At the 2008 Democratic and Republican National Conventions, the politicians who piloted us into unwinnable wars, ecological catastrophes, and grievous imbalances of wealth and power will attempt to recast themselves as the only ones who can rescue us from them.

It’s up to us to shut them down and open up the horizons of another future.
In 2008, we will interrupt the Democratic and Republican National Conventions—the biggest electoral spectacles of all—and break the spell.

Our protests against war, global warming, and exploitation must be directed against the electoral system itself; so they are not reabsorbed and neutralized when new politicians offer to “represent” us. Our protests must intercept the practical activity of the politicians—otherwise, they can be brushed off in the name of personal opinion. Even if we do not throw off their power entirely, the most efficient way to exert leverage upon politicians is by bypassing them to make the changes we desire ourselves, so they can offer us nothing and must struggle to catch up.

We are proposing a strategy for each convention, a general framework to coordinate our individual efforts so they add up to something powerful. This must be public, so thousands of people can take part: a good strategy is effective regardless of whether the authorities are aware of it. This framework must offer space for a wide range of tactics and plans, so a diverse array of people can participate. Inside this framework, participants can craft their own roles, remaining as much primary as they need to play the parts they choose. If we succeed in disrupting the political spectacle of the conventions, politics in this country will never be the same.

Unconventional Denver is committed to creating a framework to facilitate direct action for the DNC protests. Unconventional Denver held a summit in early October to discuss the role of these protests in the mobilization against the conventions and in the larger context of struggle. Their goals include:

- Build a coalition of 30 or more groups to mobilize against the DNC
- Serve as an umbrella organization for the mobilization
- Build a database for ongoing direct action against the DNC
- Build the movement
- Build a website

In 2003, they started a listserv that has continued to grow, and new participants have joined the listserv and inspired about direct action and the anarchist movement.

Unconventional Denver has scheduled an anti-war march through downtown Denver, the day before the conventions begin. They have been discussing about a day of coordinated action on Monday, the opening day of the conventions. The next step is for on-the-ground organizers and activists across the country to communicate and build up a plan.

To participate in this discussion, visit the listserv or join the Unconventional-Denver framework to facilitate direct action for the DNC protests. For more information, visit the website: www.unconventionalaction.pbwiki.com

March 17, 1973) Downing Street Bombing: An explosion went off at the Crusade for Justice headquarters. By the end of the night one Crusade member was dead, and 17 people were injured including 12 police officers. The incident made way for logistic charges against Crusade members as well as stepped up harassment, brutality, and frame-ups from the Denver police against Crusade for Justice and the Chicano community in general.

October 12, 1991) Columbus Day Parade Confronted by XIII. After broken promises by Columbus Day parade organizers, American Indian Movement activists blocked the parade route, setting off resistance to the celebration of Columbus and its legacy of genocides, slavery and racism which continues to this day.

March 11, 2002) Denver Spy Files Uncovered: The ACLU discovered a database kept by the Denver Police for over 50 years monitoring social justice and environmental groups including Food Not Bombs, the Drive Action Network, the American Indian Movement, and the Breakdown Books collective. Two years later 284 pages would again vanish leaving planned disrupted DNC and RNC protests.
NO ISN'T ON THE BALLOT

CRASH THE CONVENTIONS

Democratic National Convention
Denver, CO
August 25-28

Republican National Convention
Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
September 1-4

2008

- WAR
- CAPITALISM
- PATRIARCHY
- ECO-DEVASTATION
- WHITE SUPREMACY
- BORDERS
- SURVEILLANCE

www.UNCONVENTIONALACTION.ORG
TWIN CITIES

“...

at the end of August 2007, over a hundred anti-authoritarians from around the country gathered in Minneapolis for the “PRe-NC,” a national planning consulta called by the RNC Welcoming Committee to distill a formal strategy for disrupting the Republican National Convention. Working groups focused on nationwide communications, infrastructure, media, coalition building, and strategy. Poring over maps, timetables, and photographs of the city, the strategy working group hammered out a plan.

FLAGMENTS of radical history

Minnesota has a deep tradition of activism which continues to shape the country in which they processing the RNC will play themselves. The committee provides a brief glimpse of radical Minnesota. We highlight just those of their stories, the social movements that they stories, and their use of a diversity of tactics.

