

## **General of Florida, FBI find student free-calls racket**

Joe Engressia, a blind college student, whistled his way past long distance circuits and placed free calls across the country until he was found out by telephone officials.

Although the telephone company does not want to prosecute him, he may find himself disconnected from college. Engressia, blind since birth, said that he made about \$25 placing calls for students at the rate of \$1 each when his thriving business was discovered by authorities.

Engressia said he whistles with perfect pitch, and he found he could place calls by whistling varying series of a precise tone over the receiver. The tone can vary only 5 per cent, plus or minus, from 2,600 cycles per second.

To make a toll-free call, the youth said, he would dial long distance information to any city. Before the operator answered, he would whistle the area code. If it were 212, for instance, he would whistle rapidly twice, pause, whistle once, pause, then twice again. Then he would whistle the seven-digit local number. Engressia said he first realized his talent when he was 8, and he jumbled a call by whistling while waiting for the party to answer.

His hoax was discovered when Engressia tried to call a Long Island, N.Y., number for a student, but got a Montreal operator. He asked her to help him dial the correct Long Island number.

"She was suspicious and monitored the call," he said. "Naturally, the student I put the call through for talked extensively about the 'whiz kid' who had placed his free call. The operator broke in and managed to get the student to identify himself and where he was calling from. . . .

"I think he'd be an asset to our company," said H. E. Mason, security officer for General Telephone Co. of Florida. "But I don't think he will be able to work for us because he'd have to be on a part-time basis."

Mason said the company decided it had nothing to gain by prosecuting a blind college student, but added that he had turned over "evidence" in the case to the FBI.

J. F. Santoiana Jr., FBI agent in charge, said his office had investigated, and determined no federal violation was involved.