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MONDAY, AUGUST 16, 2004

FBI Targets Political Protestors

by Michael in New York on 8/16/2004 02:58:00 AM

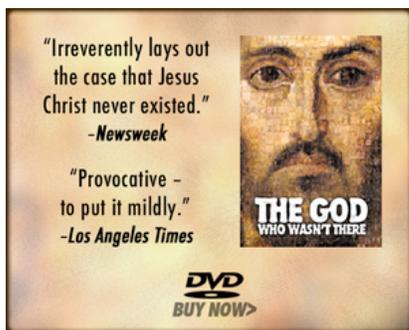
Big Brother is watching. A major story in the New York Times says the F.B.I. has taken to aggressively going to people's homes and questioning them about their political activities in an attempt, the govt. claims, to target anarchists who might be planning violent protests. Sounds fine when they talk about investigating people the FBI claims were planning to blow up news vans in Boston.

But all of the people tracked down by the NYT seem positively bewildered that anything they have done (participating in peaceful, legal political protests) could possibly be worthy of investigation by the FBI. A couple of young guys were questioned before the Boston convention and decided not to participate in either that one or the upcoming Republican event. According to their lawyer,

"they got the message loud and clear that if you make plans to go to a protest, you could be subject to arrest or a visit from the F.B.I."

Targeting people for questioning by the FBI because they have taken part in legal, political protests is of course outrageous and unnerving. Violent outbursts like at the WTO events or Weather Underground-type criminal acts need to be countered. But that doesn't mean carte blanche to intimidate and harrass anyone who shows up for a rally. The story lists a string of recent examples where the govt. overstepped its bounds in targeting Americans who were simply exercising their Constitutional rights and had no cause to be singled out.

The ones that need watching here are the FBI.



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