

ORIGINAL

Decision No. _____

Decision No. 11929-

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

City of Calexico, a Municipal Corporation,
 Complainant,

Vs.

Case No. 1116.

Imperial Telephone Company, a Corporation,
 and
 The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company,
 a Corporation,
 Defendants.

William P. Butcher, for Complainant..

James T. Shaw, for Defendants.

GORDON, Commissioner.

O P I N I O N

This is a complaint of the City of Calexico, Imperial County, against Imperial Telephone Company and The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company to the effect that the equipment maintained and the service provided by these companies at Calexico are inadequate and inefficient, and in which the Railroad Commission is asked to require the companies to provide adequate facilities and efficient service. Defendants have filed their formal answer, generally denying all of the principal allegations of the complaint. The complaint was heard at Calexico on November 6, 1917.

Imperial Telephone Company, which operates at various points in Imperial County, is owned and controlled by The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company. At Calexico, prior to the filing of this complaint, it was operating a "magneto" exchange serving

approximately 275 subscribers. The complaint alleges, among other things, that the use of magneto telephones which require the use of hand generators when signalling the central office operators, results in various and frequent delays and interruptions to service, both local and long distance.

Since this complaint was filed with the Railroad Commission, defendants have converted the former magnetic equipment into minor common battery equipment, and have thus removed the objectionable features of the former type. An inspection of the present equipment was made by the Telephone and Telegraph Division of the Commission prior to the hearing, and it appears from this inspection that the prayer of complainants that adequate equipment be provided has been satisfied. Service observations were also taken, both prior and subsequent to the hearing. These observations indicate that the service has become satisfactory except that the operators are frequently unduly slow in responding. The service observations which were taken by the Commission's representatives, however, show that the fault does not lie entirely with the operators. During conversations between subscribers, or as long as a subscriber's telephone receiver remains off the hook at his telephone, a signal light continues to show at the switchboard. When the telephone receiver is restored to the hook, the signal light is extinguished, indicating to the operator that the conversation has been completed. If at that moment the operator may happen, as frequently occurs, to be engaged in setting up a connection for another subscriber who has called in, and if, before she has had an opportunity to observe that the first subscriber's signal light has been extinguished, he may again take down the telephone receiver to place another call, she may allow him to wait, not knowing that his first conversation has been completed.

When taking these service observations, it was also noted that, in some instances after the completion of conversations, subscribers attempted to recall the operators without first having returned the telephone receiver to the hook, thereby giving no indication that first conversations had been concluded. While in such cases as those referred to, the subscriber is clearly at fault, it was also observed on a number of tests which were made that, with reasonable care on the part of the subscriber to allow a reasonable time within which to clear his line before again calling in, an average time of approximately thirty seconds was required to engage the operator's attention. Occasional delays will of necessity occur, particularly during abnormally busy periods, but with the exercise of reasonable care by the subscriber and with proper supervision on the part of operators, such delays will be the exception rather than the rule. This complaint is one which it seems is too general at Calexico, and is a matter as to which the Commission will insist that defendants promptly apply the necessary corrective measures.

The following order is recommended.

O R D E R

Complaint having been filed with the Railroad Commission by the City of Calexico, a municipal corporation, complainant, vs. Imperial Telephone Company, a corporation, and The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, a corporation, defendants, a public hearing having been held, and this proceeding having been submitted and being now ready for decision,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the defendants herein, Imperial Telephone Company and The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, at once take the necessary steps to overcome and correct delays by

operators in answering subscribers' calls as set forth in the opinion which precedes this order.

IT IS HEREBY FURTHER ORDERED that in all other respects the above entitled proceeding be and the same is hereby dismissed.

The foregoing opinion and order are hereby approved and ordered filed as the opinion and order of the Railroad Commission of the State of California.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 19th day of December, 1917.

Max Thelen
H. Loveland
W. Gordon
Edwin O. Edgerton

Commissioners.