

Defend the RNC 8!



***Defend all targets of
state repression!***

The RNC 8 are eight people being prosecuted for their work organizing protests at the 2008 Republican National Convention. They were swept up in preemptive raids and arrests prior to the convention, and detained for most of it, preventing them from participating in the very protests they had spent months building towards. They are charged with two felonies, “Conspiracy to Commit Riot” and “Conspiracy to Commit Criminal Damage to Property,” and face possible prison time if convicted. Yet another example of the ongoing criminalization of dissent, they have been targeted because of their political beliefs, and for building relationships of solidarity and mutual aid within a framework of radical, anti-authoritarian resistance to the RNC.

Ramsey County has already spent \$250,000 targeting these eight people, and it is estimated that as much money will be needed to mount their defense. On October 25, more than two years after they were charged, the eight will begin a two-month trial in St. Paul, MN. They need your support, both financial and in person. **Please consider donating, or coming to Minnesota for some part of the trial!**

Checks can be made payable to “CUAPB” with “RNC 8” in the memo line, and mailed to:

RNC 8 Legal Defense Fund, c/o CUAPB
3100 16th Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55407

More information on the case, the trial, and ways to help out, is available at: **www.RNC8.org**

January 2010

Dear friends, families and supporters,

The last time that we wrote, we were only weeks beyond the 2008 RNC, and still figuring out how to navigate our case with a sense of collectivity and integrity. Now, more than a year after the fact, we find ourselves in a sort of limbo. Day to day, we don't feel the intensity of repression that we did in the weeks surrounding the RNC, yet the trial looms somewhere in the distance and we're not really free to move on. We return to court on February 2nd, and may come out of the hearing with a trial date certain. While it's hard to remain upbeat about the prospect, we hope to make the final push towards trial energizing for ourselves and our supporters alike, and we feel certain that a strong show of court solidarity will make a huge difference in the outcome of our case.

The past year has been difficult, both in dealing with our own situation and in watching as State attempts to subvert and disrupt anarchist movement gain steam, following well-established patterns of repression against dissident political movements throughout history.

In late 2008 and 2009, Ramsey County prosecuted more than a dozen felony cases resulting from the RNC. Abusing their unchecked power to slap on charge after unfounded charge as a way of coercing people out of exercising their right to trial, and with the constant threat of terrorism enhancements, prosecutors extracted numerous plea agreements from individuals who came to the RNC protests outraged at this oppressive system and willing to take a conscientious stand against it.

During the fall of 2008, well-known and controversial radical activist Brandon Darby was outed as a paid FBI informant. This happened as a result of his entrapment of Brad Crowder and David McKay, two young men who traveled from Texas to MN for the RNC protests. Though Brad and David both eventually plead guilty to federal charges of making and possessing Molotov cocktails, facts surrounding the case and testimony given during McKay's initial mistrial make it clear that Darby went out of his way to create the unlikely scenario in which the crimes were committed. Darby, whose crimes of conscience will go unpunished, has already robbed two people of their freedom, but the extent of his cooperation and the damage it has done to our community remains to be seen.

In April of 2009, Indiana residents Tiga Wertz and Hugh Farrell were arrested and charged with racketeering as a result of their work organizing against I-69, the US segment of the NAFTA Superhighway. I-69 will displace small farmers, wreak environmental destruction, and facilitate the movement of goods and capital at the expense of the continents' poor and working people. Tiga and Hugh are still awaiting trial, which will likely not start before 2011.

Late this fall, two friends and comrades of ours in Minneapolis, Carrie Feldman and Scott DeMuth, were subpoenaed to a federal grand jury in Davenport, IA, which is investigating a 2004 Animal Liberation Front action at the University of Iowa. Scott and Carrie were teenagers in Minnesota at the time of the ALF raid, and though they have no information to give about it, they refused to cooperate with the grand jury on principle. They were both jailed on civil contempt on November 17, 2009, and two days later, Scott was indicted under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA). He is currently out awaiting trial and Carrie remains jailed in Iowa, where she may sit for another nine months. Carrie and Scott's involvement in RNC organizing, their affiliation with known antiRNC organizers, and materials seized in RNC raids, have all been used so far in prosecutorial attempts to vilify them and their politics.

Scott is only the seventh person ever charged under the AETA. In February of 2009, four people in Santa Cruz, CA, became the first AETA indictees, accused of first-amendment protected

activities including leafleting and chalking sidewalks. Last spring, BJ Viehl and Alex Hall in Utah were also charged under the AETA in relation to mink liberations. BJ recently plead guilty, citing the improbability of a fair trial in such a heavily conservative state, and will probably be sentenced in March. Alex is still awaiting trial.

The same day that we go to court here for our next hearing, Jordan Halliday will start trial for felony contempt of court, a charge he is facing after months of incarceration on civil contempt for refusing to testify before a federal grand jury in Utah.

This fall, comrades from the Tin Can Comms Collective sustained a raid and two arrests at the G20 mobilization in Pittsburgh. After returning to their home in Brooklyn, NY, the two arrested were subjected to yet another raid, this time on their house. State charges related to the G20 were subsequently dropped under circumstances that suggest the existence of an active federal investigation of Tin Can's activities.

Needless to say, anarchists have taken quite a few hits this year. Yet these cases are only one manifestation of the systematic repression of movements for social change. Even as anarchists have yet again become a primary target of State repression, the U.S. continues its war on Black and Puerto Rican revolutionaries, and their allies.

In January of 2007, charges were brought against eight former Black Panthers (the San Francisco 8) for the 1971 murder of a police officer. The case, re-opened with post-9/11 anti-terrorism funds, is based on information extracted through torture. Several of the the SF8 are former or current political prisoners. By summer of 2009, most charges had been dropped or drastically reduced in plea agreements. As of this writing, the last remaining conspiracy charge was dropped, leaving a single charge against Cisco Torres.

In recent months, the State of Pennsylvania has engaged in a new push for the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal, falsely convicted of the murder of a police officer in 1982 and held on death row ever since. His supporters across the globe are mobilizing, yet again, to prevent this—our movements have kept him alive thus far, and it falls on us yet again to prevent his State-sanctioned assassination.

Meanwhile, the Puerto Rican independence movement- which has won the release of most of its political prisoners over the past decades- is preparing a final push for the release of two of the remaining three, Carlos Alberto Torres and Oscar Lopez Rivera.

At this moment, dozens of political prisoners sit in U.S. prisons and jails, many of them having been there for decades and some who may never get out. The State would have us believe that political prisoners do not exist in this country, which holds a full quarter of the world's incarcerated people in its prison plantations. It is our common commitment to a radically transformed world that they intend to subvert with every new arrest, detention and prosecution, and our only defense is an acknowledgement of the fact that this is happening day in and day out, and a commitment to fight it at every step of the way.

As we look towards what could be the final stage of our own case, we're left to ponder the impact of our work. It is our hope that our supporters also support every person named in this letter, and every target of State repression left unnamed. Whether we're acquitted or convicted come trial, the greater measure of our success will be the extent to which our case builds the movements to which we belong.

**See you at trial,
the RNC 8**