

Susan Gaertner & the RNC 8 FACT SHEET



The RNC 8

- Between August 29 and September 1, 2008, Minnesota's Ramsey County Sheriff's Department executed raids and **preemptive arrests** of eight known anti-RNC organizers.
- The eight people arrested- commonly known as the "RNC 8" - were held for days and **prevented from participating in the St. Paul RNC protests** they had spent months working towards.
- **The property seized in the raids was comprised primarily of voluminous political literature and common household items.**
- The RNC 8 now each face a single count of "Conspiracy to Commit Riot in the 2nd Degree" and another of "Conspiracy to Commit Criminal Damage to Property," which together carry a maximum penalty of five years in prison.
- Ramsey County's investigation into the RNC 8 cost over \$250,000 at the time of their arrest, and will cost thousands more to prosecute.

Susan Gaertner's Conduct

- **The affidavit used to secure search warrants lists activities such as talking on cell phones, going to public meetings, and producing a video parody as evidence of criminal conduct.**
- The false allegations enumerated in the complaint all hinge on the premise that anarchism and anarchist-oriented political activity are criminal by nature.
- **Gaertner's office has persistently sought media outlets in which to label the RNC 8 as terrorists** and dangerous criminals, even distributing a press release *in the courtroom* at a hearing where her office simultaneously argued a motion seeking to impede the defense's ability to discuss the case in the media.
- When released on bail, the RNC 8 faced a single charge of "Conspiracy to Commit Riot in Furtherance of Terrorism." Three months later, the complaint was amended to include 3 more charges: "Conspiracy to Commit Criminal Damage to Property in Furtherance of Terrorism," "Conspiracy to Commit Riot in the 2nd Degree" and "Conspiracy to Commit Criminal Damage to Property."
- The terrorism enhancements came from the MN PATRIOT Act, a never-before used and little-known piece of legislation that **qualifies acts of property damage in excess of \$1000 as terrorism.**
- After months of public claims that the charges were justified and not political or, alternately, that she had no power to drop them, Gaertner caved to mounting political pressure and dropped both terrorism enhancements, stating that they would be a "distraction" at trial.
- Gaertner had been running for **governor in 2010** long before the 2008 convention, and **pursued these politically motivated charges to further her political ambition.** She originally announced the RNC 8 charges on her campaign website, and continues to post favorable articles about the RNC 8 case on her campaign website.