



Text Version of Audio Story: They

It appears to be a bare spot, a place where trees won't grow. It looks like, maybe at one point, perhaps, a meteorite might have made a beeline from the heavens and impacted right there on the front side of the mountain. Miles and miles of long connected mountain chain.

The Northern Appalachian Mountains, covered with green leafy forestation and then, bam, just this one little spot where nothing will grow. It was there that "they" tunneled back into the mountain, creating a large enclave from where "they" could do their very important work. This is the foreboding, top secret, mysterious location, steeped in intrigue and danger, where "they" come together and say what "they" say. Did you ever hear your cousin Earl say, "*Well, you know what they say about that don't you?*" And you've always wondered who "they" are. Well now you know. Based in McAlisterville, Pennsylvania, is the national headquarters of "They."

They work diligently there in that mountain enclave, influencing opinion, giving folks something to talk about, moulding the American vernacular, creating controversy, and thus moving their agenda forward. *They* know the truth about everything. *They* know who killed Kennedy. *They* know the truth about alien visitors. *They* not only know the whereabouts of Jimmy Hoffa, they helped put them there. *They* say the Earth is getting warmer. *They* say there's a monster in Loch Ness. *They* say it's just a matter of time until people are living on the moon. *They* say the oceans once covered the Earth. *They* say that American Storyteller guy is a good looking fellow. OK, I made that one up, but they did say the population is growing at an alarming rate.

There's a lot of common misconceptions whereas folks believe *They* have said something that *They* didn't say at all. For instance, when you hear someone say, "*They say you should wait one half hour after eating before swimming.*" *They* never said that. That was said by mothers. Or when you hear someone say, "*They say you can poke an eye out doing that.*" Again, that clearly can be attributed to mothers and was not said by *They*. "*They say mono is the kissing disease.*" *They* never said that. That was said by mothers so their daughters wouldn't kiss your sons.

Mothers is an entirely different organization, with far less influence. Mothers themselves will tell you that no one listens to them. And also the national headquarters of Mothers has a far more traditional setting. It is based around the kitchen table of Shirley Bell in Grants Pass, Oregon. Not only is it a more traditional setting, it is not cloaked in such deep, dark secrecy. For heaven's

sakes, Shirley's husband, Herb, is just in the next room in a T-shirt and boxers, watching wrestling.

Clearly and understandably, the lines blur in the American consciousness between what mothers say and what they say and, of course, it is very, very upsetting to the folks at the mountain enclave headquarters of They. After all, the last thing the folks at They want is to have people thinking they're a bunch of mothers.

From somewhere behind the radio with the music of Johnny X, I'm the American Storyteller.