

TAP UPDATE by TOM EDISON

Welcome back! I hope you all enjoyed your summer vacation. I know I sure did! I am pleased to report that thanks to the help and support of some of our readers, TAP will NOT fold!!!!!! I still personally feel that most of you readers are just a bunch of apathetic, lazy bastards but at least a few of you have shown that you do give a damn about the future of TAP! I have received a number of very supportive letters which did much to boost the low moral at the TAP office. Offers of help came from as far away as Seattle, Washington but as usual, NYC area readers sat on their fat asses and did nothing. While I'm glad that the help of some of our better readers is sufficient enough to keep TAP going, I'm saddened to have to report that our readership has fallen. Between issues 43 & 44, we lost 238 subscribers! I find it hard to believe that everyone of our subscribers could not get at least one partner in crime to sub to TAP! If TAP had a million subscribers, the loss of 238 readers would be considered nothing more than flyshit in the Pacific Ocean, but with our humble little readership, the loss of 238 readers is FATAL!!!

I told you all a long time ago that if we didn't get some new subscribers soon, I would be forced to increase our sub rates. You responded with a raised middle finger, so EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 1977, a 10 issue US Bulk sub will be \$5.00. First Class & Canada will be \$7.00 and Foreign will be \$8.00. I'm very sorry to have to hit you in the pocketbook but it was either up the sub rates or fold! YOU forced this action, NOT ME!

The TAP T-shirts are selling well, so well in fact that I'm already out of the Extra Large size. I have a few large and a quantity of Small and Medium. The Small size has NOT sold well and as a result, TAP is stuck with a lot of Small size T's. Because we didn't order a large number of shirts, we had to buy a quantity in ALL sizes, including Small. To help us get rid of them and make some room for the 1978 T-shirts, the price of all SMALL T-shirts has been reduced to \$3.50 (which barely covers the initial cost plus postage!). Cum on readers, help us out! Buy a couple of shirts for your little bastards!

And while I'm on the subject of TAP T-shirts, lemme tell ya that it's time to decide on next year's colors. What colors do YOU want? Lemme know. If I get the usual reader response to my request, I'll get about 3 letters. Now's your chance to feel important in making TAP policy decisions! If I get only 3 letters and 2 of them want the same colors, that decides it! I personally would like to have a red T-shirt with black TAP logo on front and back. What do ya want? Lemme know!

Phone Company Says It Has Pulled The Plug on Free-Call 'Blue Boxes'

By E. J. DIONNE JR.

The New York Telephone Company said yesterday that it had won the 16-year-old guerrilla war with "phone freaks" who developed ingenious devices called "blue boxes" which allowed them to make free telephone calls to any place in the world.

At a news conference at company headquarters on the Avenue of the Americas at 42d Street, company investigators demonstrated how counter technology could be used to make free calls to anywhere in the direct-dialable world. They then showed off a product of their counter-counter technology—their ultimate weapon, which they asserted would stop the use of blue boxes once and for all.

The devices are usually pushbutton affairs, often converted pocket calculators, which produce tones exactly matching the phone company's code sounds.

The tones sent through the line by a blue box fool the company's computer into thinking that a toll-free call is being made while at the same time connecting the caller to desired (and often far-off) points.

According to a spokesman for the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, blue boxes cost the nationwide Bell System \$5 million to \$10 million a year. About half that loss has been in New York State, according to the spokesman.

But no longer, the investigators said. Their breakthrough is a detection device that breaks through the protective electronic fog set up by the

blue box and finds out within seconds both the number of the phone being used for the fraudulent call and the number to which the call is placed.

This information is printed out by a computer, along with the time and length of the call. The illicit caller is immediately notified by the company that his call has been discovered, that he will be billed, and that he should stop using the machine.

Improvements Since 1961

The first device of this sort was discovered by phone company officials in 1961. It was painted blue, hence the name. Over the years its technology has been developed along with the company's. At yesterday's news conference, officials displayed several generations of blue boxes. The early ones were bulky vacuum-tube models, about three times the size of a toaster. The latest models are about the size of a pack of cigarettes and using transistors or integrated circuits.

Most of the models work through toll-free 800 or 555 numbers. Some work on the receiving end, sending off sounds to the phone company indicating that no call has taken place even as a conversation goes on.

The company says its new anti-blue-box devices—developed by Bell Laboratories in New Jersey and now in use in other parts of the country—will detect all known types of blue boxes, and can trace calls even to coin-box telephones.



