

A. T. & T. to Tell Clients of Subpoenas

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 15—The American Telephone and Telegraph Company announced today that it would begin notifying all customers whose long-distance phone records are subpoenaed by Government investigators in the future unless the investigators raise a formal objection.

The telephone company also said that it would no longer provide long-distance records to law enforcement agencies on the basis of an informal written request but only in response to a subpoena or administrative summons.

The policy changes reflected rising protests over the news that various A.T.&T. subsidiaries have surrendered toll call records of newspaper offices and reporters to the Internal Revenue Service without notifying any of the companies or individuals involved.

The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, which is suing the company to halt such secret subpoenas, said today that the changes announced by A.T.&T. were "not satisfactory."

Exception Made

The company announcement by Edward G. Greber, vice president of A. T. & T. for Customer Services, said that subscribers would be notified of subpoenas of their records "except where the agency requesting the records directs the company not to disclose, certifying that such notification could impede its investigation and interfere with enforcement of the law."

"This qualification," the reporters committee said in a statement, "potentially nullifies the telephone company's entire

commitment to provide advance notification."

The committee, a Washington-based research and legal defense group, has been seeking a guarantee from the company that any reporter whose records are demanded by investigators have enough notice so they can challenge the subpoena in court if he wishes.

"We are deeply concerned about the need to protect individual privacy," Mr. Greber said in making the announcement. "We would prefer not to reveal anything to anybody about the billing records of our

customers, but obviously we must honor subpoenas served upon us."

There would be a notice to persons whose records were subpoenaed when the subpoena was served and a letter within 24 hours.

Meanwhile, Donald C. Alexander, Commissioner of Internal Revenue, did not reach a decision today as to whether the I.R.S. would surrender toll-call records for the home telephone of David E. Rosenbaum, a reporter in The New York Times Washington bureau.