United States Patent

[11] **3,555,209**

[72] Inventor **Rainseford H. Ireland**
North Kildonan, Manitoba, Canada

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[73] Assignee **John Oliver Blick**
[32] Priority **Apr. 1, 1968**
[33] **Canada**
[31] **16,379**

[54] **TELEPHONE SECURITY DEVICE**
11 Claims, 24 Drawing Figs.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **179/189**
[51] **Int. Cl.** **H04m 1/66**
[50] **Field of Search** 179/189D, 189, 179

[56] **References Cited**

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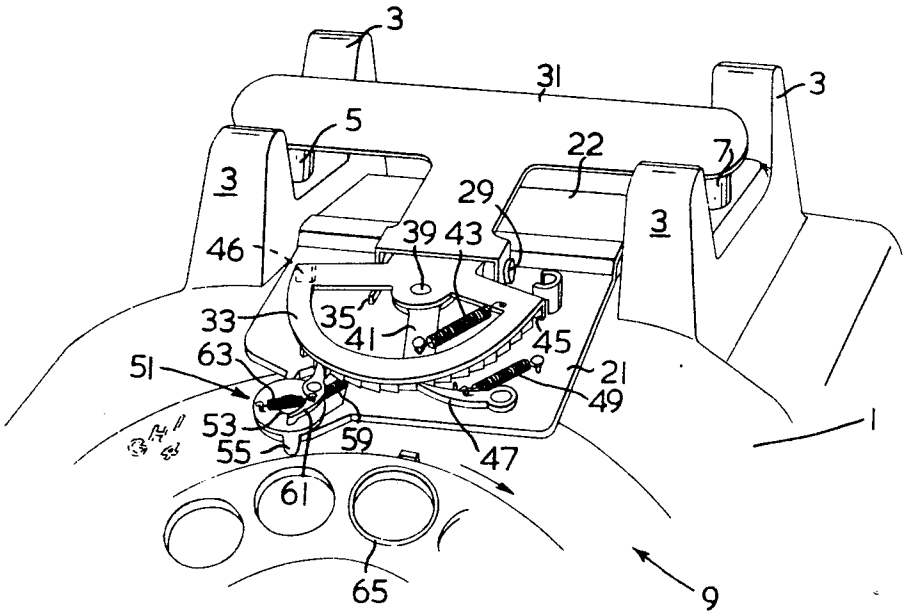
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Primary Examiner—Kathleen H. Claffy
Assistant Examiner—Thomas W. Brown
Attorney—Cushman, Darby & Cushman

ABSTRACT: In order to prevent the unauthorized use of dial-type telephones to make long distance calls, the security device of the present invention is fitted to the outer case of a standard desk or wall-type telephone instrument. In position, it permits the dialing of up to, say, eight digits, and then prevents the dialing of any further digits until the telephone handpiece has been replaced and removed. The number of digits permitted will depend upon the type of installation, eight digits being used in a PABX: in a PABX a long distance direct dialed call requires the dialing of 9-1-and seven digits, i.e. nine digits in all, and any attempted call is aborted in the absence of the last digit. A lug on the rotatable dial mechanically sets a stop after eight dialings, which stop then engages the lug to prevent the ninth dialing.



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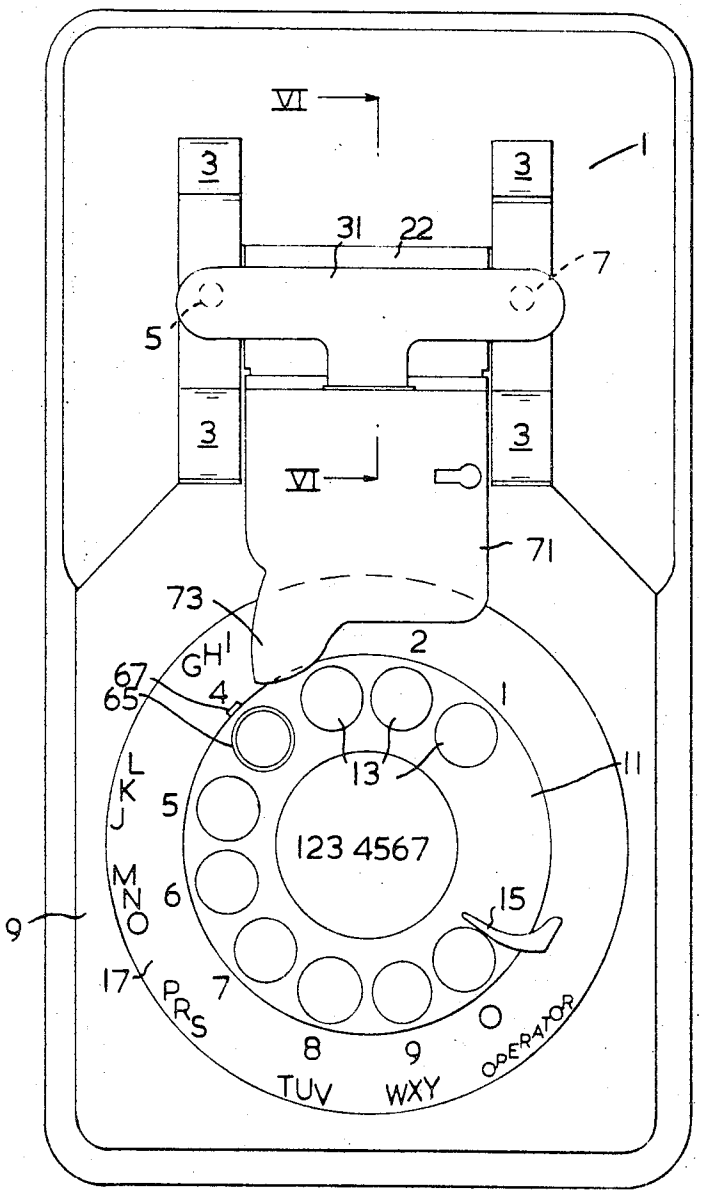


