



Exploding The Phone

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Title **Phone Device Ban by AT&T Upheld**

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Abstract FCC issues final ruling once again saying that the "unrestricted use of the Hush-a-Phone could result in a general deterioration of the quality of interstate and foreign telephone service."

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PHONE DEVICE BAN BY A.T.&T. UPHELD

**F. C. C. Rules Company Can
Bar Use of Attachments
Made by Others**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (AP)—The Federal Communications Commission upheld today the right of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and its associated companies to forbid the use of telephone attachments not furnished by these companies or sanctioned by them.

The commission, acting on a seven-year-old case, ruled "that the phone companies properly objected to the use of the 'Hush-A-Phone' device on Bell System equipment.

The "Hush-A-Phone" is a cup-like device that snaps on the telephone mouthpiece, shuts out surrounding noise and provides privacy to the telephone talker.

The Hush-A-Phone Corporation of New York, and Harry C. Tuttle, its president, brought a complaint against the Bell System regulations on Dec. 22, 1948, and demanded that the F. C. C. order "Hush-A-Phone" use.

The matter was heard in early 1950, but because of the death of the hearing examiner, who ordinarily would recommend an initial decision, the commission itself took over the hearing record for action. It decided initially in February, 1951 that the Hush-A-Phone complaint should be dismissed, but held the case open for further pleadings and possibly reconsideration.

Final Decision Issued

The final decision issued today said:

"The unrestricted use of the 'Hush-A-Phone' could result in a general deterioration of the quality of interstate and foreign telephone service. Accordingly, it is not an unjust and unreasonable practice upon the part of the defendants to prohibit its use in connection with their telephone services.

"It is necessary and proper that the use of foreign attachments be subject to control by the defendants through reasonable tariff regulations."

The commission said the "Hush-A-Phone" provides "significant privacy" against eavesdroppers and also excludes considerable noise from telephone circuits. On the other hand, the commission found that the device sometimes results in loss of voice intelligibility, and also has an adverse affect on voice recognition and naturalness.

The commission noted that the Bell System companies offer to their telephone users push-button switches to exclude surrounding noise from phone circuits.

The New York Times

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