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BETTER LIVING THRU COUNTER CONTROL

The driver's license is the most widely accepted and useful piece of ID for proof of identity. It is almost a necessity to own one because it is the one piece of ID that the porkers and bureaucrats will want to see from you. With alarming frequency the forces of state are using the driver's license as a tool of oppression. Some counter control can be used to thwart the forces of oppression and fear. One of the best methods available is to obtain your driver's license under an alias name. Here are some good reasons why:

First, the point system on the driver's license can only go against you. Points against you are added on until some arbitrary total is reached, then your license gets suspended or revoked. Only the bad points are added on — **there are no good points** to be made. You can't win using your own name. If all you can do is get bad points you might as well have them added on to the driving record of an alias and keep your own name and record clean.

Second, almost every time you get stopped by a pig a radio check will be done on you for outstanding warrants, unpaid fines and tickets, etc. A bad report back on the radio check could get you a tour of an Amerikan version of Auschwitz. The gestapo can check out the validity of the driver's license number by radio, so the license you show the inquisitive porker should be real. A real license under an alias name can be obtained with a birth certificate at your local Department of Motor Vehicles.

Third, you should never use your address where you are living on any driver's license — under your own name or an alias. The address that is listed on your driver's license is the one that the police, creditors, and other hostiles will go to if they are looking for you. Even if they aren't looking for you now, the future is always uncertain. Have your license sent to a mail receiving service, or have a friend put the name you are using on your driver's license on their mail box. They can take the name off after the license comes. If the pigs show up at their house looking for you, they can say you moved and then tip you off. Always use a safe address — don't lead the porkers to your door.

Birth certificates for starting an alias can be bought on the black market, can be made at home via "do it yourself", or instruction for obtaining documents are available for a price from Eden Press, 16681 Evergreen Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708.

AGENT MDA

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THE VOICE by Ted Vail

I would like to start a new serial column, THE VOICE, with an error correction: I am from Washington, D. C., not from Illinois. How Tom slipped on that is beyond me, unless he was thinking of my many pen pal friends in that state. I would like to receive comments, tips, and other interesting info (like test numbers) relevant to either area and in this vein I would like to pass on two stores that I've heard of. They both sell various types of phones. The first is on Lincoln Avenue in Chicago, near Larchmont Avenue. Look it (and others) up in the Chicago Yellow Pages. The second is the Georgetown Phone Warehouse in Georgetown on (I think) Wisconsin Avenue. Look that up too.

In this column I would like to update errors in TAP's back issues, correct fallacies, and clarify misconceptions and rumors. The one main difference between EDEN UNDERGROUND NEWS SERVICE (EUNS) and TAP, in format, is that letters published in TAP do not have their answers published there, but in EUNS every published letter has a published answer right there. That is probably because EUNS has a staff of resident experts, right on hand, to answer the questions. But TAP has few experts, and most of those are not right in or near New York, or else they are unwilling to come in and be resident experts. Thus, ideas, answers, and such have to come in and out through Tom, and he is getting tired of being called upon to do and know everything. I am going to try to take this part of the burden from Tom, and be a "general specialist". Both questions and answers, as well as guesses and speculations, will go to me (if and when Tom approves) thru Tom. I will try to connect the questions and answers, supply some of my own info, and publish things of general interest in TAP.

I will be setting up a "cool" mailing address so you interested readers can write directly to me. This address will be published as soon as possible in a future issue of TAP. I can't guarantee instant replies to letters, but I usually have time to reply within a few weeks.

I have tried to get in touch with "Kilgore Trout" in Canada, but I've been unable to do so. Please get in touch with me, "Kilgore"! I think that the military Blue Boxes of issue 37, the Generals' phones with the special buttons mentioned in issue 39 by Bill Moorefield, and the control frequencies described by Depravo in issue 43 are all the same things, and I think I know how to get those tones! A remark by "Kilgore" to the effect that "if I can hear them going out, the equipment can probably hear any beeps that I make" gave me the clue. Now hear this: All you TAPpers who want to help us out should mobilize your cassette tape recorders-check the tape (get the highest quality you can afford-one cassette should be enough) and make sure the batteries are good-and rig the mic input so you can tape off of a phone line. This should be done by all people who might have access to the military system, especially those who can talk to a friend at the military switchboard. Start the recorder and have your friend play the tones for you, and try to find out which tone is "flash", "priority", or whatever. With the toner down on tape, they can be "decoded", that is, their frequency or the frequency of the two component tones can be determined. This will also work with the regular mic, just get into a room with the special phone or switchboard.

