

# Omnibus Crime Bill

Bill Higgs

1968

*Editor's Note:* On Thursday, June 6, the House gave final approval and sent to the President for his signature or veto, the Omnibus Crime Bill of 1968, the effects of which may be on us for years.

Liberation News Service — Now a person can sit on his chair in his home and say, "I sure am enjoying this grass!" and be sent to federal prison for five years based on that statement—when and if the President signs the 109-page Omnibus Crime Bill. A local cop might have bugged the pot smoker's house, on the tip of a member of a new style police private vigilante group which the new bill also provides for and would finance.

No longer would the police be required to warn of one's right to be silent or his right to counsel—If a person isn't under arrest or being questioned, they could have the hell beat out of him to get a confession.

The new National Law Enforcement Institute could-Institute for Defense Analysis-like-contract with Universities for major crime-prevention research. Police investigation techniques are slated to become a big item for the nation's institutions of higher learning. New Programs are provided for the public schools to encourage cooperation with the police—all financed with federal money.

The American police-state has now arrived!

The legalization of both bugging and wiretapping by all law enforcement officials is now a fact of life—the local cop, sheriff and highway patrolman, as well as the FBI and the CIA, are now in on the act.

And they can do it on suspicion of almost any crime—you name it. In its lazy fashion, the establishment press has only cried out against "Title II", the part of the new bill that overturns the recent Supreme Court decisions concerning such matters as advising of right to counsel and right to be silent.

However, while "Title II" was knocking out these peripheral "rights" dear to the heart of American liberalism, the Congress was gutting the right to privacy itself in the other parts of the new law.

The "firearms control" provisions are generally ineffective to prevent the weapons traffic, particularly in rifles and shotguns; yet, the new law contains sufficient tricky provisions to trap almost anyone that the authorities wish to get. Controls on major weapons (bazookas, machine guns, etc.) are strong, are fairly weak on other weapons, such as pistols, and are virtually nonexistent on rifles and shotguns. The Secretary of the Treasury administers the law.

In essence, any transporting of a firearm (other than a rifle or a shotgun)\* over state lines or any disposition of the firearm thereafter or any transfer between residents of different states will result in violation of the new law; the penalty is five years and/or \$5,000. Dealers are subject to rigid penalties for failure to comply with the provisions, including registration of all sales and prohibition against selling to anyone under 21 or to anyone indicted or convicted of any crime involving a penalty greater than one year (except for violation of the criminal anti-trust laws). Major weapons can only be purchased upon the O.K. of the chief law enforcement officer of the locality (therefore, only by the "minutemen" types?). Law enforcement officers are exempt from the new law; even private guards are exempt from many of them. In complex and inter-drafted legislation that is a layman's nightmare the Congress has put together a monstrosity that will take years to reach the Supreme Court for review of its provisions: Meanwhile the fuzz will be enforcing their dream-baby with a real vengeance.



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<https://www.fiftheastate.org/archive/56-june-19-july-1-1968/omnibus-crime-bill>  
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