In 1974, newly Minneapolis labor unionists, Minneapolis members of the Minnesota Farm Bureau, planned to build a 400-mile power line through rural North Dakota and Minnesota, which would destroy hundreds of poor farmers’ land and lead to electromagnetic pollution. Despite the opposition of local townships, Minnesota granted the permit in 1977. From then on, it was a no-holds-barred battle between rural Minnesotans and the government and utility companies. Farmers gathered to block-time sawyers and used tractors to destroy their equipment. In August of 1978, a 150-foot transmission tower came crashing to the ground, to be followed by fourteen more over the next few years. In what was described by one reporter as “guerrilla war” over half of Minnesota’s state highway patrol and FBI was engaged in stopping sabotage of the project. When they would interrogate farmers about the fallen power lines, the only response was, “Hurry! Must have been the bolt worms.”

Standing on August 10th, 1978, the Minnehaha Free State was a day and a half of active resistance against the planned rerouting of Highway 65 over sacred Dakota land. A cross-cultural coalition of neighborhood community groups, Big Woods Earth First, the Mendota Mesquakien Dakota community, and the American Indian Movement used a wide range of tactics including law, suits, blockades, tree houses and rails, and demonstrations before being repressed by an unprecedented show of force. From law enforcement nearly a day and a half later. For many in the Twin Cities, this was their introduction to radical politics. Nothing since has been a focal point for so many different people to get active. By August 21st, employers caved in and guaranteed, among other things, wage increases and union recognition for all workers involved in the strikes. Following that summer, militant tactics became standard for all Minneapolis unions, and Minneapolis became a union town.

Those pummeling into this strategy will be free to shape their actions as they see fit, using the tactics they consider appropriate. As the specific blockade sites are established, some sites may be designated “red zones” (prepared for self-defense), “yellow zones” (peaceful but assertive), and “green zones” (no risk of arrest) so as to accommodate a wide variety of creative tactics. The RNC Welcoming Committee is currently considering these zones and laying out specific blockade sites. Once these details are finalized they will be made public, and locals will be available to provide specific information and pictures of intersections, bridges, and other relevant locations to people who would like them.

Over the next six months, a group will be adopting specific intersections, streets, on-ramps, and bridges as their own. To facilitate this process, the pRe-NC, gathering called for local and regional groups to organize their own planning consultas over the next few months, so as to be ready to reconvene in Minneapolis in early summer 2008. Participants also called for a series of local actions against oppression and discussed political leadership up to the conventions, to build momentum and experience for the DNC and RNC protests.

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This strategy is endorsed by...

1. Blockade

Establish 15-20 blockades, utilizing a diversity of tactics, creating inner and outer rings around St. Paul Civic Center.

2. Immobilize

Im mobilize the delegates’ transportation infrastructure, including buses, bullet trains, and airports.

3. Block connecting bridges

Black the best western bridges connecting the city.

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UNCONVENTIONAL ACTION ROADSHOWS

Unconventional Action collectives are organizing tours to circulate up-to-date information about strategy proposals and logistics from both Denver and the Twin Cities. These roadshows will be geared towards helping affinity groups and individuals acquire the skills and information they need to plug into the direct action strategies at both convention protests. We will be scheduling one-night stops or multiple-day trainings in each town, as needed. We can offer various skill-based workshops including direct action tactics—like scouting/planning an action, blockades, de-arresting and breaking holds, street tactics—and other useful skills like consensus, working with an affinity group or cluster, and possibly medic trainings.