I think it's reasonable to assume that the special beeps can be heard in the handset's earphone, so I'll recommend that you hold the mic up to the earphone of the telephone, and press the special buttons one at a time, announcing to the recorder the name of each button. If you don't dial any numbers, I don't think anyone's calls would be interrupted. After you get the recordings, play them back to make sure you got the tones down. Give the cassette to a friend who has a frequency counter or signal generators (for trial and error) unless you yourself can determine the frequencies. I would like to know what happens when dual frequencies are fed into a frequency counter. I would like to give you some tips on these military systems. First, remember that even the regular numbers on Defense touch tone pads are different frequencies. I want some good, generous TAPper to attend a Defense Dept. surplus sale and pick up a D. of D. surplus touch tone phone (they can be gotten from other places that got them second or third hand from D. of D.

surplus sales - I want to know the mailing addresses of these outfits) and screw around with the phone (DON'T DISASSEMBLE IT unless you take copious notes on the electrical connections-just hook it up and beep) to find out the frequencies of the numbers. Knowing how the "grid" is set up will allow you or even more clever TAPpers to deduce one tone of each of the specials because it's safe to assume that they derive the extras by adding one new tone to mix with the old ones. If you know anything about the way touch tone pads are set up, you'll see what I mean.

On a civilian T. T. pad, the "A B C & D" buttons are non-existent, but the inductor in the circuit has a tap that can be used to generate the four new tones. All the buttons in a given row or column share one tone and differ because they have the second tone different; for instance, tone 2 of the civil pad is 770 Hz. The sounds for 4, 5, 6, and B all contain 770 Hz mixed with something else. Thus, to add a new group of 4 buttons, they need only add the one tone which would then be common to all buttons in that row or column. To get A B C & D, Bell added a new high tone, 1633 Hz, and mixed it with the old low tones 1 2 3 & 4 (which are 697, 770, 852, and 941 Hz) to get A B C & D respectively. Now we can't hope to count on the good fortune of some nameless TAPper to "acquire" a 16 button military phone, so we'll have to make do with acquiring a 12 button one. By determining all the tones (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7) used on the 12 button one, we'll have one of the two tones used in each of the special buttons. And for a special bonus, the unknown one is the one common to all four! A little trial and error on one of the new, still unknown but tape recorded tones should yield a pretty close approximation of the unknown tone common to all four special buttons. When that is known, and the tones for the horizontal rows are known, they can be mixed and compared with the recorded DF recorded tone for checking.

Once we know these various combinations, the sky's the limit! But wouldn't we have to get a connection between the military and civilian phone systems? I don't think that they are normally connected at the low level because the touch tones are different on the telephone units. But does the military system use the same long distance lines as the civilian phone system? If so, we're lucky. It was a remarkable stroke of luck and ingenuity on our (phreak's) part, plus a remarkable dumb blunder on Bell's part, that put the long distance Blue Box tones in our hands in the first place. Don't expect that to happen again, especially not with the military system. But if they share the same long distance circuits and if we can decode the military tones, we're home free! Another crushing TAP victory! WOW! Let's get moving!!!



"I want to report a robbery in progress."

THEY SAW THE LIGHT

—and they heard the message in Hardenburgh, so now half of the Catskill town's residents have been ordained ministers in the Universal Life Church, a sect where holy orders can be had for the asking.

What caused the people of Hardenburgh to get religion was their tax bills, which soared as large chunks of prime real estate were bought up by tax-exempt Zen Buddhists, Tibetan monks and other exotic creeds. If we can't beat 'em, Hardenburghers reasoned, we'll join 'em.

We don't know whether the hard-eyed revenue collectors will buy the ministerial bit. But the people of Hardenburgh deserve to have their resourcefulness commemorated somewhere—perhaps in that Great Tax Lophole in the Sky.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Dear TAP,

Just came across a very interesting and amusing example of the vulnerability (so they say) of our public utilities which may be of interest to ye olde readers.

