

**July 1, 2020**

New York City Fight For Our Lives Coalition  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**On the Attack on Robert Cuffy at the Mass March to Defund the NYPD**  
***Statement of Solidarity,***  
***Call for Information Accountability and Action***

Foley Square, New York, NY, 8:55 pm –

While leading Monday June 29th's Mass March to Defund the NYPD & Abolish the Police from Washington Square to Foley Square Robert Cuffy was filming the march, when he was **blindsided and tackled by an unidentified man who then slammed Robert into another car**, dislocating his shoulder. Prior to this moment Robert was straining his voice by calling out to marchers **"We're going to City Hall!"** but he was not able to continue due to the severity of his injuries.

Police nearby observed the assault, and joked with the attacker before walking him to the Foley Square subway station, where they **released the attacker without charges**. NYPD didn't even document the attacker's identifying information.

**Robert is a well-known revolutionary socialist in NYC**, and an effective organizer for Black Liberation. He is a member of the DSA Afrosocialist Caucus, a leader of the NYC Fight for Our Lives Coalition (which is part of People's Strike, a National coalition organized by Cooperation Jackson), and a founder of the Socialist Workers Alliance of Guyana. He is also a leader of the DSA Labor Branch. This made him a target.

Robert was put into an ambulance, and was told that he would be taken to New York Presbyterian. **Instead, he was driven a few blocks away where Robert waited over an hour inside the ambulance**, which did not budge from its location at Spruce and Nassau Streets. Fearing for his own safety, Robert texted marchers to gather at the intersection for support and to enforce transparency. Robert was provided no pain control for his injury. This punitive and callous treatment of Black patients, especially of movement fighters, is all too common.

**Robert had every reason to be afraid** that medical neglect or overt violence at the hands of police could be life-threatening; from Ferguson to Baltimore to here in New York, incidents like this have ended with the deaths of far too many Black Liberation activists and of other

working class people of color. Even when treatment is provided, individual EMTs who are aligned with police will often take activists and other Black patients past the closest hospitals, going out of their way to drop them off at the most overcrowded, underfunded, and dangerous facilities, as a particularly isolating and potentially lethal form of racist abuse and punishment. Robert was lucky to have a caring EMT named Nancy who kept him safe and even got Robert a blanket upon his request after arriving at the hospital

On the short ride to the hospital, his fear, horrifyingly, began to come true; he had been left without a seatbelt and was nearly subjected to a “rough ride” of the kind that notoriously ended the life of Freddie Gray in the back of an ambulance in 2015. Without the use of his arm, Robert (just as Gray, handcuffed) wouldn’t be able to physically protect himself from being slammed into hard, sharp metal surfaces inside the vehicle.

By responding **quickly and collectively**, activists can protect ourselves and each other from this treatment by disrupting that isolation. When dozens of supporters mobilized and gathered outside the ambulance, **the police were forced to take a statement from Robert, rather than ignore the attack, or worse—spuriously charge Robert**, potentially making good on the continued threats spewed by his attacker immediately after the assault. That collective support gave force to Robert’s demand that his seatbelt be buckled.

Too often, and for too long, Black victims of violence have been routinely subjected to exactly this sort of **revictimization by cops** and vigilantes, even in death. It is impossible to forget that Trayvon Martin was branded a “thug” by his killer, or that Mike Brown, described there as “no angel,” was blamed for his own murder in the press.

The ambulance eventually transported him around the block to the hospital where his partner, mother, and other comrades were waiting for him. NYC Fight For Our Lives Coalition, Peoples Strike, and the DSA are **SEEKING FOOTAGE AND DOCUMENTATION** of the attack, the attacker, the license plate of his car, cars parked in that location, the ambulance, and its driver/EMT, as well as badge numbers and identification of the police involved. Any information, including **witness statements**, may be useful.

The attack on Robert Cuffy was not an isolated incident. **Police and far-right vigilantes are threatening coordinated attacks** on protestors, particularly as the calendar nears **July 4**. As the **#GeorgeFloyd Uprising** continues to flourish, and as protests and rallies nationwide call to **defund, dismantle, and disarm police**, law enforcement and their backers have been stoking the fascist fire, encouraging lone-wolf attacks to terrorize supporters of the fight against police brutality.

**This is a reminder that the movement will need to increase security measures and step up our game.** We have to collectively prevent further attacks and protect ourselves as the movement grows, continues to win reforms, and pick up steam. Go out into the streets with your friends and comrades, use the buddy system, and coordinate security to protect

the movement's leaders as we continue this rebellion. **Remember that we are all leaders in the fight to get free.**

**We call on the NYPD to identify and to immediately fire and hold accountable the officers who not only ignored this attack, but aided the attacker.**

If you have any **relevant information**, or to connect with and support the work that Robert has dedicated himself to, **contact NYC Fight For Our Lives Coalition at:**

**Phone: (347) 433-8652**

**Email: [GeneralStrikeNYC2020@gmail.com](mailto:GeneralStrikeNYC2020@gmail.com)**

**Twitter: [@fight\\_nyc](https://twitter.com/fight_nyc)**

**Instagram: [@fightforourlivesnyc](https://www.instagram.com/fightforourlivesnyc)**

**Hashtags:**

#FireAndThunder

#DefundNYPD

#DefundDisbandDisarm

#AbolishNYPD

#WeKeepUsSafe

#FireFranciscoGarcia

#ChargeVincentD'Andraia

#WeCantBreathe

#NoWorkNoRent

#BlackLivesMatter

#BlackLiberation

#BlackPower

#FightForOurLives

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#FreeThemAll

#StrikeForOurLives

**Join Us, July 4th:**

**[Fire and Thunder: Movement for Liberation](#)** Broadway Junction, Brooklyn, July 4th @ 4pm

**Event Intention:**

Inspired by Frederick Douglass' famous speech "[What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?](#)", the NYC Fight for Our Lives Coalition is calling a march for freedom on the 4th of July. It will begin with a meditation and community grounding in recognition of the history of the U.S. as a nation founded on the systematic murder abuse and exploitation of Black people.