FIG. 1

Inventor
Rainsford V. Ireland
By Cushman, Darby & Cushman
Attorneys

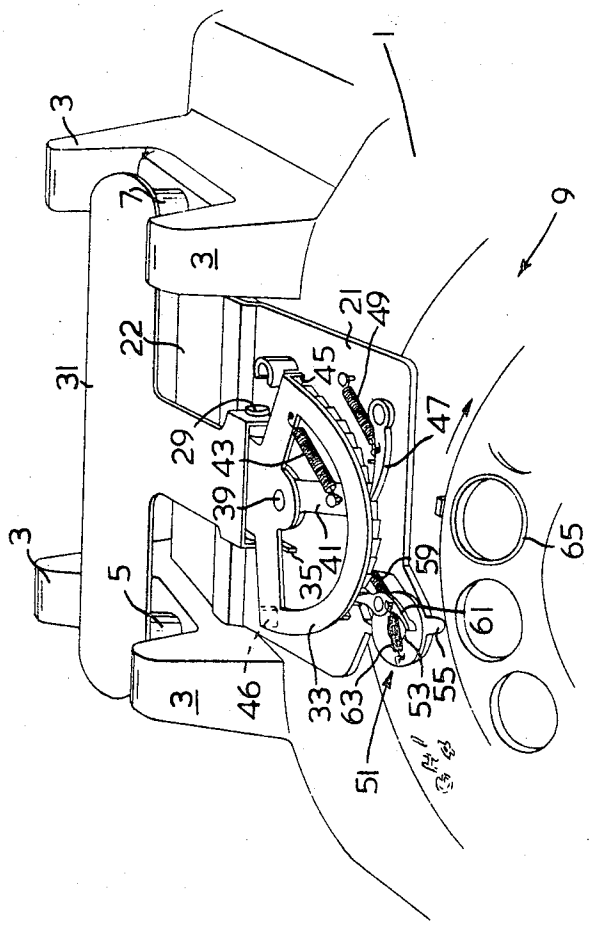


FIG. 2

Inventor
Rainsford N. Ireland

By Cushman, Darby & Cushman
Attorneys

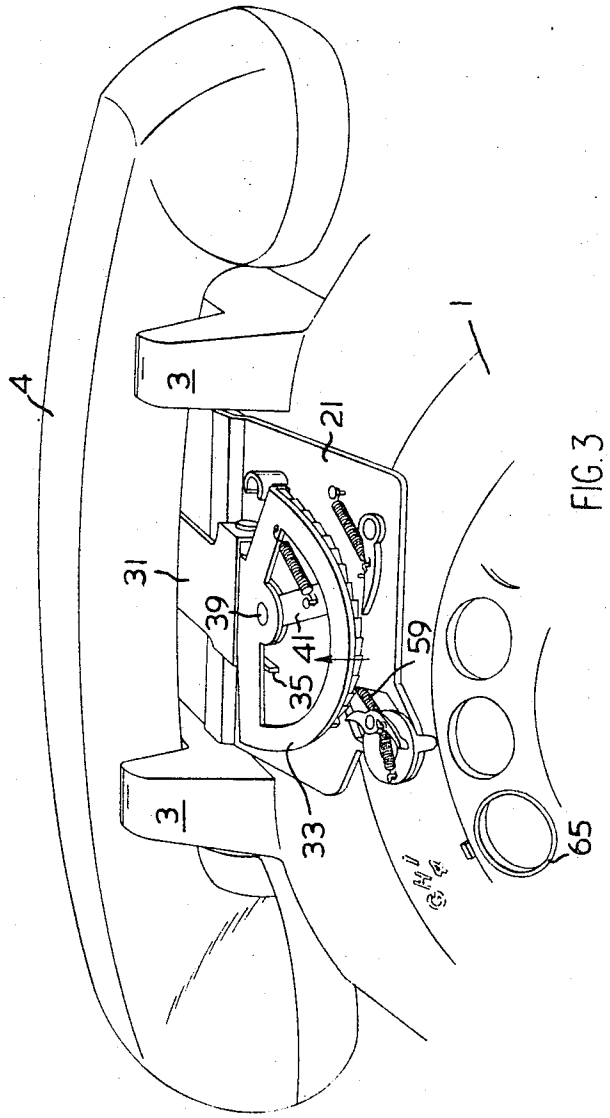


FIG. 3

Inventor
Rainsford A. Ireland
by Cushman, Darby & Cushman
Attorneys

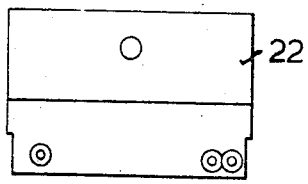


FIG.4

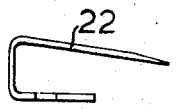


FIG.5

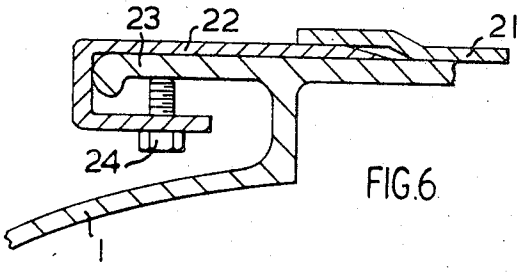


FIG.6

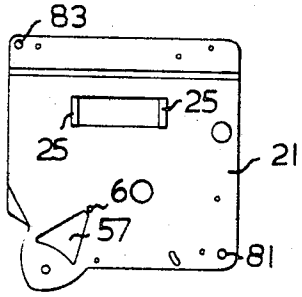


FIG.7

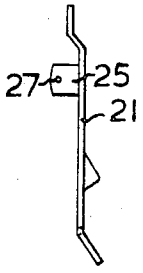


FIG.8

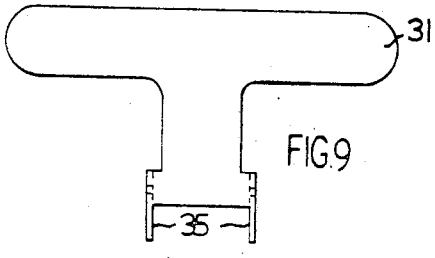


FIG.9



FIG.10

Inventor
Rainsford H. Ireland
By Cushman, Darby & Cushman
Attorneys

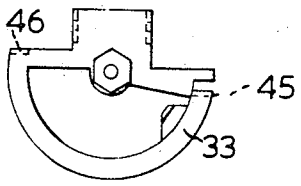


FIG.11

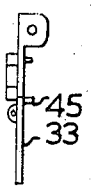


FIG.12

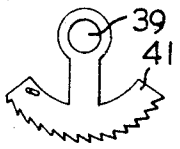


FIG.13



FIG.14

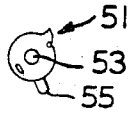


FIG.15

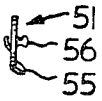


FIG.16

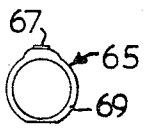


FIG.17

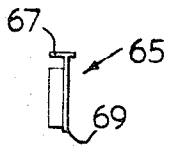


FIG.18

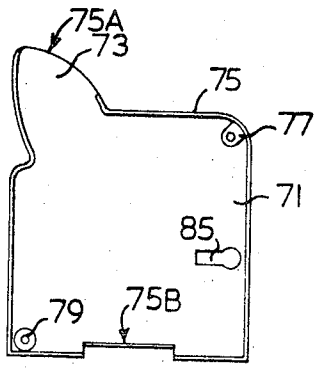


FIG.19

Inventor
Raineford H. Ireland
By Cushman, Darby & Cushman
Attorneys

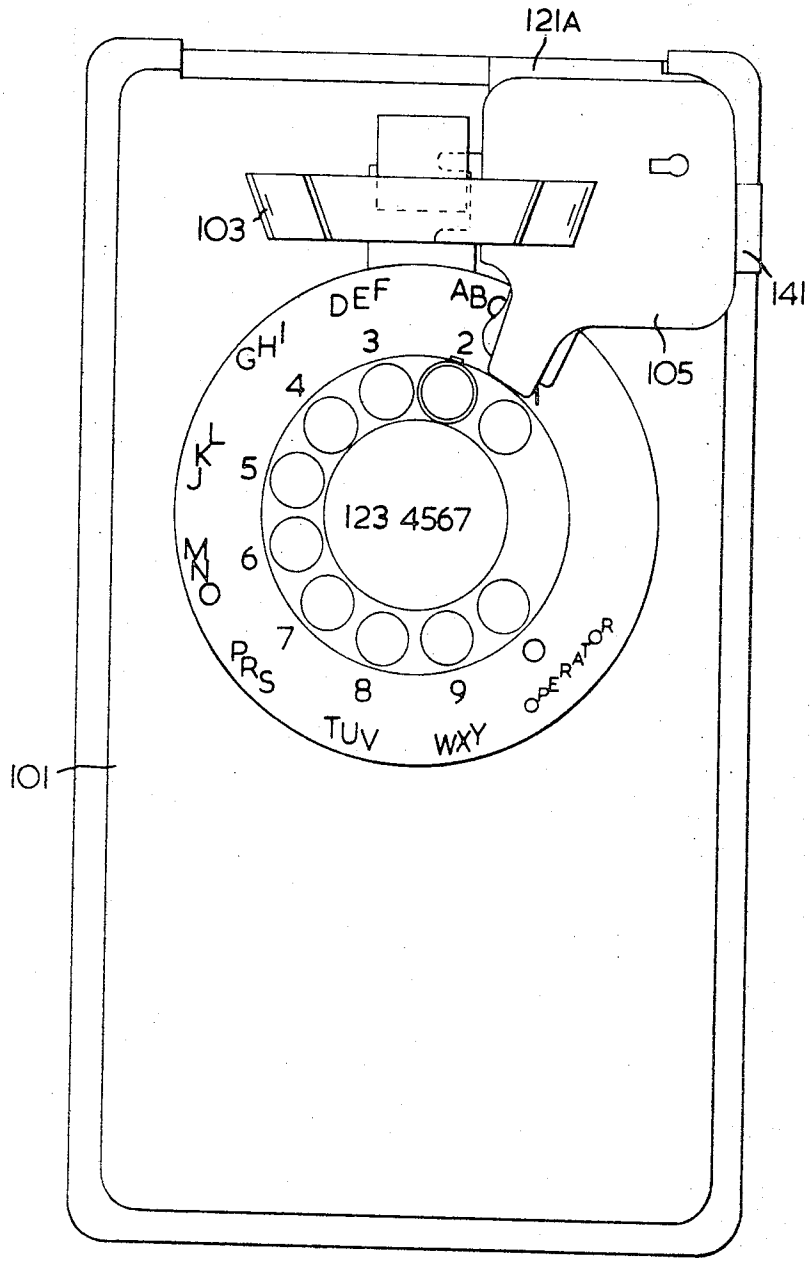


FIG. 20

Inventor
Rainsford K. Ireland.
By Cushman, Darby & Cushman
Attorneys

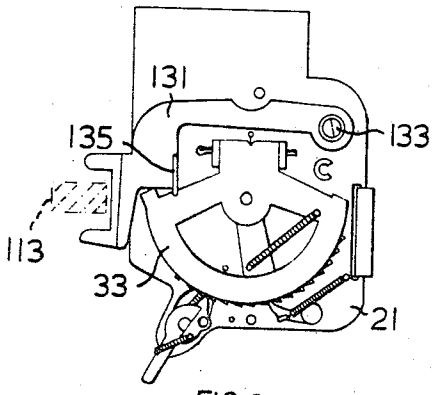


FIG. 21

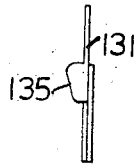


FIG. 22

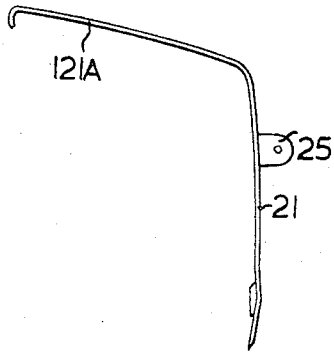


FIG. 23

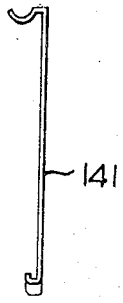


FIG. 24

Inventor
Rainsford K. Ireland
By Cushman, Darby & Cushman
Attorneys

TELEPHONE SECURITY DEVICE

This invention relates to dial-type telephone sets, in which a user can by repeated operation of the dial make use of automatic exchange facilities to cause his connection to another telephone set.

