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'Blue Box' Battle Boils

Ma Bell is stepping up her campaign against the "blue box."

The boxes, about the size of a cigaret pack, emit sound tones that duplicate those which trigger automatic telephone switching circuits **all over the world. The possessor of a box can place long distance calls to anywhere in the world without activating the phone company's billing equipment.**

Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co., a Bell System unit, has filed a \$100,000 suit against Amateur Radio 73 magazine for publishing plans in its June issue showing how to build a blue box. The suit also asks unspecified compensation for all the unpaid calls that will be made by people who build boxes from the magazine's plans.

Blue box cases have been growing in recent months. Networks of blue box hobbyists, who just like to chat, are known to exist, along with serious use by businessmen and, allegedly, organized crime. Financier Bernie Cornfield was accused last week of making thousands of dollars worth of calls to Europe with a blue box.