

WORLD AND NATION

U.S. Supreme Court favors types of student searches

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — For years, President Reagan and other critics have complained that the courts have given too much liberty to students and taken too much authority away from teachers.

Now the highest court in the land may have redressed the balance of power with its decision allowing school officials to conduct "reasonable" searches of students for drugs or other contraband.

The Supreme Court, in its 6-3 ruling Tuesday, said students do not forfeit all of their Fourth Amendment rights against unreasonable searches when they walk in the schoolhouse door. But it said teachers and other supervisors do not need to meet the police standard of "probable cause" or obtain a court warrant before conducting a search.

The Reagan administration had filed a brief on the side of the Piscataway, N.J., school officials who had searched a 14-year-old freshman's purse after she was caught smoking.

The search turned up rolling papers and marijuana, and the girl later was found delinquent after admitting to police she had sold marijuana cigarettes to classmates. The New Jersey Supreme Court over-

turned the delinquency finding, ruling that the search had violated the student's rights. But the nation's high court now has reinstated the delinquency verdict.

Reagan has been calling for restoration of "good old-fashioned discipline" as part of his crusade to exhort schools to raise their academic standards.

He complained last February, "for too long, courts and others have concentrated on protecting the rights of the disruptive few. Well, it's high time we paid some attention to the rights of the well-behaved students who want to learn."

A White House staff report on discipline problems a year ago stressed the importance of defending the rights of educators in cases where they were pitted against the rights of students.

Gary Bauer, deputy undersecretary of the Department of Education, who helped craft that discipline report, said teachers "can't be lawyers and policemen at the same time. We feel the standards that teachers and principals have been under have been too severe."

Gary Sykes, a former National Institute of Education researcher now at Stanford University, wrote in The Wilson Quarterly last January that

students "have gradually acquired a broad array of First Amendment rights in the classroom" since 1943, when the Supreme Court ruled in West Virginia vs. Barnette that students could not be compelled to salute the flag.

In the case, Tinker vs. Des Moines schools, the late Justice Abe Fortas wrote that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech and expression at the schoolhouse gate."

August Steinhilber, a top official of the National School Boards Association, hailed the new ruling.

Some schools, particularly those fighting daily battles to keep drugs or weapons out of their precincts, may now be quicker to search students who are suspected of wrongdoing.

But the court's emphasis on "reasonableness" may inhibit teachers from ordering a classroom full of children strip-searched when money is missing, as happened in one school district recently.

The most important point is not the ground rules the high court set for searches but the message it sent to educators, students and parents alike. That message is that discipline takes precedence in schools over students' rights to privacy.

SHOE

by Jeff MacNelly



Whales prove playful at San Diego sea park

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Not until the last 20 years have killer whales been regarded with anything but fear by travelers to the cold waters of the Arctic and Antarctic oceans. Frequently, the beasts were shot for sport.

But in 1965, Sea World presented Shamu, the first trained killer whale.

As trainers became acquainted with the huge marine mammal, they

learned the killer whale could differentiate between people and could develop relationships with them.

Such relationships are the key to the marine mammal training technique Sea World uses with its three resident killer whales, according to Jerry Roberts, publicist for the park.

"I think the most exhilarating thing about working with Shamu is being in the water with him," said Joanne Hay, one of the five killer whale trainers employed by Sea

World. "All of a sudden it's just you and this incredible animal — in his environment."

An important part of each trainer's day is spent in play sessions with the animals. In addition to playtime and public shows, animals and trainers exercise and train together.

To the animals, their trainers are both coach and friend. And because of Sea World's efforts, the public has become aware of the killer whale's intelligence and gentleness.

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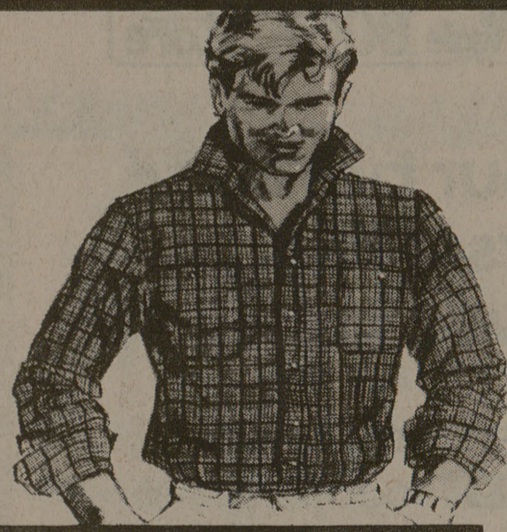
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