I have been battling Con Edison for some astronomical bills they sent me when I first moved into my apartment. I live alone and I know of some small manufacturing businesses who pay less for electricity than the Con was asking from me. I went through the usual jazz of asking them to check their records, their meters, their sanity, etc., all to no avail. I came up with an interesting solution; I simply didn't pay the overcharges. For a while they didn't react. Then they sent me a turnoff notice, stating that unless I paid by such-and-such date, they would turn off my lights. OK, I wrote to the Public Service Commission, and Con Edison got off my case for a while. Then the Public, you should pardon the expression, "Service" Commission sent me a form letter which totally ignored what I had written. My counterattack was to ignore them. Con Edison sent me another turnoff notice with a very specific turnoff date. I took a deep breath and ignored the notice, while promptly paying my current bill. Wonder of wonders, the turnoff date came and went, and the electricity was still on. Next month's bill said that, "a turnoff notice is still in effect" and threatened action if the entire bill was not paid "promptly", whatever that means. Now things settled into a pattern. Every three months they gave me a specific date and inbetween they said that the notice was still in effect. Later on they also asked for a deposit - which, of course, I never paid. At no time did my lights even flicker.

This went on for over a year. One day I got home to find a telephone message on my answering system to call Con Edison about my bill. The same day I got my latest bill from them. There was no mention of the past due balance for the first time in four years. However, the bill was marked "final bill" and was for much less than a full month. Whoops, I figured, they're finally gonna do it! I called the next day, expecting fire and brimstone. Instead all I got was a bland inquiry as to when I was planning to pay the back bill. I referred the gal back to the Public Service Commission, telling her I was awaiting further word from them. She said, "OK, please get what you need from them soon so we can resolve the matter." Oh, by the way, I said, what does this "final bill" jazz mean? Well, she says, you just moved, didn't you? If you consider four years ago as "just moved", yes. There is dead silence on the phone for a few seconds before she asks me if I was planning to move soon. No. Well then it's good you called, she says, because the clucks had a record that I had or was about to move. I asked how this could happen, and she sheepishly admitted that all public utilities are vulnerable to prank phone calls. They make no effort to check up on the validity of any phone calls they get. If someone calls and claims he's Tom Edison, and he's moving out to Alaska tomorrow morning, you, sir, will have no electricity tomorrow morning! Or perhaps you simply won't be billed for electricity beyond tomorrow morning. I haven't quite figured that one out yet.

The final piece of the action reached me last week. I got a bill from Con Edison, again for a partial month, but this time with a new account number, and again with no mention of the past due balance. In the same mail I got a letter from Con Edison, welcoming me as a new customer!

I have no idea who my benefactor is, or if it was simply a human error at Con Edison, but the whole matter does raise some very interesting possibilities as to how to deal - or not deal - with public utilities.

The Answer Man

DEATH AND TAXES

Vivian Kellers, who spent most of her life fighting the Internal Revenue Service, said repeatedly the only way the government would collect taxes from her would be "over my dead body."

That feisty woman died last year, and I just read that the IRS collected \$265,000 from her estate in back taxes. Does this suggest anything to you?

Dear TAP,

The Post Office has been using a printer's ink formulation for years to cancel stamps. It is a composition of linseed oil and carbon-black. The linseed oil base can be softened by any of the standard paint remover formulations and washed out with gasoline, turpentine, etc., but the very finely dispersed carbon particles (soot) are really in there for good; I've never been able to wash them out, and I say "out" because they penetrate into the interstices of the paper and seem to lock there. If you have ever tried to bleach out newspaper print which is the same general kind of ink, you'll know what I mean. If you want to experiment, start out with newspapers, they're easier to come by than postage stamps. But remember, if you do much bleaching, you'll bleach out the more fragile inks in the stamps.

So, obviously, the best thing to do is to keep the ink out of the stamp in the first place. I'll come back to that in a minute. First, though, some remarks about the new Post Office ink (or should we say the new "Postal Service, Inc"?).

We don't seem to have it yet out here in the West, but our mail from the East is now coming thru with a red colored cancellation ink. A few tests with home chemistry and we discover that the new ink is far more fragile than the old stuff and has real possibilities. But it has some difficulties attached to it too. First of all, turn on your psychedelic black light and look at it under ultra-violet light. WOW! It lights up just like your posters. This is a clue. CLUE. Don't forget it. While you're admiring the cancellation ink, (incidentally, the identical ink seems to be used in metered postal imprints), note something else. They've been telling us that the stamps all have fluorescent in them for detection by postal cancellation machines and that's why you can't make color Xerox copies of them and get away with it. Well, do you see any evidence of fluorescence in the stamp itself? Neither do I. But take a look at a Canadian stamp. Both edges are coated with a invisible fluorescent material that lights up like a searchlight when UV hits it. It glows in bright yellow. Now I don't know that US stamps are not UV coded, but I don't see any evidence under any of my standard black light bulbs. This doesn't prove that there isn't something there that'll shine under some other wavelength of excitation, such as from an argon bulb or a filtered arc lamp, but it is my guess that we are being led on.

