB 14 @ 3:30 – Valentine’s Day CLIMATE ACTION – Hochul’s office 633 Third Ave.  
Valentine-themed action at Hochul’s office: “Show us some love / show us the \$15 Billion.” The amount needed in the NYS budget to address climate. Chocolates will be provided!

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2 @ 1 PM – monthly INDICT ACTION – Foley Square  
We will be back in Foley Sq calling for the indictment of trump along with other characters. We will tweak our message in relation to the latest news!

FRIDAY, FEB 11 @ 4:30 PM -- SAY THEIR NAMES – 96<sup>th</sup> and Broadway  
Our weekly action returns, after having to cancel the last two Fridays due to weather. Another police murder has taken place in Minneapolis, of Amir Locke. We will be there.

### **Report Backs**

THURSDAY, FEB 3 @ 5 pm – VOCAL ‘Communities Not Cops’ action

A vigil/memorial for people recently killed by police, followed by a big march. We brought the “Democracy Dies in a Police State” banner. 3 RAR people joined close to 100 folks overall, a diverse crowd. Powerful spirit among the marchers. Excellent banner from others: “Defund Means Invest.” Organizers clear this was about reducing access to guns, having alternatives to police presence.

### **Discussion - backlash against Defund the Police/Black Lives Matter/Bail Reform/’Soft on Crime’**

Jamie: These issues came up in Actions Committee and other discussions. In summer 2020 when we were going out to George Floyd protests, we developed the banner “Democracy Dies in a Police State.” After that, it seemed there was some movement toward discussing alternatives: bail reform, changes in NYS laws, people were starting to talk in a different way about decarceration. Then gradually in the last 18 months, backlash. This winter we really see it: the media and political coverage of 2 police officers just killed; rollback in bail reform; how Alvin Bragg (Manhattan DA) was forced to walk back policies he had put in place; fear mongering about crime and crime on the subway; potential reintroduction of some kinds of Stop and Frisk. How do we respond to this? How to work our opposition to this backlash into our politics? How do we find other groups in the city that we can support? How to recognize that we are in a time of backlash and be conscious of it. Chance to reflect on that together now.

- So glad we are talking about this. Has anyone heard Adams say one way to address this is to weed out the racist police? I interviewed a violence interrupter, from Save Our Streets, about ways to stop a shooting before it happens. Adams needs to deal with why people don’t trust the police.
- Devil’s advocate question: how do you identify a racist police officer? Is there a scorecard?
- Social media posts have been useful in other settings, to root out the racism of police.
- On the electoral side, there were candidates who ran on Defund the Police. If you look at a society like ours with extreme inequality, that correlates with high levels of violence. So increasing equality means addressing violence. Progressives running on Defund the Police kind of put the cart before the horse, because people focused on crime or the threat of crime. Longer term goals need to be: investing in communities; ending racist housing policies. I think Defund the Police is a bad slogan that has hurt us.
- We have something really good now: one of the best things that happened about BLM protests is bail reform, which has helped with decarceration. And it’s under attack around the state. If we find a way to defend that—get useful and good information out. Fear mongering really works, and media narratives are shallow. They jump on fear mongering, they don’t push back with the truth. We can be defenders of bail reform. It needs defense right now.
- I second that. I think it’s one of the most effective things we can do. We need to put out the true messaging. Also, another aspect of this backlash is what’s happening in schools right now: book censoring, book burning, repression of teachers, not talking about anything that will make white kids uncomfortable. It’s not really happening in NY. But that’s the other place where messaging from us can be effective: to counter this ridiculous white supremacist rhetoric about schools. The right is doubling down on this message cuz it’s working to get people riled up.

- We want to reach out to communities of color, and this seems like a perfect issue to make allies around. Check out this group: [Justice Not Fear](#). See what they are into, and what we can do on the streets.
- We can remember that the backlash is because we got structural and institutional power. 'Defund the Police' being chanted by a few million people was an incredible threat to the institution of policing – it wasn't about a few racist cops, or about diversity training, or about police 'reform.' Bail reform too, is a structural change. So the backlash is exactly because this is a totally serious challenge.
- We have backlash because of an enormous amount of consciousness-raising. People understood systemic racism, that's why we are seeing these bans on critical race theory. We did make two steps forward, and now we have one step back.
- I go back to Ibram Kendi's *How to be an Anti-Racist*. He gets to the guts of racism. Focusing on protecting bail reform is important. In Actions meetings, Naomi spoke up and posted something about an organization, [Freedom to Thrive](#). Thriving communities, not prisons: criminalization of our communities stops here
- Trump is representative of corrupt violence, and what happened on January 6 is because 7 million people voted him out of office.
- One of the things that the defenders of the insurrection are saying is: yes they were wrong, but so were the people in BLM who sacked the cities. They are making a false equivalency, and it's a racist thing obviously.
- I'm a prison rights advocate in my spare time, and worked with the New Sanctuary Coalition. One law that went into effect is that if you are an immigrant, you can now vote in NYC. However, there is a lawsuit by Republicans trying to block that. It's good to involve people who live here; I helped someone get a green card and it took her 20 years. People not allowed to become voters who should be. So this is a revolutionary law supported by the mayor.
- Yes, immigrant justice groups here in Queens have been campaigning for nonresident voting for over a decade. And it's also happening in other US cities. It used to be legal for nonresidents to vote, but it was criminalized in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- Returning to our focus and talking about Defund the Police, my criticism is the messaging. Republicans use it to say the Dems want total chaos. Biden won't touch it, Sanders won't even touch it. We already have so much inequality, so many guns, people get scared including black and brown communities who suffer from that violence. India Walton shocked the corrupt Buffalo political leadership but she refused DSA's suggestion to run on 'Defund the Police.' She wouldn't run on it, she's from a working class background -- but they attacked her on it anyway. It's a strategy issue. All these policies--Bail Reform, and yes defund the police--but call it something else: Invest in Communities. Easy to see how the call for Abolition is an idea they can use against us.
- No matter what the message is, they are going to discredit us. Whether it's defund, whether it's bail reform. Can RAR come up with a way of packaging this that really represents us and the different elements? It's a really hot topic now, and I'm really concerned about the thrust toward a police state, with all sorts of rationales now. If we really put our heads together around how we can hold ground on a message that encompasses most of this.
- First, I feel like I'm watching DW Griffith's film *Birth of a Nation* sometimes, in terms of the demonization, for example, of mentally ill homeless people of color in the city right now. The politicians' lack of empathy for people who are homeless, for people with mental illnesses, this desire to clean everything up and get them off the streets – to

