



Exploding The Phone

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Title **Phone Freaks Invade Computer Networks**

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Abstract Description of phone phreak "sophisticates" access to computer networks, including COMLINK and ARPANET. "S22 is continuing its investigation to verify the Phone Freaks' claims and is developing a technical database from which communications threat conclusions can be drawn." From January 1976 interview of two phone phreaks with FBI in Los Angeles, CA.

Keywords NSA; FBI; sophisticates; ARPANET; Los Angeles, CA

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PHONE FREAKS INVADe COMPUTER NETWORKS (S)

During an investigation of Phone Freaks invading the AUTOVON system it was also disclosed that certain elements of the Phone Freak community known as "sophisticates" have expanded their activities to include accessing computer networks. This activity is not limited to computer systems that can be accessed via the telephone, but also includes those which are accessed via Teletypewriters (TTY's) and Cathode Ray Tubes (CRT's). They claim that they cannot only obtain information stored in computers but can also reprogram some computers and store their own information in them so that other "sophisticates" can obtain information on what computer systems can be accessed and the procedures for doing it.

Two "sophisticates" were interviewed in Los Angeles on 22 January 1976. One claimed that he had accessed, or at least could if he wanted to, access computer systems of the Rand Corporation, AT&T, California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Social Security and a military materiel ordering system which he identified as COMLINK. Some of these could be accessed by telephone and others require a TTY.

The other stated that he, and others, had accessed the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) network via the terminal at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles (USC). Once in that net, they can access other computers that interface with the ARPA net, including NSA! Although he has never accessed the NSA computer, he "has heard" that others have but that they are unable to reprogram it or obtain information from it because it is "clocked". The ARPA network must be accessed with a TTY or CRT.

As was the case in accessing AUTOVON, both "sophisticates" adamantly deny any motive other than "just being able to do it". While this may be true, the capability discloses a potentially lucrative source of intelligence. S22 is continuing its investigation to verify the Phone Freaks' claims and is developing a technical data base from which communications threat conclusions can be drawn.

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