CrimethInc.
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A Ten Point Checklist
July 6, 2013

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in that group is paying attention and practicing security culture properly.

Be safe, be effective, and trust your gut.

breaks with discipline, and violations of the conditions previously agreed to. Suddenly he strikes out with a small but significant action, say of property damage or violence toward an individual, providing the flashpoint for sudden escalation. Then, as others follow suit, and illegal and dangerous actions erupt in front of the cameras, the provocateur fades back into the crowd, his mission accomplished. He has now put vulnerable and unprepared members of the community into direct danger, leaving them to handle the consequences of his actions while once again he goes free.

Check videos of actions on YouTube. Some people have filmed themselves breaking the law at actions. Some videos include this flashpoint moment. Note who does this over and over. Note who is and isn't arrested for these things, and who does and doesn't do time.

Successful agents can be hard to spot. But most infiltrators are not trained law enforcement officers. Most are criminals who have been cut a deal if they simply go to meetings and listen, or if they go to meetings and actions and disrupt.

In our experience, there have been a bare few, but significant, cases in which activists have been mistaken in their suspicions. In one case long ago that affected many of us, this misidentification had devastating consequences. The mistake was due to a lack of evidence and experience on the part of those who made the misidentification and a lack of solid criteria with which to evaluate the situation–not to mention the participation of actual agents in scapegoating an innocent woman. But because of this serious mistake, many activists compounded that mistake by swinging to the other extreme, overlooking blatant red flags and even direct admissions of infiltrator status. By providing this checklist, we aim to help you to develop your ability to identify, and prioritize, the truth in these situations. It's not "bad jacketing" when it's true.

There are a number of guidelines and articles out there about security culture. But just because a group has posted links or statements about the need for security culture doesn't mean everyone

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press charges. If there's a solid case against a predator, and that predator is allowed to flee, then goes to political meetings in another jurisdiction while the feds refuse to extradite him for trial… bingo.

In our recent experience, a predator who met nine out of ten of the above criteria (including number ten: an admission to other activists he was trying to turn) was never convicted by law enforcement. Instead, he was turned loose on a series of activist communities, wreaking havoc and destruction. Only his death put a stop to it. But there are plenty just like him, eager to take his place. Some of them may be on your friends list on Facebook. Some may have literally gotten away with murder.

When it comes to the thorny question of agents provocateurs and direct action, the point is not whether violence or nonviolence is preferable, but whether someone has violated the consensus of their affinity group and put their team in danger without their consent. It is irresponsible to allege that violence is always the work of agents provocateurs; rather, agents provocateurs set out to instigate violence that will be disadvantageous or isolating for the participants.

Here's an example. Someone who has met all the above criteria except numbers nine and ten shows up at a public march. The march has been planned as a peaceful, legal event. Perhaps not all actions by this group are peaceful and legal, but for this event, that is the agreed strategy. The event is covered by the media, people are using their real names, and elders and children are participating. The provocateur has spent months ingratiating himself into the group, showing up for every action, paying the bills, giving people rides, saying whatever they want to hear, even buying them drugs. But once the march is underway and the cameras are rolling, the provocateur proceeds to show no regard for the safety or consensus of his group. He does whatever he can to shift the mood of the crowd, to instigate and encourage high emotions. The conditions are tense, and the provocateur does what he can to encourage

informant provocateur received in exchange for their work: either the amount of money they were paid, or the deal they got to be released from prison or avoid prosecution for particular crimes. In some cases, the deal includes a future position with the law enforcement or intelligence agency that hired them. On the unlikely chance that someone is mentally ill, this information could conceivably be checked against the going rate for informant provocateurs; but if the other criteria are met, assume they are telling you the truth, even if they are mentally ill. While mentally ill people do not make reliable informants, they can make excellent provocateurs, and their history of instability can be cited as evidence when law enforcement denies the individual was hired as a provocateur.