In commerce and in industry large privately owned telephone installations are often used, all connected to a private branch exchange (PBX) by means of which any telephone set in the installation can be connected to any other telephone set in the installation without making use of the telephone company lines external to the installation. Thus one common system is for each telephone set in the installation to be provided with a dial by which a user can make use of automatic exchange facilities in the PBX to connect himself automatically to any other telephone in the installation. In many installations, connection to an outside line must be made through an operator at the PBX, for example by dialing 0.

With the development of the size of these installations, the automatic facilities have in many cases been extended so that a user can, by first dialing 9, connect his telephone set to the telephone system of the external telephone company, and can then proceed to dial any external telephone number he wishes. For local calls, this is usually acceptable to the owner of the PBX, and when the system is used to make long distance calls through the telephone operator of the external telephone company, the record of such calls kept by that operator for charging purposes usually is sufficient to prevent any serious abuse of the ability of any telephone user in the installation to make long distance calls.

With the advent of "direct distance dialing," a user of any telephone set in the installation can first dial 9 to obtain connection to the external telephone company equipment, can then dial 1 to obtain automatic connection to the "direct distance dialing" equipment of the external telephone company, and then can proceed to call almost any telephone number in Canada and the United States. The equipment of the external telephone company records all such calls for charging purposes, but only identifies the calling PBX. As a result, the system is open to abuse by users of the telephone sets of the installation, there being no record of which telephone set was used to make the "direct distance dialing" call.

An object of the present invention is the provision of means by which use of a telephone set can be limited to the dialing of numbers having no more than a predetermined number of digits. For example, in a PBX system having less than 999 internal lines, the apparatus of the invention could be used to prevent all except a few of the telephone sets being used for the dialing of numbers having four or more digits, so that all calls external to the PBX must be routed through the PBX operator. The sets not fitted with the apparatus could still be used normally to use the 9 facility. As a further example, in a PBX system where local calls were to be permitted, the apparatus of the invention could be used to prevent the dialing of numbers having more than eight digits. A telephone set so fitted could be used freely to call any other internal telephone set; it could be used to call the PBX operator (by dialing 0); it could be used to call any "local" number (by dialing 9 and then the seven digit local number); it could be used to call the long distance operator (by dialing 9 and then 0); but it could not be used to make a direct dialed long distance call, which would necessitate dialing first 9, then 1, and then a seven figure telephone number. Any attempted call would be automatically aborted by the equipment of the external telephone company when the transmission of the last digit of the seven figure number had been delayed beyond their predetermined calling time limit.

