

public interest.’ . . . Third, the statute places no termination date on the eavesdrop once the conversation sought is seized. . . . Finally, the statute’s procedure, necessarily because its success depends on secrecy, has no requirement for notice as do conventional warrants, nor does it overcome this defect by requiring some showing of special facts. On the contrary, it permits unconsented entry without any showing of exigent circumstances. Such a showing of exigency, in order to avoid notice, would appear more important in eavesdropping, with its inherent dangers, than that required when conventional procedures of search and seizure are utilized. Nor does the statute provide for a return on the warrant thereby leaving full discretion in the officer as to the use of seized conversations of innocent as well as guilty parties. In short, the statute’s blanket grant of permission to eavesdrop is without adequate judicial supervision or protective procedures.”³⁹⁴

Both Justices Black and White in dissent accused the *Berger* majority of so construing the Fourth Amendment that no wiretapping-eavesdropping statute could pass constitutional scrutiny,³⁹⁵ and, in *Katz v. United States*,³⁹⁶ the Court in an opinion by one of the *Berger* dissenters, Justice Stewart, modified some of its language and pointed to Court approval of some types of statutorily-authorized electronic surveillance. Just as *Berger* had confirmed that one rationale of the *Olmstead* decision, the inapplicability of “seizure” to conversations, was no longer valid, *Katz* disposed of the other rationale. In the latter case, officers had affixed a listening device to the outside wall of a telephone booth regularly used by Katz and activated it each time he entered; since there had been no physical trespass into the booth, the lower courts held the Fourth Amendment not relevant. The Court disagreed, saying that “once it is recognized that the Fourth Amendment protects people—and not simply ‘areas’—against unreasonable searches and seizures, it becomes clear that the reach of that Amendment cannot turn upon the presence or absence of a physi-

³⁹⁴ 388 U.S. at 58–60. Justice Stewart concurred because he thought that the affidavits in this case had not been sufficient to show probable cause, but he thought the statute constitutional in compliance with the Fourth Amendment. *Id.* at 68. Justice Black dissented, arguing that the Fourth Amendment was not applicable to electronic eavesdropping but that in any event the “search” authorized by the statute was reasonable. *Id.* at 70. Justice Harlan dissented, arguing that the statute with its judicial gloss was in compliance with the Fourth Amendment. *Id.* at 89. Justice White thought both the statute and its application in this case were constitutional. *Id.* at 107.

³⁹⁵ 388 U.S. at 71, 113.

³⁹⁶ 389 U.S. 347 (1967).