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# JERSEY BELL GIVES MONITORING DATA

Hearing Told That Practice

Aims to Check Its Service

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NEWARK, Feb. 28—Senior officials of the New Jersey Bell Telephone Company today defended their current and past telephone-monitoring practices as being done solely to "audit the quality of our product, service."

After the day-long hearing before the State Board of Public Utility Commissioners, Commissioner Joe Jacobson said he was "unsatisfied" with the Bell testimony.

Rocco J. Marano, vice president for operations of New Jersey Bell, told the hearing officers that current company practice was "to observe one of every 2,800 calls handled by a central telephone office." The prime purpose of such observations, Mr. Marano said, is to discover how effectively the company's equipment is functioning.

In testimony made public earlier this week, New Jersey Bell acknowledged that it had monitored 2.6 million telephone calls in the state between November, 1966, and March, 1970, and recorded 280,000 of those calls as part of its effort to discover the extent of "electronic toll fraud."

This morning, Donald J. Stevenson, an assistant vice president of the company, gave a demonstration on how such monitoring took place and described the mechanism of so-called electronic "blue boxes" used to trick the telephone company's billing devices into not recording toll calls.

The purpose of today's hearing was to review the procedures, equipment and services offered by New Jersey Bell and seven smaller state telephone companies in toll fraud detection, service observations and other services for monitoring subscribers.

The last such public hearing took place before the commission on Jan. 28, 1969. As today's session opened, Mr. Jacobson, a former senior official with the United Auto Workers Union, issued a strong statement challenging the concept of monitoring by New Jersey Bell of customer telephones.

He said, "We solicit an explanation as to why, during the progress of this operation, details were kept from this board and, of course, from public knowledge."

The commissioner said he regarded such a question "as more than academic" because New Jersey Bell officials had stated during testimony in the 1969 hearing that "the only thing we listen to are conversations directed by the public to us."