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The charges against J20 defendants are an experiment. If the courts are able to successfully prosecute those arrested at J20, this will send a green light to the forces of repression seeking to contain, control, and eliminate social movements around the country. Just as all of our struggles are connected, we understand these arrests to represent a real threat to all efforts towards true freedom, dignity, and autonomy. We call for the immediate dropping of all charges, and express our sincere solidarity with and support for those arrested, and encourage others to do so as well.

defendj20resistance.org

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STATEMENT OF
SOLIDARITY
WITH J20 DEFENDANTS



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**To have your group sign on, email
J20endorsements@protonmail.com**

On January 20, 2017, tens of thousands of people converged in Washington, D.C. for the #DisruptJ20 protests to oppose the inauguration of Donald Trump. A combination of blockades, marches, and festive demonstrations shattered the spectacle of a peaceful transition of power, and made it clear around the world that people do not recognize Trump's authority. What could have been a day signaling resignation and defeat became a moment of defiance and resistance. As such, the protests on J20 set a tone and precedent for the events that unfolded shortly after, including the notably successful, mass direct actions at airports against Trump's Muslim ban, as well as ongoing resistance to deportations. While Trump and his white supremacy footsoldiers have encountered few meaningful obstacles from liberal politicians in the halls of power, grassroots resistance has continued to prove a substantial force.

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Unfortunately, however, with resistance comes repression. In addition to shooting pepper spray and concussion grenades indiscriminately at protesters, including children, the elderly, and people with disabilities, DC police cordoned off an entire block and mass arrested more than 230 people in an attempt to stop an anti-capitalist and anti-fascist march. While mass arrests are not unheard of, in this case arrestees were originally charged with felony riot, a charge that potentially carries ten years in prison. On April 27, the prosecution announced additional felony charges against the entire group -- inciting to riot, rioting, conspiracy to riot, and five counts of property destruction.

With these heightened charges the state is trying to set a precedent for harsh crackdowns of disruptive protest in the future, so that Trump can proceed with his agenda unimpeded by anything but symbolic hand-wringing. This strategy corresponds with a broader wave of repression and reaction, from the arrests and grand jury investigations of Indigenous water protectors at #StandingRock to backlash against #BlackLivesMatter and black-led uprisings against police.

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