



Exploding The Phone

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Abstract Untitled telephone company profile of John Draper, including his background and arrests.

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JOHN DRAPER (alias Captain Crunch)

John Thomas Draper was born in San Francisco, California, on March 11, 1943, second of three children born to Harry and Olivine Draper. Draper's father was a career enlisted man with the United States Army and the United States Air Force. Draper attended public and private schools in California, England and Germany due to his father's transfers with the Air Force, and finally graduated from Pioneer High School in San Jose in June of 1963.

While in high school, Draper developed a great interest in electronics and ham radio. He attended a junior college from 1963 to 1964, and since 1971, obtained additional credits in engineering, electronics and science from several local colleges. Draper appears to possess above average intelligence with a superior intellect in electronics and science.

Draper enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1964. He obtained a certificate in electronics from the electronics school at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, and served tours of duty in Alaska and Maine. Draper was honorably discharged with the rank of Airman Second Class in August, 1968.

Draper's employment varies from 1968 through the present, with a break in 1970 when he went to England for a month's vacation. Upon returning from England, Draper decided to return to school due to his difficulty in finding employment. In all of the jobs Draper held, he was employed, basically, as an electronics technician.

Draper attributes his interest in phone freaking to a group of blind persons he became involved with in 1970. He received a great deal of publicity through an October, 1971 Esquire article which popularized the term "Phone Phreak". As is well known, Draper's alias of Captain Crunch resulted from the whistles packed in Captain Crunch cereal which, when blown, emitted a 2600 hertz tone. These were used by phone phreaks to condition a switching machine to receive blue box digits.

Until Draper was 29 years of age, he had not been involved in any known criminal activity, but was one of the best known of the phreaks. However, on May 4, 1972, he was arrested by the FBI in California for making at least 7 illegal phone calls to Australia, New York and Oklahoma by use of a blue box. On November 29, 1972, he was convicted in U. S. District Court in Los Angeles for Fraud by Wire. In December, 1972, he was sentenced to 5 years probation, \$1,000 fine and was given a warning by the Court to behave or "suffer" the consequences. Nevertheless, Draper was convicted of a similar offense less than three and a half years after being placed on federal probation. After again being charged with Fraud by Wire, Draper

served a 4 month sentence at the Federal Prison at Lompoc, California, beginning October 4, 1976.

During this time, Draper wrote to Congressman McCloskey making various claims about his ability to monitor conversations on the telephone network.* McCloskey referred the allegations to the General Accounting Office in Washington for investigation, who, in turn, referred them to the Bell System for response. Draper, in describing a system he referred to as "Autoverify" claimed, "anybody with a blue box could easily access these circuits". The interpretation was that, "Autoverify" was a busy verification system that could be accessed by a blue box user giving them the ability to monitor anyone's telephone conversations. Investigation of this claim identified a PT&T panel office in Oakland, California, which had a trunk class mark missing, allowing calls from other than operators to access that office's busy verification. This mistake was corrected and a nationwide survey was made to insure all verification was secure from access by outsiders. The Bell System response was forwarded to the General Accounting Office in December, 1976.

On October 22, 1977, Draper was arrested in Canadensis, Pa, along with Andrew Wright. About 15 other people were in the home with Draper and Wright but were not arrested. Draper and Wright were charged with possession and usage of electronic fraud devices. Calls were made to a dimension PBX customer, LaMaur Company, Inc., a cosmetics firm.

Draper had in his possession at the time of his arrest, the telephone number #319-555-1088. This was identified as an echo suppressor test number in the Long Lines switching center in Davenport, Iowa. This number is available for testing as #319-959-1088, but due to a shortage of call store memory in this machine, either 555 or 959 would access the echo suppressor test line. The test line consists of 2 test ports, therefore, a second call to the same number enabled each of the calling parties to converse since they were connected together through the test ports. Both of these test ports returned answer supervision to the calling parties.

The device confiscated by police when Draper and Wright were arrested is described as an "Apple" (trade name) micro-processor and a mini computer, consisting of a circuit board approximately 16" X 20" containing integrated circuits. This mini computer was designed and presumably built by Draper and is used as an interface between the Apple processor and telephone lines.

*Draper offered his services as a "consultant" to the Government at this time and it appears this letter was an attempt to avoid being incarcerated. A similar tactic seems to be emerging with his 1977 arrests.

Instructions are fed to this mini computer by a cassette tape player and the results are displayed on a small TV monitor connected to the mini computer. This device has the capability of producing Touch Tones, dial pulses and multi-frequency tones used in blue boxes.

Bell Labs' analysis indicates this device is used to scan WATS numbers in sequence to locate a customer who has a WATS box. The device will then try combinations of four digits until the password digits are identified. The device then scans to identify the 2 digit user code. This scanning is done automatically, and when the codes are identified, an audible alarm sounds and coding information is displayed on the TV screen.

On December 27, 1977, Draper was arrested in Weehauken, New Jersey, for possession of a red box; i.e., a cigarette pack size box which simulates the sounds generated by coin deposits in a coin telephone. This arrest stemmed from a vehicle incident in which Draper's car was towed by police from a service station. When Draper appeared to claim his car, a police search, based on a bulge in Draper's pocket, revealed the red box. A partial blue box and other electronic devices, which Draper disclaimed knowledge of, were found in the car. Draper states, in recent interviews, that his arrest was due to the finding of the items in the car rather than possession, on his person, of a red box.

A hearing on the red box charge has been postponed twice by Draper since he told the court he is in poor health. The hearing is presently scheduled for the second week in February, 1978. New Jersey Bell Security believes the charges will be dismissed since New Jersey statutes do not make possession of a fraud device punishable by law. There is no evidence indicating Draper used the red box.

The recent press releases by Draper in which he alleges the Bell System can monitor conversations by use of a system called REMOB (Remote Observation) have generated considerable investigative effort. This effort is to determine if any feature of Bell System maintenance or observation systems can be misused resulting in an outsider being able to monitor customer conversations.

The investigation to date has resulted in identification of a remote service observing system used to observe employee response to customers reporting troubles on the 611 trouble reporting number. This system is in use in several operating companies and is called "REMOB" in some of them. Phone Phreak informants have told their security contacts that this is what Draper is referring to in his press conferences.

The investigation by several operating company security and engineering groups and by Bell Laboratories is continuing.

On January 31, 1978 Draper testified before a Federal Grand Jury in Des Moines, Iowa, regarding his allegations of the telephone company testing a device to provide monitoring capability on customer calls. No details of this testimony have been made public. No telephone company employees have been requested to appear as of this date.

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