



Exploding The Phone

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Title **A Little Bit Uncrunched**

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Abstract John Draper gives the Village Voice an update on his life since he did his previous interview. He was arrested in October (1977) in Pennsylvania and December (1977) in New Jersey. Charges were dropped in NJ. He also appeared before a secret grand jury in Iowa about the remote-observation wire tapping center in Davenport, IA.

Keywords John Draper; Captain Crunch; phone phreaks; red box; remote-observation wire tapping center; Davenport, IA; Des Moines, IA

Source An anonymous phone phreak

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SCENES

By Howard Smith & Leslie Harlib

A Little Bit Uncrunched

haps I can bring about a much bigger change than if I continued walking that dangerous line between legal and illegal."

FRED MCDARRAH

Captain Crunch bounded gleefully into our office a few days ago to fill us in on the latest developments in his continuing war with the phone company.

(Last month [Scenes, January 16], we ran a lengthy interview with him. His real name is John Draper, and he's America's most famous phone phreak, having invented so many of the free call devices that guerilla engineers widely copy today. He grimly told us about his harassment by Telco Security agents, his October bust in Pennsylvania, and his December arrest in New Jersey.)

The reason he was so happy on this visit was that he'd just come from New Jersey, where the charges against him for having "red box" in the trunk of his car were dismissed.

"The judge told me that no one had ever been convicted for simply being in possession of one of these. Under the New Jersey law, it would first have to be proven that I had intent to defraud Ma Bell with it. Only then would the police have had sufficient grounds to arrest me. So it turns out it was actually the detective who acted illegally by pulling me in."

When we spoke to Drapers's lawyer, he explained that they had arranged a deal so that the prosecutor would drop the case entirely if John didn't try to sue that cop. Of course Crunch agreed, having enough other legal problems as it is.

Draper told us that as far as he knows, Telco Security agents are not longer on his back, but he's not yet off the hook entirely. There's still his April trial in Pennsylvania coming up. However, the Captain feels that something good has begun to happen. In Scenes, we broke the story that he suspected (and felt had had proof, which he had obtained by scanning) that Ma Bell is creating a hidden remote-observation

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Is he going to further investigate the Iowa phone situation? "No way. Though it was terrific to be able to speak freely to powerful people, on another level the whole thing really freaked me out. Going there, the secrecy of it all . . . I think my underground days of battling Telco are over. I'm still planning to work against them, but it's essential to me, right now, to become a part of a community and be able to contribute my technical skills in a

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