provide no alternatives. I used to work for NYC transit, and during the winter the homeless come into the subway cuz it's the safest place for them. What does that say about our city if that is the safest place for them? What is missing is any sense of empathy for the people caught up in it, and how to get that in our messaging, and get that in our heads about what we are doing.

- The FBI always says we couldn't go after the white terrorists because they are too much like us. A lady got 6 years for attempting to vote and 4 republicans who DID actually illegally vote got 3 days. You can't get the cops to actually look at the Nazis, or look at the people who attacked the Capitol. So: equal justice for guilty Republicans!
- I get the sense there is some interest in immediately seeing what we can do around bail reform. Can we get a straw poll of hands who might want to work on bail reform? [a few hands raised]
- The whole concept of 'othering' people – like homeless people – it's violence and it's othering. How long have we all been protesting this? Civil rights, ACT UP, we never come to that core. We're against violence, otherizing, until we sit down to eat at a dinner table. We don't do violence to anything .... except sentient beings, ourselves. There's always going to be some group that we can compartmentalize that makes us keep doing this. Tolstoy said: 'As long as there are slaughterhouses, there will be battlefields.'

### **Report Backs, cont'd**

WEDNESDAY, FEB 2 @ 1PM -- INDICT action at Federal Courthouse

Jay really led the day. It was great --great photo-ops. We had the "Indict Trump" banner plus signs with other elected criminals. We might be able to build on people following us there on a monthly basis.

We got a lot of responses on Twitter from photos. People want to hear this message. They don't want it to fade away. It's an important action to repeat. People walking by were resoundingly positive. Being in front of THAT building felt right. There's a lot of frustration among people in terms of what's happening. We need to keep it out in front so people can relate to it.

EVERY TUESDAY AT 12 noon – TRUTH TUESDAY at Fox - 48th and Sixth Avenue

Held this action this afternoon. Good fulsome number of folks are out today ... We are bringing in a new message: trying to get Fox off of being broadcast at military bases. Our soldiers who we are training to kill are watching Fox and being radicalized with our tax dollars. There was a new flier today about this, about Fox being mandatorily broadcast on military bases. Good information, plus action/phone number to call.

Julie: Did some research re: moving "Fox Lies" website to RAR website. Talked to someone at National Lawyers Guild who said there is no copyright issue – if Fox wants to bring a frivolous lawsuit, let them. Fox doesn't want to raise a fuss. Could we vote on moving the website from xxxx personal account to Rise and Resist? We already pay for it, this would just move it to our account.

**Unanimous vote YES**

VIDEO made by Eric shown: review of the past year of actions with lots of Rise and Resist actions. View video on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/u4yPmZqGVlw> Please consider

supporting Erik's work. Make a donation at Venmo: @erikcito or PayPal:  
<http://tinyurl.com/erikmcgregorphoto> Erik's email: erikrivas@hotmail.com

### **Non Rise and Resist Actions**

Self-defense training with XRNYC. A series of self-defense classes for activists. Four Tuesdays/Saturdays. Small group. Leader is fantastic. In-person in Brooklyn. Any age, any skill level welcome. Text or email Maryellen if you are interested: xrnyc.maryellen@gmail.com

MONDAY, Feb. 14 Valentine's Day action at Hochul's Office, 2:30 – 3:15 Raging Grannies and NYC & Upstate Poor People's Campaign. Right before RAR action at Hochul's office! Focusing on all of the demands in the People's Budget (environment, NY Health Act, etc). Flier in chat. Can we vote to endorse this action? After discussion of the flier's use of the word 'bit—', floor decided not to hold a vote to endorse. Will convey to Raging Grannies our reason for not endorsing.

THURSDAY, Feb. 10 -- FOOD AND WATER WATCH Demo -- Hochul at Cornell Club 10:30 am. Greet her about climate policy: call on her to stop a fracked gas bitcoin mining project.

MONDAY, Feb. 14 @ 5:30 – Gays Against Guns action. Wear red and/or pink. Meet at Moynihan Train station (Eighth Ave and 31<sup>st</sup> street entrance). Action re: Supreme Court case ruling on NY gun law that could make Conceal and Carry legal in NY state.

Upcoming Primary Elections – Progressive Democrats -- Get-out-the-vote work. Contact Donna G. for more info, or Mike Fox: mikefox@pdaamerica.org

End of Meeting!

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