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Bibliographic Cover Sheet

Title           **Ike Turner Bust: Phone 'Fraud'**

Date            1974-00-00

Abstract       Detailed description of Ike Turner's March 26, 1974 arrest for blue box usage. Same page includes shorter articles on Bob Cummings.

Keywords      Ike Turner; Dennis S. Rubenstein; Rhonda Graam

Source         Alan Rubinstein

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## Ike Turner cleared

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AUP) —Rock musician Ike Turner was cleared Tuesday of charges of defrauding the Pacific Telephone Co. by using a "blue box" to make unlimited free long distance calls.

The boxes generate sound tones that manipulate the company's lines and computers, enabling users to make direct dial calls and bypass the billing process.

Municipal Judge Timothy Vassie dismissed charges against Turner, of the Ike and Tina team, and two codefendants because voiceprint analyses found no evidence of their voices on fraudulent calls.

Another defendant, Dennis H. Rubenstein, 24, whose voice was identified, pleaded no contest. He was fined \$625 and ordered to make \$3,000 restitution to the telephone company.

The former movie and television series star, Bob Cummings, was free on his own recognizance yesterday, after his arrest in Seattle on a charge of defrauding the telephone company. The arrest came when the police raided a downtown apartment building seeking the user of "blue box," a sophisticated electronic device that makes it possible for a caller to bypass phone company circuits and make free long distance calls. The 65-year-old actor has been living in the apartment where the device was found, during his six-week run at a dinner theatre in Hard Feelings, called "No Hard Feelings." He was charged with the misdemeanor of possessing a device to obtain telephone services fraudulently.

## Cummings calling

Actor Bob Cummings, 65, was arrested yesterday in Seattle on charges of using an electronic gadget for making long-distance telephone calls free of charge. Police said he was arrested at his apartment and a "blue box"—an electronic device that bypasses phone company circuits—was in use here.

Cummings, who has been starring in the play "No Hard Feelings," posted \$1,000 bail, police said. His television comedy, "The Bob Cummings Show" is for six years during the 1950s.

Compiled From News Dispatches

## Ike Turner Bust: Phone 'Fraud'

INGLEWOOD, CALIF. — Ike Turner was arrested at his Bolic Sound Recording Studios here March 26th, and charged with illegal possession and use of blue boxes (electronic multi-frequency devices that allow unlimited long-distance phone calls without charge). Also arrested in connection with the blue boxes were Roy Robinson and Dennis Rubinstein, who work for United States Theatrical Agency, Turner's booking agency (the agency has offices at Bolic Sound) and Rhonda Graam, Turner's aide and road manager. Rubinstein was also busted for possession of marijuana: A small bag containing approximately one-half ounce was allegedly found in his desk.

The police entered Bolic studios with a search warrant and remained for nearly three hours, rounding up four blue boxes in three offices, questioning people in the lobby, and, according to one witness, forcing open the door to the studio where Turner was recording. The four persons charged were jailed (only Rubinstein was handcuffed, because of

the marijuana charge) about 5 PM and released from Inglewood jail at 8 PM.

The phone company was behind the arrests. According to Tom McNaghten, public relations officer for Bell Telephone in Los Angeles, "We found out about the devices through an investigation. We have devices and procedures to detect these things, but we can't go into that. We contacted the Inglewood police and a search warrant was issued. Police and our security agents went in." McNaghten said there had been "absolutely no wiretapping. The phone company doesn't wiretap."

The four arrested were charged with violation of penal code 502.7, a California statute that deals with toll fraud. There are federal laws that relate to blue-box use, but those were not invoked in this case. "The penalties for conviction depend on the amount of money and time involved," McNaghten said. "It can be a felony if there is more than \$200 within 12 consecutive months. I'm not at liberty to say how much is involved in this case; generally, the maximum penalty would be imprisonment in a state penitentiary for not more than five years and/or a \$5000 fine."

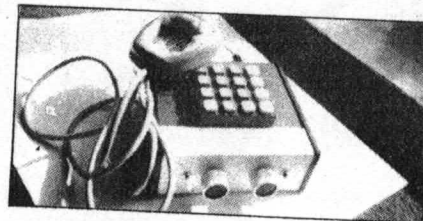
Turner had originally been booked on

a felony, but Lt. Henry Solorio, press relations officer for the Inglewood police, said that the charge was later reduced to a misdemeanor. The three others were also booked on misdemeanor charges.

Peter Brown, attorney for the defendants, said he didn't know how much money was involved. "I'm sure that will come out at the April 15th arraignment, when the phone company has to decide exactly what monies they're going to claim."

The bust took place at 1:30 PM when two uniformed policemen, five plainclothes agents (led by narcotics-and-vice officer, Sergeant Shovlin) and one policewoman barged through Bolic's front door (it was open) with a search warrant. Tom Thacker, who said he works as liaison between United Artists Records and Turner and also helps with Turner's publishing, said he was in the glass-enclosed reception area when they came in.

When the police entered, Turner was locked in the studio behind a steel door, recording basic tracks for the next Ike and Tina album. There was no way to communicate through the heavy door, and despite repeated banging by the



police, it was not opened. After about two hours the police forced the door open.

"They were looking for Ike, that's who they really wanted," Rubinstein said. When Turner finally emerged from the studio, he cooperated with police and unlocked the door to the upstairs apartment (which opens only when a certain phone number is dialed, and only Turner knows the magic number).

"They tested everything in that apartment, the sugar, flour, coffee, everything. They were obviously looking for narcotics up there, but they didn't find any," Thacker smiled.

Rubinstein, in good spirits after his release, said, "The publicity is wonderful. Ike and Tina were scheduled to play in Fresno the night after this happened; it got on the news in Fresno, and the concert was sold out *that night*."