The present invention provides a security device suitable for use with a dial-type telephone set having a handpiece, a cradle or the like on which the handpiece rests when not in use, and a rotary signalling dial, the device being adapted to restrict the use of the dial to the effective dialing of a series of digits no greater in number than a predetermined number, comprising a base member adapted for securement to a standard telephone set, ratchet means carried by the base member and arranged to cooperate with a member affixed to the telephone set dial so that each time the dial is rotated in a clockwise direction with the handpiece removed from the cradle or the like to dial a number, the member affixed to the dial through the ratchet operating means moves the ratchet means through a first predetermined distance, stop means arranged when the ratchet means have been moved through a second predetermined distance from a reset position to prevent further dialing movement of the telephone dial in a clockwise direction, reset means carried by the base member and actuated automatically when the telephone handpiece is restored to its cradle or the like to return the ratchet means to its reset position, and guard means arranged to prevent unauthorized disabling of the security device.

The invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a plan view of a standard desk-type dial telephone set of the cradle type to which the invention has been applied, the combination hand microphone/earphone handpiece and its connecting cord being omitted for the sake of clarity;

FIG. 2 is a perspective drawing of the upper part only of the telephone set shown in FIG. 1, with a security cover for certain parts of the apparatus removed to expose the working of those parts;

FIG. 3 is a perspective drawing similar to FIG. 2 but showing the parts in an alternative working position;

FIG. 4 is a plan view, and FIG. 5 is a side elevation, of a securing clip shown in FIGS. 2 and 3;

FIG. 6 is a sectional side elevation taken on the line VI–VI of FIG. 1;

FIG. 7 is a plan view and FIG. 8 is a side elevation of a base plate shown in FIGS. 2 and 3;

FIG. 9 is a plan view and FIG. 10 is a side elevation of a canceller lever shown in FIGS. 2 and 3;

FIG. 11 is a plan view and FIG. 12 is a side elevation of a ratchet holder shown in FIGS. 2 and 3;

FIG. 13 is a plan view and FIG. 14 is a side elevation of a ratchet member shown in FIGS. 2 and 3;

FIG. 15 is a plan view and FIG. 16 is a side elevation of a ratchet actuator disc shown in FIGS. 2 and 3;

FIG. 17 is a plan view and FIG. 18 is a side elevation of a bush shown in FIGS. 2 and 3;

FIG. 19 is an underneath view of a security cover shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 20 is a front elevation of a standard wall-type (or hook-type) telephone set to which the invention has been applied, the combination hand microphone/earphone handpiece and its connecting cord being omitted for the sake of clarity;

FIG. 21 is a front elevation of a base plate utilized in a security device shown in FIG. 20;

FIG. 22 is a side elevation of a canceller lever shown in FIG. 21;

FIG. 23 is a side elevation of an upper securing clip shown in FIG. 20; and

FIG. 24 is a plan view of a side securing clip shown in FIG. 20.

Referring first to FIGS. 1 to 19, the telephone set comprises a moulded body 1 provided at its upper part with upstanding horns 3 which normally serve to locate axially and laterally a standard combination telephone microphone/earphone handpiece 4. In the set shown, two upstanding buttons 5 and 7 located between the horns are normally depressed by the handpiece, when the handpiece is not in use, and serve to operate switches inside the body 1 to place the telephone set in readiness for receiving incoming calls. In some telephone sets, the two buttons are replaced by a single flat member which is mounted on an upstanding stem slidably carried by the body 1, and again arranged to operate switches inside the body to condition the telephone set for transmission or reception. Mounted on the sloping front part 9 of the body 1 is a rotatable dial 11 formed with 10 fingerholes 13 suitably

spaced around a circle concentric with the axis of rotation of the dial. A finger stop 15 mounted on the body limits the clockwise rotation of the dial by a finger placed in any of the fingerholes, and a return spring (not shown) biases the dial 11 in an anticlockwise direction so that the dial normally assumes the position shown in FIG. 1. A peripheral scale 17 identifies each of the fingerholes, for the convenience of the user of the telephone set.

The preceding description of the telephone set is a description of a standard orthodox desk telephone such as is in use over the whole of North America. The present invention relates to a security device which can be fitted to such a standard telephone set to modify its operation so that the dial 11 can be used to dial, in one effective group, only a number of digits less than a predetermined number of digits.

