

At the conclusion of the 2008 Republican National Convention, police and federal agents had arrested 159 people for supposed felonies; within two weeks, they dropped 140 of those charges, a frank acknowledgment that they had fabricated the charges for sake of intimidation. At events like the RNC, we can see that the authorities take the law even less seriously than anarchists: for them, it is not a means of effecting justice, but only of exerting control.

19 people still have felony trials pending from the RNC, not to mention the hundreds who may be tried for misdemeanors. The majority of these 19 cases are based on the testimony of paid police informants who will say anything to help the government get a conviction. Eight local organizers face felony conspiracy trials, the first of this kind since the notorious show trial following the 1968 Democratic National Convention in which the defendants were all declared innocent after four years.

These cases affect all of us. They are intended to set new precedents for legal repression, to make it easier for the government to suppress dissent. The outcome of the trials will not be determined solely by the evidence but by how much power we can bring to bear by means of fundraising and political pressure. As state-sponsored efforts to silence us escalate, supporting these defendants is simply self-defense.

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