In the recent past, both the Earth First! and animal rights movements have been successfully infiltrated. This sort of occurrence can lead to exaggerated suspicion. In fact the opposition not only benefits by obtaining inside information and by setting people up for a fall, they also benefit by breaking down our trust in each other. When an informant or infiltrator is exposed within the folds of any political grouping, people naturally get confused and start to doubt one another. Energy is then focused away from radical thought and activity and is instead devoted to fear and mistrust. By making this analysis we don’t want to fan the fires of needless paranoia, but to reiterate what can never be said enough.

- Certain information is very easy for the opposition to get; other information is far less accessible. Strategies, covert activities, the real name of the person behind the penname, certain ‘special’ addresses like safe-houses, who is involved in publishing subversive literature, rescuing animals, and other important bits of information can usually only be obtained by word of mouth. If you don’t say anything, they would never be able to find out.

- When thinking about security, one of the first things to consider is the level of ‘sensitivity’ of your statements. If you have information (or speculations) about something that you think should remain secure, err on the side of safety and keep it to yourself. Think about what possible purpose would be served by telling someone and remember whoever you are talking to will probably talk to others. In the US where there is the grand jury system, just knowing something can land you in jail. By telling someone something, you may actually be putting him or her in jeopardy. Protect yourself, your companions, and the person you might consider telling something to and keep your lips locked. Despite the fact that the “need to know” philosophy often can come off as elitist and authoritarian, it is absolutely essential to successful sabotage.

- Real security at large gatherings is impossible. Connections between people are so vague. We are always amazed at how loose people can get when they are surrounded by large numbers of people they think are like-minded. Anyone can call themselves an anarchist—even a cop.

- Telephones, even pay telephones, are not secure. Telephone company computers automatically record the time at which every call is made, its duration, the telephone number from which it was made, and the telephone number called. In essence, what this does is give the police almost instantaneous access to records of every telephone communication made. By merely making a polite and informal request of the telephone company, the police can discover a network of communications and relationships among any group or community whose activities they do not approve. This gives them vast intelligence gathering resources which are as potentially damaging to comrades involved in legal activities as those using more secretive means. Thus, for example, the police can now determine that during a particular political crisis, Activist A immediately made lengthy calls to activists B, C, and D, as well as shorter calls to activists E, F, G, and H. Or conceivably, following a bombing in which a telephone threat was made, the police will likely be able to determine the pay booth from which the warning was made. On the basis of this instantaneous information, they may be able to rush to the booth to collect more specific traces of the caller, such as fingerprints, shoe impressions, hair and textile fibers, and so on. The police might even run a check of adjacent booths, and find out that immediately after calling in the warning, the caller switched to another booth in order to confirm to another comrade involved in the action that the warning call had been made. All this without the police even hearing any conversations.

- Conversations can also be listened in on by highly sensitive microphones directed at the house or phone booth by a person in a van nearby.

- Anything tricky you might think of doing, the opposition would also think of. Whenever there is a struggle, it is never a good idea to underestimate your opponents, even if they do have doughnut crumbs for brains.
You spoke often of your love
for this grove or that,
or mountain or meadow or river.
Remember when you came home
from climbing that peak?
I've only done that in my dreams.
But on that day, a little part of me
had done it with you,
and on that day, some of my boyhood
retumed.
And then was the time
you planned on and on,
for that river trip.
Well, you tugged at my heart then too.
I was actually sad when you left without me.

I began to understand when you dreamed
with your friend
about blowing that dam to the sky.
For my heart had begun to long for
the freedom and joys
of your chaotic, confused,
wild and untamed,
activist's life.

Those long talks with your friends,
so full of passion and love,
I couldn't help but feel it too.

I felt also your pain
when you'd begin to despair.
You were always the underdog,
and you know, you never really had a chance,
so I hope you forgive me
someday.
There's nowhere left for people like you
not anymore.

So you're doing 15-20
inside the State Pen,
and sometimes I wish I could've
stopped you from talking
too much on the phone.
It was just once.
But it was enough.
I'm sorry,
But I was just doing my job.

by Chaco