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Title           **Fraudulent Phone Calls Charged in Grant County**

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Abstract       James R. Mischel, 36, of Ephrata and Ralph R. Barclay, 19, of Grant Orchards, arrested for blue box fraud.

Keywords      Ralph Barclay; blue box; Pacific Northwest Bell

Notes          Publication date is approximate

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# Fraudulent Phone Calls Charged In Grant County

EPHRATA—In a strange case, two men were arrested here Friday on charges of making fraudulent telephone calls with a device one of them had invented.

Men from the Grant County prosecutor's office, the sheriff's office and the telephone company made a lightning-like arrest of an Ephrata photo studio operator and a 19-year-old Grant Orchards college student.

Arrested were James R. Mischel, 36, Ephrata, and Ralph R. Barclay, 19, Grant Orchards, a residential and farm located between Soap Lake and Ephrata.

They were accused of operating a machine which apparently could

bypass telephone company long distance machines, enabling them to avoid paying for long distance calls around the country.

Few details were revealed. A special investigator and a technician from Pacific-Northwest Bell Telephone Co. were in Ephrata this morning studying a device reportedly invented by the Grant Orchards youth. The device, when seized yesterday afternoon, was hooked into the

telephone lines at the studio in Ephrata operated by Mischel, according to police.

The device itself is hardly larger than a shoe box and has about 12 keys on the face of it. This, along with a telephone dial, was all the visible workings of the machine. The inside of the box was equipped with electronic tubes and other materials that were purchased at regular supply stores, officers said.

Although the operation and the device are highly interesting and complicated, Grant County Prosecutor Paul Klasen said the only charge against the two was that of making fraudulent telephone calls, only a misdemeanor under a Washington State law enacted in 1955.

Both the telephone technician and the company's special investigator were quiet on many details of the operation, partly for security reasons, and partly because they lacked details themselves on the workings of the rig.

From information available, officers indicated the youth apparently built the device last year while at Washington State University, where he was a freshman. He read telephone manuals available to anyone and then built the device.

The telephone company investigator said he was greatly impressed with the cooperation of Grant County law enforcement officials and those of the prosecutor's office. He said they arrived in Ephrata at noon yesterday and made their arrests about four hours later.

He said the company had been aware that something abnormal was going on through their equipment.

One ironic twist: Barclay applied for a part-time job this summer with the company, but since they use practically no part-time employees, the telephone company could not use him

## Student Accused Of Phone Fraud

EPHRATA, Sept. 16.—(U.P. I.)—Ralph R. Barclay, 19, a Washington State University sophomore, was arrested here last night on charges of constructing an intricate machine that made it possible to bypass direct-dialing long-distance telephone systems.

Barclay, who resides on a farm near Soap Lake, was released in \$100 bail. His telephone calls ended with confiscation of the complicated device which hooked into the lead wires of a phone.

Grant County Sheriff Cecil H. Gilman arrested Barclay and Prosecutor Paul Klasen filed a misdemeanor charge of making a fraudulent telephone call against the youth.

Also arrested on the same charge was James R. Mischel, 36, local photographer in whose studio the machine was connected. Mischel was released on his personal recognition.

Investigators said the device enabled the caller to get in touch with information operators at distant points, then leave the telephone line open while the call by-passed a timing center which would determine the cost of the call.

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