



THE PEOPLE'S TRIBUNAL ON THE RIIS WATER CRISIS AND NEGLECT OF NYCHA RESIDENTS

Although arsenic was detected in the water at Jacob Riis Houses in early September, NYCHA and city officials still haven't done anything to actually fix the problem. NYCHA had a meeting on September 9th at PS 34 where city officials and former NYCHA CEO Greg Russ came to speak to Riis residents and proclaimed that the positive arsenic test result was false—a lab mistake—and that the water was safe to drink and had been safe all along. The room erupted in protest, with people shouting down Greg Russ and city officials and demanding real answers, not a cover-up. They know from getting sick from the water and from getting rashes after taking showers that, even if it's not arsenic, something's been wrong with the water.

After months of getting the runaround by those in power, *Dare to Struggle* and *Rogue Residents - Jacob Riis* organized a People's Tribunal to put NYCHA and city officials on trial and have a place where residents could express their grievances on their own terms with their own verdict. The "official channels" haven't done anything - we need to expose the crimes committed by those in power and come together to put them on trial, because they won't do it themselves!

At the People's Tribunal on the Riis Water Crisis and Neglect of NYCHA Residents on December 7th, NYCHA and city officials were found guilty of gross criminal negligence by residents of public housing. NYCHA Board Chair Greg Russ? Guilty! Mayor Eric Adams? Guilty! Interim CEO of NYCHA Lisa Bova-Hiatt? Guilty! Tried in abstention, these officials were sentenced to live out the rest of their miserable lives in decrepit NYCHA apartments, drinking the contaminated water.

Half a dozen residents testified, recounting the years of neglect and more recent horrors they've been subjected to by NYCHA, their experiences throughout the Riis water crisis, and the contempt of NYCHA management and officials towards their situation. "I had to get two amputations from a fall that housing could've prevented had I had my bars in my bathroom like I was supposed to. Now for the rest of my life I gotta be like this. Do you know the depression I have to go through every day? [...] I cry all the time. I didn't cry from losing my leg, I cried from losing my life. Because my life, how it used to be, it's not the same! Because of *housing*! Housing needs to pay for the shit that they do!"

The Tenants Association was also denounced for their complacency. One resident said, "I also want to indict the Tenants Association because [...] they don't even want to meet with the *Rogue Residents*. They don't even want to sit down with them and come up with something that's really going to indict NYCHA. They're on NYCHA's side at the end of the day. They're *for* The Trust! They're *for* all these things that are gonna privatize NYCHA!"

The entire event was live-streamed and recorded to expose what's been going on, and it can be viewed on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/9HCighnvj78>.

Unfortunately, we don't have the power to enforce the verdict of The People's Tribunal and carry out justice against this city's biggest criminals. We do, however, have the power to come together to continue to expose their crimes, get more people involved, and confront them directly to win victories.

GET INVOLVED

Get in touch with *Dare to Struggle* to document the problems and repairs needed in your apartment. Join with and organize *Rogue Residents*. Get copies of this bulletin to distribute in your building. Use the hashtag #NYCHANeglect on social media to expose the ways NYCHA is mistreating residents.

Riis Residents! Join Rogue Residents - Jacob Riis

Meeting every Wednesday @6:30PM

Henry St Settlement, Boys and Girls Republic, 888 6th St

Contact Dare to Struggle:

@daretostrugglenyc on Instagram

@daretostruggle_ on Twitter

Photo by María Mónica Fernández

Email: daretostrugglenyc@protonmail.com

Facebook: <https://bit.ly/3BnJf89>



VOTING ON THE TRUST: THE ILLUSION OF CHOICE

NYCHA has plans to get rid of public housing through privatization with either PACT or The Trust, but they're working hard to make it seem like they care about what residents have to say, so they're putting it up to a vote. After getting "feedback" from residents in the Fall, NYCHA has updated its voting procedures so that only 20% of heads of household in a given development would need to take part in the vote for a decision to be made in that development. NYCHA and the City are counting on as little participation as possible so they can succeed in destroying one of the last big public housing programs in the country, project by project.

NYCHA is proving that democracy under capitalism just means you get to choose your own oppression. Here are your options:

1. **PACT:** straight up privatization. The transition to Section 8 puts NYCHA buildings into the management of private developers who have the power to evict people.
2. **The Trust:** privatization with a nonprofit cover. Section 8 under the management of NYCHA and City officials who have been neglecting residents for years.
3. **"Reject PACT and Trust":** nothing changes. NYCHA gave you a choice between two privatization schemes. If you don't like it, you can eat shit and shut up.

NYCHA has proven that they don't actually care about what's good for residents by forcing people to live with rats, roaches, mold, broken pipes, and without proper heat, gas, and hot water for years. The only options they're giving people are to either sell out NYCHA tenants and buildings or keep the decrepit and unsafe conditions. Can't we do better?

At a time when finding housing has been made nearly impossible for poor people, thousands of people are at risk of being displaced. The only force capable of stopping this is NYCHA residents coming together to expose the truth behind these privatization schemes and fight to keep people in their homes.