If a person meets any of the criteria beyond points 1 through 3, you shouldn't be working with them. Hopefully, all the points beyond number one will not even matter, as you will have already cut ties with the person after the first red flag. Regardless of whether we can prove someone is an infiltrator, if they display any of the problematic behavior described here, they shouldn't be party to anything sensitive in the first place. Even if they're not an infiltrator yet, it offers reason to believe they could be turned or crack under interrogation.

Here are some other warning signs to watch for. When it comes to people's daily behavior, outside of meetings and actions, is the suspicious person behaving inappropriately with children? Are they harming their partners? Can they not keep their hands off kids? Or are they trying to sleep with multiple adults in the group (or one of the leaders)? Make sure you don't have a pedophile who was let free in exchange for disruption, or a serial rapist or woman beater who has been turned loose on an activist community to cause devastation. Note when such people never face consequences from law enforcement, even when the victims

A group of people who have been directly harmed by informant provocateurs have put together this checklist, drawing on personal experiences as well as those of other activists and information from informant provocateurs who have gone public. We hope you can learn from the damage that has already been done, so these people can be stopped before they are able to harm you.

Here are ten warning signs:

1.

Something feels "off." Something about them just doesn't line up. Their stories about their activist history or life history, don't ring true. At this point, you need to run a background and criminal check. If you wait for all the other signs, it may be too late. The most obvious cause for serious concern is when someone shows up in an activist community and they don't seem to have existed prior to that. That should be a deal breaker right off the bat.

2.

Despite the misgivings of some members, the individual quickly rises to a leadership position. S/he eagerly takes credit for actions in the media and begins to promote him/herself. S/he works to become one of the "faces" of the organization, and clearly wants to be a poster child for the group, attempting to "brand" their identity with the group's name, imagery, and identity. S/he likes getting photographed, even when engaged in illegal activity.

3.

S/he photographs actions, meetings, and people that should not be photographed. S/he posts photos of actions and meetings on so-

cial media sites like Facebook, even tagging activists without their permission (in effect, facilitating law enforcement surveillance).

4.

S/he is a liar. S/he shows signs of lacking ethics and lacking transparency with the rest of the group.

5.

S/he advocates for high-risk illegal action to people s/he should not trust, while claiming to understand the importance of security culture. S/he goads others to violent action, for example by telling them they need to be "warriors." Upon reflection, the illegal actions in question often have no real purpose and will not advance the goals of the group in any meaningful way. The person generally has a very twisted perception of what it means to be a warrior.

S/he seeks internal rifts in the community and exploits them. S/he has a cycle of abuse with groups and individuals: a honeymoon period, followed by manipulative, abusive behavior, followed by apologies and promises to do better. Then the cycle repeats.

6.

S/he always has bail money and pocket money, but either no real job, or no job that pays that much. S/he may imply access to a trust fund or similar resources, but this needs to be checked. S/he somehow has the financial freedom to be at any action that will get media attention, or any underground action that may involve illegal activity.

7.

S/he is found to be lying about really serious things like identity, family, background, race, or ethnicity.

8.

S/he has warrants but is unafraid of announcing and advocating illegal action, using his/her real name, publicly advertising his/her whereabouts, and once again jumping into the frame whenever photos or video are being taken at illegal actions. When picked up, s/he always makes bail and gets released, sometimes released on Own Recognizance even when the charges are very serious. This happens a lot. Then the individual goes right back to meetings, taking photos and posing for photo ops. S/he has a Catch and Release cycle with the cops. S/he may have a history of very early release from prison, then going directly to political meetings, sometimes of groups s/he privately claims to hate, or that would have been forbidden as a condition of normal parole.

9.

Juicy information, given only to the suspected informant, comes out the law enforcement end. To be sure this is taking place, the information must be unmistakable, and have been shared face to face, one on one, with zero possibility of surveillance (say, whispered in the informant's ear in the middle of a field).

10.

Full admission: "My name is _____ and I was employed by [agency] to infiltrate [organization]." A full admission of informant and/or provocateur status may include details of what the