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# It's Easy to Get OK on Wiretapping

Washington

Federal and state prosecutors continue to get court permission to tap telephones and plant microphones nearly every time they ask for it in criminal cases, the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts reported yesterday.

In its sixth annual report to Congress on the workings of federal and state wiretap laws, the office said federal judges granted all 130 wiretap warrants sought by the Justice Department in 1973 and state prosecutors were successful in all but two of 866 applications.

Previous reports have shown that a federal judge has turned down a Justice Department wiretap request only once since the Nixon administration began using the court-order wiretap procedure established by the 1968 Safe Streets Act. State prosecutors have failed in only a handful of cases.

The report by the administrative office, bookkeeper for the federal judiciary, is required by the 1968 law and is frequently cited in debates over the frequency, effectiveness and cost of wiretapping.

Not included in the reports is the constantly shifting number of "national security" wiretaps which the administration contends do not require court permission.

Federal wiretaps declined by 37 per cent to a total of 130, the report said, but state wiretaps, led as usual by New York and New Jersey, increased by 13 per cent to 734, making the total number of taps about the same for 1972.

Wiretap experts attributed the falloff in federal warrants to a reduced emphasis on eavesdropping in gambling cases.

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