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Bibliographic Cover Sheet

Title **Newswire story regarding John Draper's claims that a system in Iowa can monitor any phone call in the country**

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Abstract John Draper says that AT&T has a system in Iowa that can monitor any phone call in the country. AT&T and the FCC both deny its existence.

Keywords AT&T; John Draper; Captain Crunch; John Trovoto (AT&T spokesman); FCC; whistle; phone phreaks

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The Associated Press January 17, 1978 Tuesday
By JANE SEE WHITE, Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK A freelance telephone consultant who made his name by shortcutting phone company billing systems claimed Tuesday that the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. has developed a computer system with which it can listen in undetected on calls across the country.

AT&T spokesman denied that the company had such a system.

Consultant John Draper, 34, claimed at a news conference that an AT&T computer system in Iowa has been programmed to bug telephone calls thousands of miles away undetected by tapped parties.

Asked about the claim, AT&T spokesman John Trovato said, "To my knowledge, no such device is being tested in Iowa." He said AT&T has "no such system " and "no such capabilities."

In Washington, Randolph Young, chief of the Federal Communications Commission's telephone tariff division, said, "Were not aware of any centralized ability of the telephone company to tap a line, but obviously they have some capability in this regard.

Young said his staff consults periodically with telephone companies to determine that they are complying with the law when there is monitoring in connection with court orders.

"The capability does exist. It was demonstrated to me and it really blew me out," said Draper, who works as a consultant to businesses who want to reduce their phone bills.

Draper is also known as "Captain Crunch" because he once used whistles offered as prizes in cereal boxes to bypass phone company billing systems. His skill at such activities has made him something of a folk hero among other self-styled "Phone Phreaks" - people who delight in playing with telephones, often to circumvent charges.

Draper pleaded innocent last November in Pennsylvania to charges of theft of trade secrets and criminal conspiracy against the telephone company. The case has not yet come to trial. He is currently on probation after four months in jail on a 1976 conviction for similar activities.

Draper said the computerized "remote observation" system in Iowa was demonstrated to him by other "Phone Phreaks," who had accidentally stumbled onto the telephone number that gives access to it. The access number has since been changed, he said.

He claimed that any person who knows that Iowa access number can dial it, then dial any telephone number in the country and eavesdrop without detection on conversation on that line.

Draper said he is preparing a report on the system, and will ask Rep. Paul McCloskey, R-Calif., to conduct investigative hearings.

Because it can not be detected, the remote observation capacity is different from other bugging devices available to the telephone company, he said, including no warning beepers and requiring no tapping of the line.

"With this one, all you've got to do is dial," he said.