**Statement Endorsers in Solidarity:**

## **Organizations**

NYC Fight For Our Lives Coalition  
Peoples Strike  
DSA Afrosocialist Caucus  
Socialist Workers Alliance of Guyana  
Cooperation Jackson  
Red Bloom Communist Collective  
Amazonians United NYC  
Spectre  
Emerge Caucus, DSA  
DSA Racial Justice Working Group  
CounterPower /ContraPoder  
Unity & Struggle  
May First Movement Technology  
Marxist Center  
Red Union  
Revolutionary Socialist Network  
Rank and File Action, (PSC CUNY)  
Movement of Rank and File Educators (MORE )  
Mid-Hudson Valley DSA  
Left Voice  
Cooperation Northfield  
Denver Communists  
SVPRESS  
New Politics  
Venezuelan Workers Solidarity  
Solidarity Winnipeg  
Queens Club, Communist Party of NY  
Black Internationalist Unions (BIUs)  
Syria Solidarity New York City  
PoliFem  
Working Class Heroes Collective  
Global Prison Abolitionist Coalition  
The Local Fightback Coalition  
Solidarity, A Socialist, Feminist, and Anti-Racist Organization  
League for the Revolutionary Party  
Resistance Studies Initiative  
Socialist Resurgence  
The Abolition Collective  
Peace in Kurdistan Campaign  
Resistance Studies Initiative  
Jews for Palestinian Right of Return  
Revive the Peace Movement (RPM)  
Locust Review

Social Service Workers Uprising Now  
Denver Communists  
Communist Party of New York  
Twin Cities DSA  
Resistance in Brooklyn  
The Abolition Collective  
NYU Law Prison Reform and Education Project  
Macalester College Young Democratic Socialists  
SENS-UAW  
Sixth Street Community Center  
Worker's Voice / La voz de l@s Trabajadores

### **Public Officials & Candidates**

Rossana Rodriguez-Sanchez , Chicago Alderman, Ward 33, & Chicago DSA  
Jabari Brisport, Candidate for State Senate

### **Individuals**

Charlie Post  
David Roediger  
Kate Doyle Griffiths  
Eileene Vicencio  
Stuart Chen-Hayes  
Mara Phelan  
Kit Wainer  
Vikramjit Gill  
Aaron  
Wende Marshall  
Eric Tien  
Haley Pessin  
Jason Schulman  
Mike Pappas  
Joel Schwartz  
David McNally  
Julie Harting  
Meredith Schafer  
Justine Medina  
Charles Wynns  
Elizabeth Lalasz  
Mithra Lehn  
Marcela Onyango

Olivia Suter  
Sean Petty, RN  
Jordy Cummings  
Michael Brown  
sam salour  
Leslie Akst, Ph.D  
Zachary Levenson  
Octavia Leona Kohner  
Ethan Young  
Molly Golanka  
Peter Solenberger  
Aaron Berman  
Alyce Currier  
John Snowden  
Bryan Doniger  
Andrew Abreu  
lynk bella hues  
Nantina Vgontzas  
Lee Cyphers  
Mae Smith  
Rachael Kurland  
Max  
Rust Gilbert  
Emily Cunningham  
Joy James  
Ting Lau  
Anya Snyder  
Joy Ming King  
Sabrina Koetter  
Janine Jones  
Roxy Chang  
Ted Miin  
Richard Owen DeWald  
Pamela Cote  
Vincent Wong  
Ira Pollock  
Katherine Yanney  
Anthony Alessandrini  
Janet Goldner

Amy Wilson  
Jamie Partridge  
John Hitzfelder  
Elizabeth Oh  
Linden McEachern  
Alex C  
Asher Wycoff  
Ted Mineo  
Michael Truscello  
annalea racibarskas  
James Young  
Paul Werner  
Lucy Livingston  
Erica Caparelli  
Stephanie Flores  
Fiona McTeigue  
Gabriel Solis  
ARTORICAL  
Javier Sethness  
John Hitzfelder  
Juan Garcia  
Steve Leigh  
Jennifer Siqueira  
Danielle Mikos  
Samantha Pinsky  
Daniel Fischer  
Jack Ganley  
Liza Featherstone  
John Ferretti  
Brett Story  
Queen Arsem-O'Malley  
Camille Brown  
Gabriel Berlin  
Scott McLemee  
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Vicki Niu  
Susan Daum  
Keshet Sivan  
Saurav Sarkar

Sina Zekavat  
Edward Hon-Sing Wong  
Tristan Sloughter  
Delaney Lee  
Zoe Carey  
Blair Rogers  
Rafaella Spielberg  
Natasha Pasternack  
Gretchen Ludwig  
Sylvia Gorelick  
Eric Josephson  
Rosa Zedek  
Marc Polite  
Emily Weinrebe  
Yves Menshikova  
Kimberly Wirt, MSW  
Michael Z. Letwin  
Alexander Billet  
Alexandra Poole  
Laura Rhymer  
Timothy Schermerhorn  
Alexandra Poole  
Pano Karambelas  
Alexander Billet  
William Johnson  
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