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Bibliographic Cover Sheet

Title	Michigan Bell denies illegal eavesdropping
Publication	<i>Detroit News</i>
Date	1975-02-07
V/I/P	p. 8b
Abstract	Michigan Bell states that its participation in AT&T's toll fraud surveillance system program was legal.
Keywords	Michigan Bell Telephone Co. (MB); eavesdropping; wiretapping; J. H. Shuler (VP and Gen. Counsel, MB); American Telephone and Telegraph Co. (AT&T); Pic Wagner (PR Mgr., MB); toll fraud; William P. Mullane, Jr.; Greenstar
Notes	News Clips sheet includes a typed list of related AP and UPI stories with publication names and story titles.

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Michigan Bell denies illegal eavesdropping

Michigan Bell officials insist they are complying with all federal and state laws when the firm tape-records portions of some long-distance telephone calls in suspected fraud cases.

"We emphasize there has been no illegal monitoring or taping of telephone calls and conversations," J.H. Shuler, Michigan Bell vice-president

and general counsel, said in a statement issued yesterday.

"The Bell System's methods of gathering evidence of electronic toll fraud have been tested and upheld in numerous court cases," he said.

The denial came after a story which said Michigan Bell may be violating a state law passed in 1966 which makes it a felony for anyone to listen in to

a telephone conversation without the approval of the parties involved.

From 1964 to 1970, the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. (AT&T) and its Bell System affiliates taped 1.5 million calls nationally to identify toll-fraud cheaters. The same equipment was used in Detroit from 1965 to 1967, a Michigan Bell spokesman said.

However, since 1970 Michigan Bell has used more sophisticated devices which can electronically identify the illegal calls without human

eavesdropping, according to Pic Wagner, Michigan Bell press relations manager.

Only then, when suspected cheaters have been identified, are their conversations monitored, he said. Wagner said up to two minutes of each conversation in such cases is tape-recorded in order to establish legal evidence of the parties' identities.

In 1974, 50 calls originating in Michigan out of a total of about 465 million were monitored that way in investigations of six suspected fraud cases, he said.