

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"That's it? I come to you, an experienced upperclassman, in all seriousness and ask you how I can make good grades on my finals and all you can come up with is 'study.'"

Supreme Court to decide if child-abuse defendant may see victim questioned

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court said Monday it will decide whether a person charged with sexually abusing a child must be allowed to attend pretrial hearings in which the child is questioned.

The court will review a ruling that threw out a Kentucky man's sodomy conviction because he was excluded from a hearing held to determine his alleged victims' competence to testify at trial.

The Kentucky attorney general says the ruling, if upheld, could increase "traumatization and intimidation of child victims by the criminal justice system."

In other matters, the court:

- Agreed to consider killing a lawsuit against the government by a former Army sergeant who was given LSD without his knowledge 28 years ago in secret chemical warfare tests.

- Voted to decide, in a case with millions of dollars in consumer savings at stake, whether the government must stop allowing the importation of some foreign merchandise bearing U.S. trademarks.

- Rejected the appeal of a Louisiana family trying to change from "colored" to "white" the state's official racial listings for two deceased family members.

- Agreed to use a Wisconsin case to decide whether probation officers need a court warrant before they search the homes of people on criminal probation.

- Let stand a \$26,500 invasion-of-privacy award against a Green-

ville, S.C., newspaper for an article that correctly identified a teen-age boy as the father of an illegitimate child.

- Said it will judge the validity of how eligibility is calculated for benefits under the federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children welfare program.

In the sex-abuse case, Sergio Stincer was accused of sodomizing three young children in Christian County, Ky., in October 1983.

Prosecutors said Stincer sexually abused two sisters, ages 8 and 7, and a 5-year-old boy after the children's mothers left his home to shop for his birthday party.

His conviction and 20-year prison sentence were overturned by the Kentucky Supreme Court, which ruled that Stincer's fair-trial rights were violated because he was excluded from a pretrial hearing in which the two little girls were questioned.

The state court said the exclusion denied Stincer the right to confront his accusers.

"The competency hearing was a crucial phase of the trial and (Stincer) had an absolute right to be present and be represented by counsel," the state court said.

In appealing the state court's ruling, Kentucky Attorney General David Armstrong said courts in four states — Arizona, Illinois, Minnesota and New Mexico — have ruled that defendants do not have to be allowed to attend competency hearings in such cases.

Wall Street prices close mixed following late surge

NEW YORK (AP) — Stock prices, which lagged for most of Monday's session, closed out the day mixed in trading that was boosted by a strong bond market performance and some computerized program buying, analysts said.

The late positive developments came amid continued profit-taking

after Tuesday's 43.03-point gain and an undertone of concern over the insider trading scandal and the Iranian arms imbroglio, they added.

The Dow Jones average of 30 industrial stocks closed at 1,930.26, up 5.20 from Friday.

But declining issues outpaced gainers on the New York Stock Exchange by more than 4-to-3.

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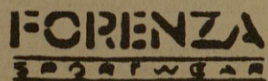
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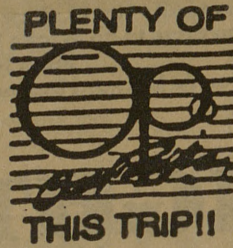
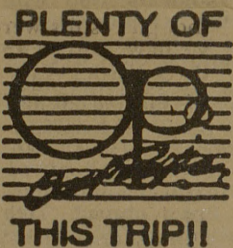
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