The embodiment of the security device shown in FIGS. 1 to 19 includes a base plate 21 which is firmly secured to the body 1 by a clip 22 (see plan view FIG. 4 and side elevation FIG. 5) to which it is firmly attached and which extends rearwardly, downwardly and then forwardly round a platform 23 of the body 1, being locked in place by a bolt 24 screwed into clip 22 (see FIG. 6). As will be clear from the plan view of FIG. 7 and the side elevation of FIG. 8, this base plate is provided with two upstanding ears 25 formed with aligned holes 27 through which extends a horizontal pivot pin 29 on which are mounted firstly a canceller lever 31 (see plan view FIG. 9 and side view FIG. 10) and secondly a ratchet holder 33 (see plan view FIG. 11 and side view FIG. 12). The relative disposition of these two parts will be clear from FIG. 2. A small spring (not shown) biases the free end of the ratchet holder 33 downwardly towards the base plate 21, and the canceller lever 31 is provided with two lugs 35 which lie under the ratchet holder 33. As a result, this spring also holds the main part of the lever 31 up away from the body 1 as shown in FIG. 2 so that the two buttons 5 and 7 can rise relatively to the body 1 when the handpiece 4 is removed. On the other hand, if the handpiece is replaced on top of the lever 31 (see FIG. 3), the two lugs 35 will lift the ratchet holder 33 against the action of the biasing spring.

Pivotally mounted on the ratchet holder 33 by a vertical pivot pin 39 is a ratchet member 41 (see plan view FIG. 13 and front elevation FIG. 14) which is biased in an anticlockwise direction, as viewed in plan, by a tension spring 43 acting between an arm of the member and the ratchet holder 33. Thus, unless otherwise held, the ratchet member will assume a position in which its continued movement is checked by its engagement with a stop 45 on the ratchet holder. Travel of the ratchet member 41 in the clockwise direction is limited by engagement of the ratchet member with a stop 46 on the ratchet holder 33. Pivotally mounted on the base plate 21 is a pawl 47 biased by a tension spring 49 into engagement with the teeth of the ratchet member 41. The teeth of the ratchet member are so directed that it can readily be moved in a clockwise direction (viewed in plan) past the pawl, but the pawl normally prevents return movement. Thus the ratchet member will normally be held by the spring 43 in set position engaging the pawl 47.

Also mounted on the base plate 21 is a ratchet actuator 51 (see plan view FIG. 15 and side elevation FIG. 16) in the form of a circular disc rotatably carried by a vertical pivot pin 53 and formed with an outwardly extending lug 55. A downwardly extending peg 56 on the disc is accommodated in an aperture 57 in the base plate 21 and is connected by a tension spring 59 to an anchor point 60 on the base plate. The peg is so located on the disc that the disc is biased in a clockwise direction (as viewed in plan) to a position where the peg engages the side of the aperture 57. Pivotally mounted on the disc of the ratchet actuator is a ratchet 61 biased in a clockwise direction (as viewed in plan) by a tension spring 63 acting between an anchor on the ratchet and an anchor on the disc. The shape of the tip of the ratchet 61 is such that as the disc is moved in an anticlockwise direction by means of the lug 55, the ratchet 61 engages one of the teeth of the ratchet member 41, and moves ratchet member 41 through a sufficient distance for the pawl 47 to step to engage the next tooth of the ratchet member. During clockwise return movement of the disc of actuator 51, the ratchet 61 rides freely over the subjacent teeth of the ratchet member 41.

Mounted in 4 hole of the dial 11 is a metal bush 65 (see underneath view FIG. 17 and side elevation FIG. 18) carrying a lug 67 which lies radially outwardly of the periphery of the dial 11. This bush has a peripheral flange 69 and the tubular part of the bush is inserted in the 4 fingerhole from underneath, the upper end of the tubular part then being rolled over to retain the bush in place.

A security cover 71 is fitted over the mechanism on the base plate 21 to ensure that the mechanism cannot be tampered with to enable unauthorized dialing of numbers with more than a predetermined number of digits. The underneath view of FIG. 19 indicates how this generally square cover is provided with a forward extension 73 which covers the ratchet actuator 51. The cover is provided with a depending peripheral flange 75 which is cut away at 75A to permit movement of the lug 55 of the actuator and is cut away at 75B along the rear edge of the cover to permit free up and down movement of the canceller lever 31. The cover is formed on its underside with two screw-threaded lugs 77 and 79 into which extend bolts extending respectively through aligned holes 81 and 83 in the base plate 21. These bolts are fitted before the base plate is clamped to the telephone handset, and are inaccessible until the base plate is again unclamped. The cover is also formed with a keyhole slot 85, the removable key (not shown) for which includes an inclined surface such that, as the key is turned in the slot, the part of the key provided with the inclined surface engages the underside of the ratchet holder 33 to lift that holder and so disengage the pawl 47 from the teeth of the ratchet member 41.

In use of the telephone handset with the security device fitted to it, the telephone handpiece 4 will rest on the canceller lever 31 as shown in FIG. 3 (the security cover 71 being in place) so that the buttons 5 and 7 are depressed and the telephone set is enabled to receive any incoming calls, To make an outgoing call, the user lifts the handpiece 4, so permitting the spring which acts on the ratchet holder 33 to draw the holder downwards and raising the canceller lever 31 free of the buttons 5 and 7, to enable the switches inside the telephone body 1 for the making of a call. The user then commences to dial his desired number. Since the bush 65 is fitted to the 4 fingerhole 13, and since that is the hole nearest the actuator 51, even if the first numeral 1 is dialed the lug 67 on the bush 65 must pass the lug 55 of the ratchet actuator 51 and so cause an operative partial rotation of the disc of the actuator 51 in an anticlockwise direction. It will be seen that such an action will take place as each digit is dialed, and each such action will by the action of the ratchet 61 on the teeth of the ratchet member 61 cause the ratchet member 61 to step one tooth in a clockwise direction. The pawl 47 will hold the ratchet member in the stepped position.