To set up a date in your town or help out with fundraising, contact us at roadshow@unconventionalaction.org

JOIN THE PARTY-CRASHERS:
- Recreate 68: info@recreate68.org, www.recreate68.org
- RNC Welcoming Committee: rnc08@riseup.net, www.rnc08.org
- UA Central NC: centralNC@unconventionalaction.org
- UA Denver: unconventionaldenver@riseup.net
- UA in the Bay (West Coast): UAmiteBay@unconventionalaction.org
- UA Chicago: unconventionalchicago@gmail.com
- People’s Networking Convention (Madison, WI): pn29nc@gmail.com
- Iowa Organizers Against the RNC: velocipedeninshop@riseup.net
- MKE to RNC (Milwaukee, WI): mketornc@yahoo.com, www.mkeanarchy.brayehost.com

TACTICAL SKILLS

- Unpermitted Marches and Collective Anonymity
  www.unconventionalaction.org/resources/legal.html
- Direct Action Survival Guide (general safety at actions)
  www.unzlibrary.net
- Bodyhammer (body armor and self-defense guide)
  www.unzlibrary.net
- Road Raging (excellent in-depth guide for road blockade tactics)
  www.evo-action.org
- Non-Lethal Disabling Weapons (analysis and guide to tools of State repression)
  www.schnews.org.uk/dyguide/guidetpublib/ww/cocktails.htm
- Recipes for Disaster: An Anarchist Cookbook (694-page tactical manual)
  www.unconventionalaction.org/resources/cocktails.html
- Blockades and Lockdowns
  www.unconventionalaction.org/resources/blockades.html
- Communications Technology
  www.unconventionalaction.org/resources/comms.html
- Action Medical (international network of street medics)
  zena.secureforum.com/ontheground/action-medical/index.html
- Black Cross Health Collective (recent source for legal trainings, medics and online publications)
  www.unconventionalaction.org/resources/medical.html
- Health and Safety at Militant Actions
  www.blackcrosscollective.org
- Street Medics and Emergency Healthcare
  www.unconventionalaction.org/resources/medics.html

FACILITATION/CONSENSUS

- Direct Action Handbook (guide for using consensus in affinity groups)
  www.casagordita.com/consensus.htm
- Consensus Decision-Making (a basic introduction)
  www.unconventionalaction.org/resources/legal.html
- Consensus by Peter Gelderloos
  www.seesharppress.com
- Consensus is Not Unanimity: Making Decisions Cooperatively
  www.rantcollective.net/article.php?id=9

SECURITY CULTURE

- Activism and Security Culture
- Security Culture
  www.huntsab.org/safety.html
- Creating a Culture of Security: Preparing for a Raid Before It Happens
  www.zinelibrary.net

RESOURCES

In March, April and May 2008, Chicago Street Medics will be touring the United States offering trainings focused primarily on the Midwest and the West Coast of the United States. These trainings will be updated to include information specifically about Denver (altitude protocol, police tactics, locations). Trainings will include basic, 24 hour courses, advanced 7-9 day medic trainings, 48 hour refreshed, and affinity group trainings. All lessons taught include emergency protocol, aftercare, herbal techniques and a few skills derived from Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Chicago Street Medics is one of the oldest medic collectives in the US with more than 100 years of experience in justice work since the Chicago Blackouts in 1968. Our trainees are experienced in medics, EMRT, first responders and doctors, and have been present at the Seattle WTO, Los Angeles DNC, Quebec City and Miami FTAA, and New York RNC protests, among dozens of others. To organize or attend a training, or to participate in the Denver DNC Medics, contact zenofoods@gmail.com. They also have a training scheduled for January 23-26 in Lawrence, Kansas. For more info contact Jordan at seedsofpeace@riseup.net.

Security Culture is a collective of dedicated individuals working to support activists on the front lines of the struggle to bring about economic, environmental, and social justice. We will be spending most of our time preparing for the RNC, sending a few members of our collective to Minneapolis months before the convention to help with the organizing efforts already underway. We will also be working with other groups and individuals to provide food and medical support at the protests, as well as a variety of trainings for large actions and ongoing campaigns.

We are currently in the process of setting up a workable, long-term, certified Wilderness First Responder course—with a focus on action first aid—or to take place this summer; contact us for details. In the weeks before the convention we will be providing introductory medic trainings and advanced medic trainings for those with medical backgrounds who lack experience in action first aid. We will also be offering direct action trainings before the convention and would like to collaborate with other groups to organize an action camp this summer. If you or your collective have any questions, are interested in learning more about our trainings, or would like to collaborate with us, please email seedsofpeace@riseup.net or visit our website at www.seedsofpeace-collective.org. See ya’ll in St. Paul!