This fluorescent ink being used to cancel stamps, the new stuff, turns out to be highly soluble in alcohol. It washes right off in isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol. BUT, after you wash it off, take a look under UV light. It shines all over. Even the back of the stamp shines out. The stuff is bloody persistent, even when so dilute that you can't see any trace of it at all under the naked eye in normal illumination. What can you do about that? Well, a little home chemistry to the rescue again. A dilute solution of liquid bleach seems to wipe it out easily without being so strong as to bleach out the stamp. This seems to work. It's a good idea to neutralize the bleach with a little vinegar afterwards so the stamp will still be in good condition for its next trip. But the best way to solve the problem is to protect the stamp with a little shot of clear lacquer or, if you haven't got that, with some white glue [see TAP #39]. But the glue isn't waterproof like the lacquer and some of the red kind of ink definitely soaks into it so you have to watch out for this. The glue works great with the black ink however. When you soak the stamp, the glue peels right off. Scotch tape is perfect either way. Use the Magic kind which has a rough surface which takes a cancellation beautifully and doesn't show up well. Hint: Try smearing the stamp and envelope with detergent (laundry type). It has a white fluorescent dye in it that masks residual red dye.

Bug Juice

Editor's note: Wow! Now that's what I call a well done report! The Establishment and grandmother - types might say: What a shame, he uses his intelligence that way. We say Fuck the Establishment!



Conned Again

by **TOM EDISON**

The above figure, slightly modified, is a familiar sight to all NYC area readers. It's Con Edison's logo. I'm not going to bitch here about what a truly shitty utility it is. I don't have to. If you're unfortunate enough to be "serviced" by the Con, you know it first hand. And if you're lucky enough to live elsewhere, you've read all about the now infamous July 13, 1977 blackout. A Con Ed spokesman said that Con Ed was the best run utility in the nation. I'll let those of you who sweltered in the darkness for 25 hours and pay the highest electric rates in the country be the judge of this asinine statement!

The point that I want to make you aware of is that if ever there was a time to jump your electric meter, THAT WAS IT! With the juice off for 25 hours and after you'd done all of your selective looting, you had more than enough time to build the most undetectable jumper circuit. The only thing that I'm sorry about is that we didn't get a blackout in New Jersey for a few hours! I'm wiring my home for a 240 volt air conditioner and nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to connect my line to the power line BEFORE the meter! Maybe I can pray for another act of God?

Juice Thefts Squeezed Out

Among the ironic casualties of the power failure yesterday was an organized crackdown against electricity thefts which Con Edison officials and Bronx District Attorney Mario Merola were scheduled to announce at 11 a.m.

Merola was to announce the arrests of 13 small businessmen who allegedly ripped off Con Ed for \$60,000 by tampering with their electric meters; and the utility was to tell the public that it was increasing its property protection force with a special unit for catching meter cheats.

Those arrested were to be charged with a misdemeanor — theft of services.

"The press conference has been canceled until next week," a spokesman for Merola said. "It would be grossly inappropriate to lock up people for stealing power from Con Ed in the middle of the power failure."

ALERT

Since the Supreme Court vs Hampton decision in April 1976, the porkers are breaking the law with impunity to get a conviction. Juries are turning in guilty convictions even when the pigs overtly manipulated the person into committing a crime and provide the material for the crime. If the pigs want to put you away they will try to arrange it.

What this means is that there is no more defense of entrapment! It is also very hard to spot an undercover agent when their committing the crime themselves or trying to aid one into happening. We know for sure that the pigs can and do provide drugs, stolen merchandise, sex, and even build blue and black boxes with you. The Supreme Porkers have given their local pig buddies permission to be vendors of anything illegal.

Also, a pig does not have to say he's a pig when he's undercover. You don't expect him/her to blow his cover do you? Asking a pig if he's a pig does ABSOLUTELY no good.

Porkers are playing dirtier in some area's than in others. Be on the alert for their new tactics. The best way not to deal with a pig is to meet as many of a person's friends and family as you can before taking him into your confidence. Above all listen to your instincts. Instincts are a survival mechanism and will seldom advise you wrong. If you intuitively feel there's something wrong about someone, but can't put your finger on it - don't deal with them. Stay Free.

Internal Security Committee



I Thought He Was On Our Side

While spokesmen for Con Edison continue to explain away their company's responsibility for the blackout, Charles Luce, chairman of the utility company, offered the definitive explanation: "It appears it was an act of God."

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