After the ratchet member 61 has stepped through eight teeth, it engages the stop 46, so that upon a user trying to dial the ninth digit of a nine-digit series, forward movement of the dial 11 will be stopped positively by engagement of lug 67 with lug 55. Lug 55 cannot yield to permit continued movement of the dial 11, since ratchet 61 is held immovable by the ratchet member 61 which in turn is held against further movement by the stop 46.

It will be seen that a user attempting to dial 9 (to obtain connection to the outside telephone company equipment), then 1 (to obtain connection to the automatic direct distance dialing equipment) and then a seven-figure subscriber's number, is prevented from completing the call. On the other hand, when calling the PBX operator (dial 0), or the local exchange (dial 9), or another number on the PBX (dialing three or four digits only), although the ratchet member 61 will be stepped, it will not reach the stop 46.

In the case of any dialed call, or an abortive attempt to use the direct distance dialing equipment, when the handpiece **4** is replaced it will depress the canceling lever **31**, the lugs **35** at the forward end of which then lift the ratchet holder **33** on its pivot pin **29** to raise the teeth of the ratchet member **41** out of engagement with the pawl **47**. The ratchet member then returns automatically to its original position, ready for the use of the dial to dial another number.

The key which has been mentioned above can be provided when it is desired to enable certain members of the staff of an organization to make use of the direct distance dialing facility without recourse to the operator. Such a person could always dial 0, ask the operator to connect him to the 1 facility, and then carry on with dialing his seven figure subscriber's number, since he would then have dialed in all only eight digits. However, by inserting the key and turning it appropriately, he can disable the security device by lifting the ratchet holder **33** and thus lifting the ratchet member **41** out of engagement with the pawl **49** and the ratchet **61**.

The security device described above has been applied to a desk-type telephone, but obviously the device can readily be modified to suit say a wall-type or "hook" telephone. In such a telephone, the two buttons **5** and **7** are replaced with a pivoted cantilever arm forked to accept and hold the telephone handpiece, which hangs down from the forked arm or "hook". The cantilever arm is arranged to actuate switches inside the body of the telephone set to prepare the set for the reception of calls and for the making of calls.

FIG. **20** illustrates a wall-type telephone set **101** with the handpiece removed to enable the cantilever hook **103** to be seen, the security device being indicated at **105**. In FIG. **21** the security device is shown in front elevation, and it will be seen that it is generally similar to the security device described in connection with the desk-type telephone set, and the same numerals are used to denote corresponding parts. However, the canceller lever **31** is replaced with a generally horizontal canceller lever **131** mounted on a pivot **133** and normally biased upwardly by a spring (not shown). At the end from the pivot, the lever **131** is forked and the two arms of the fork lie respectively one above and one below the hook **103**. Thus the lever **131** follows the up and down movement of the hook. FIG. **22** is a side elevation of the lever **131**, and it will be seen that an intermediate part of the lever is provided with an inclined cam surface **135** which lies underneath the ratchet carrier **33**. When the "hook" and thus the lever **131** are in their uppermost positions, the ratchet carrier is drawn down towards the base plate **21**. When the "hook" and thus the lever **131** move down towards their lowermost positions, the cam surface **135** jacks the ratchet carrier **33** away from the base plate **21**. It will be seen that this action is basically similar to that in the embodiment of FIG. **1**. As in the embodiment of FIG. **1**, the base plate is clamped to the telephone set, in this case the base plate being provided with an upward and rearward extension **121A** (see side elevation FIG. **23**) which fits over an upper part of the telephone set and a side securing bracket **141** (see plan view FIG. **24**) fitting over a sidewall of the telephone set.

It will be appreciated that any security device attracts the attention of persons who willfully seek to disable it. It is important therefore that the security device be engineered in such a way that it is difficult if not impossible for it to be disabled without actual breakage of parts. Thus the bush **65** must be fitted to the dial in a manner preventing its detachment. The fit of the security cover **71** to the base plate must be such that it is not possible for the insertion of any thin item such as a bent paper clip or other piece of wire to lift the ratchet carrier **33**. The keyhole in the security cover for this reason is a potential source of weakness which must be guarded to prevent tampering. The use of a reasonably strong spring to hold the ratchet holder **33** down towards the base plate **21** prevents disabling of the security device merely by inverting the telephone set, which inversion otherwise would enable the ratchet holder by its own weight to move the ratchet member **41** out of engagement with the pawl **47**. Furthermore, the use of say a steel security cover **71** and the use of nonmagnetic material for the ratchet holder prevents use of a small but powerful magnet to disable the security device.

