Court to study Chicago's anti-loitering ordinance

The Supreme Court will decide how far cities can go in combatting street gangs, agreeing Monday to study a Chicago anti-loitering ordinance intended to control the "expanding cancer" of urban gangs.

Chicago contends its ordinance, struck down by a state court, was a lawful effort to head off drug deals and shootings associated with gangs. The 1992 ordinance required police to order any group of people loitering in public to move along if the officer believed at least one was a gang member. Those who refused could be arrested.

Gang-related killings

allowed to remove a "visibly lawless element whose very was often viewed by rival gangs as an invitation to violence," the city's lawyers said.

But those challenging and unfairly allowed people to be arrested for innocent conduct. One man was arrested after standing on a sidewalk with his brother, eating carryout sandwiches, said lawyers for the Chicago-area American Civil Liberties Union.

The Supreme Court will hear arguments in the case this fall and issue a decision by mid-1999.

In ruling the law uncon-

stitutional last October, the Illinois Supreme Court acknowledged, "Criminal knowledged, street gangs are an expanding cancer in our society."

But the state court said, "The city cannot empower the police to sweep undesirable persons from the public streets through vague and arbitrary criminal ordinances" and cannot make it "a crime to be a gang member in a public

Under the ordinance, people who refused to move along after a police order could be arrested and sent to prison for up to six months, fined \$500 and ordered to perform 120 hours of community service.

Funds for addict program denied

The Clinton administration refused on Monday to use federal tax dollars to buy clean needles for drug addicts, even though it said needle exchanges fight AIDS without encouraging illegal

Health and Human Serdorsement should encourage their own needle exchanges.

But Shalala, under orders from the White House, sidestepped a political fight with conservatives and stopped short of providing communities with federal money to let addicts swap dirty nee-

Half of all people who contract HIV are infected by needles or by sex with inchildren of infected addicts.

appointed AIDS activists, who said they couldn't recall another medical program the government had declared lifesaving but refused "They've now said we

know how to save lives and we don't want to do what's necessary to save the lives, said an angry Dr. Scott Hitt. chair of President Clinton's AIDS advisory council.

"This administration is now publicly stating how to slow it (the AIDS epidemic) down and is saying they lack the courage to do it."

Republicans continued to argue that needle exchanges were bad policy, and Rep. Gerald Solomon,

federal funding altogether in case Shalala changed

Why not simply provide heroin itself, free of charge, courtesy of the American taxpayer?" asked Sen. John Ashcroft, R-Mo.

President Clinton's own drug policy chief, Barry Mc Caffrey, spent the weekend arguing that needle exministration's war on drugs and send the wrong message to children.

Asked about the criticisms, National Institutes of ing made only by politi-cians, not scientists.

Every major public health R-N.Y., said he would needle exchanges.

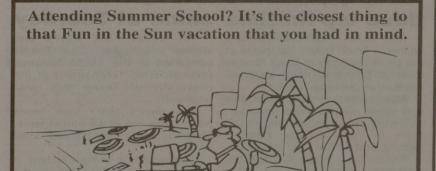
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"There's a tremendo the Republican Partyan vative movement for: leader," said Adri



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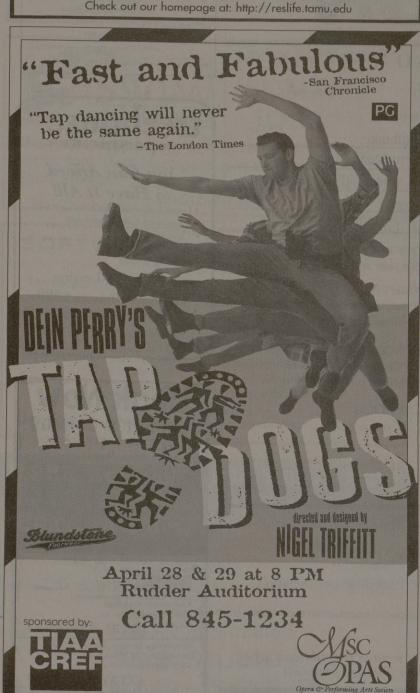
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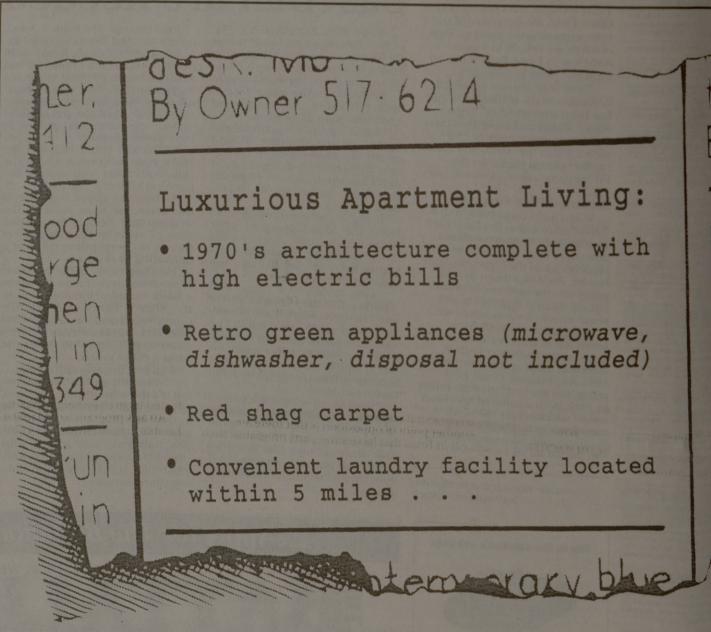
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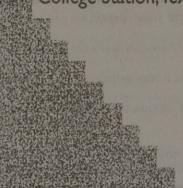


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