

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU USE TERRORISM LAWS TO INVESTIGATE HIPPIES

Jane and Lindsay have been doing great work covering the heavy-handed raids on hippies' houses leading up to the RNC.

Early this morning, the Ramsey County police raided several homes occupied by people here to protest at the Minneapolis Republican National Convention. It's believed that these were associated with another raid conducted last night, and the target were individuals associated with a group called the RNC Welcoming Committee.

It's time, I think, to recall something I reported back in May: lefty groups very much like Food not Bombs were infiltrated by Minneapolis' Joint Terrorism Task Force earlier this year.

Minneapolis' Joint Terrorist Task Force is recruiting people to infiltrate vegan potlucks to look for potential-what?-tahini enthusiasts?-in advance of the RNC convention this fall.

If the Ramsey County Sheriff Bob Fletcher got it into his head that these hippies were terrorists, this is precisely the kind of thuggish behavior you'd expect. Heck-you'd expect it from the Bush DOJ as well.

Which is all the more reason to find out the precise role of the JTTF in these raids. If the Bush DOJ approved the use of terrorism techniques to prepare for the convention-in spite of the fact that such an approval would violate DOJ guidelines-we'd have a crystal clear

example of why it is inappropriate to interpret terrorism as broadly as the Bush Administration has been pushing to do.