Since the object is to prevent clandestine use of the telephone handset to make unauthorized calls, in some parts of the device it may be more effective to use material which will break rather than bend. Thus the canceller lever **31** can be made of very stiff metal to prevent bending up the arms upwards to disable the device without operating the switch buttons **5** and **7**, or it can be made of a brittle material which if so bent will break. It is difficult if not impossible to prevent misuse of the telephone handset, but it is possible to make misuse impossible without obvious damage to the parts.

As described above, the present invention finds a considerable application to telephone sets of a PBX system, but the use of the invention is not limited to such systems. Thus in an ordinary household having but the one telephone set, the security device can be applied to the telephone set to prevent children from using the direct distance dialing system to make other than local calls. In such an installation the parents can have a key to disable the security device whenever desired.

Another application of the invention is to apartment houses and the like in which no PBX is provided but in which the use of the telephone is to be restricted to the making of local calls, which are of course normally uncharged calls.

The proportions of the ratchet member **41** will determine the number of digits which can be dialed before the ratchet member engages the stop **46**, and in the mass production of the security device it will be possible to provide several alternative ratchet members which can be used to restrict the number of digits which can be dialed to five, or seven, or any desired number. For the limitation of the use of the telephone set to interdepartmental use with an automatic private branch exchange, the number of permitted digits will depend upon the number of lines on the exchange.

In order to make the construction and operation of the security device clear, the key unlocking or disabling device has been shown diagrammatically only. When an unlocking device is provided, a noninterchangeable barrel type tumbler system lock will be provided with a suitable key, thus providing effective security against the use of improper keys.

I claim:

1. A security device suitable for use with a dial-type telephone set having a handpiece, a cradle in or on which the handpiece rests when not in use, and a rotary signalling dial, the device being adapted to restrict the use of the dial to the effective dialing of a series of digits no greater in number than a predetermined number, comprising:

a. a base member adapted for securement to said telephone set;

b. a member provided on said dial so as to extend outwardly from that dial;

c. ratchet means carried by said base member;

d. ratchet operating means arranged to cooperate with said member provided on said dial and, when actuated by that member, to move the ratchet means through a first predetermined distance;

e. stop means arranged so that when the ratchet means has been moved through a second predetermined distance from a reset position further dialing movement of said dial in a clockwise direction is prevented;

f. reset means carried by the base member and actuated automatically when said handpiece is restored to its cradle to return the ratchet means to its reset position; and

g. guard means arranged to prevent unauthorized disabling of the security device.

2. A security device according to claim **1**, in which:

a. the ratchet means include a toothed segment movable by the ratchet operating means;

b. a pivotally mounted complementary pawl; and

c. the reset means is arranged to effect relative lateral movement between the teeth of the segment and the pawl to free the toothed segment from the pawl for automatic return to the reset position.

3. A security device according to claim 2, in which:
a. the pawl is pivotally mounted on the base member;
b. the toothed segment is pivotally mounted on the base member so that it can rock bodily to produce said relative lateral movement between the teeth of the segment and the pawl; and
c. the reset means is arranged to rock the toothed segment on its pivot on the base member.

4. A security device according to claim 3, in which:
a. the telephone set is a desk-type set and the reset means comprises a reset lever pivotally mounted on the base member;
b. said lever includes a part positioned over the cradle or switch buttons of said desk-type telephone set; and
c. said lever is effective when depressed to effect the resetting of the toothed segment.

5. A security device according to claim 4, in which:
a. the reset lever is separate from the pivoted toothed segment; and
b. the reset lever includes lugs which are effective upon replacement of the handpiece to rock the toothed segment to effect resetting.

6. A security device according to claim 3, in which:
a. the telephone set is a hook-type set and the reset means comprises a reset lever pivotally mounted on the base member;
b. this reset lever includes parts extending respectively above and below the hook of the telephone set; and
c. the lever is effective when depressed to effect the resetting of the toothed segment.

7. A security device according to claim 1, in which:
a. the member fixed to the telephone dial is in the form of a bush fitting inside one of the fingerholes of that dial;
b. the bush carries a lug extending beyond the periphery of the dial; and
c. the lug is arranged during clockwise dialing movement of the dial to engage the ratchet means.

8. A security device according to claim 1, in which the guard means is adapted to admit key means by which the security means can be disabled.

9. A security device for use with a standard telephone set having a cradle, a handpiece and manually operable means for producing telephone signals identifying a telephone set comprising:
a. a base member adapted for attachment to said standard telephone set;
b. a member fixed to the signalling device;
c. ratchet means carried by said base member and adapted to cooperate with the member fixed to said signalling device such that each time said signalling device is operated in a normal manner to produce said signals, with said handpiece removed from said cradle, the member fixed to said signalling device operates to move the ratchet means through a first predetermined distance;
d. stop means arranged when said ratchet means has been moved through a second predetermined distance from a reset position to prevent further dialing of said signalling device;
e. reset means carried by the base member and actuated automatically when said handpiece is restored to said cradle to return said ratchet means to its reset position.

10. A security device according to claim 9, in which said telephone is of the cradle type on which the handpiece rests when not in use and said producing means includes a rotary signalling dial.

11. A security device according to claim 9, in which said telephone is of wall-type with a hook on which the handpiece rests when not in use and said producing means includes a rotary signalling dial.