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Abstract      AP wire story on Greenstar Congressional hearings.

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Notes         Archive sheet notes that this article also appeared in the Jackson Patriot, the Ann Arbor News and the Midland Daily News.

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# Phone Monitoring Termed Necessity

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation's largest telephone company used an elaborate electronic process to winnow illegally placed telephone calls from 30 million calls it monitored randomly in the late 1960s, a spokesman has said.

The process, which eventually reduced to 1.5 million the number of calls listened to by American Telephone and Telegraph Co. employees, involved electronic detection of special signals that occur at the start of telephone calls, a House subcommittee was told Tuesday.

H. W. William Caming, an AT&T attorney specializing in industrial security, said the company lost at least \$1 million in the late 1960s as a result of the illegal use of electronic devices that circumvent the billing process.

Without the monitoring, "these losses would rapidly reach staggering proportions, soaring into the tens and hundreds of millions of dollars and jeopardizing our very ability to provide telephone service to this nation," he said.

Caming also told the House Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on courts, civil liberties, and the administration of justice that AT&T was still monitoring portions of some calls.

He said such monitoring was necessary to gain evidence of prosecutions involving electronic toll fraud.

Rep. Robert W. Kastenmeier, D-Wis., the subcommittee chairman, said Justice Department officials would testify at future hearings.

Rep. Robert F. Drinan, D-Mass., criticized AT&T for not turning the fraud investigations over to the Justice Department.

Caming said the company tried to get as much evidence as it could before seeking help from law enforcement agencies. He said AT&T was required by law to reduce such fraud in order to bill all customers equally.

Information about the original monitoring system was disclosed by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch earlier this year.

Caming said the 30 million calls were monitored from 1967 to 1970 in Los Angeles, New York, Newark, N.J., St. Louis, Detroit and Miami.

He said approximately 28.5 million calls were not recorded for further testing because the electronic signals they emitted indicated the calls were being conducted in a legal manner.

But 1.5 million were recorded automatically in the six locations and at least 25,000 were "provably illegal," he said.