P.S. to the NEWS
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SUPREME COURT DECISIONS

The chances of an average citizen being able to appeal a lawsuit to the United States Supreme Court are small, indeed. Even if you are lucky enough to get the Supreme Court to hear your case, you can count on many months of wearisome delays. The customary explanation is that the dockets are so full and the justices are so overworked.

Now, you can get set for more delays. The U.S. Supreme Court, in closing its 1973-74 term and leaving town for a vacation, has made it clear that the justices prefer to accept and decide obscenity cases rather than more difficult and important cases. The Supreme Court adjourned without ruling on the Detroit busing case which poses the question of whether busing can be required between inner-city and suburban school districts. This is one of the longest-pending cases now before the Supreme Court, and it is the first case on which the Court has had the chance to rule on cross-district plans.

The Court's inaction means that nothing will be resolved until at least the fall term. A decision would have been welcomed by both sides of the controversy. The case is a matter of vital and immediate concern to all parents, teachers, school children, and school boards all over the country now making their plans for the opening of the school year in late August and early September.

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The U.S. Supreme Court, on the other hand, did find time to decide two obscenity cases, and these decisions clearly put the nine justices back in the business of deciding obscenity on a case-by-case basis. Last year, Chief Justice Berger handed down a sensible decision that the determination of what is or is not obscene should be left up to local juries, based on community standards. If there is one thing an ordinary jury of local citizens is capable of deciding, it is whether a given book or movie is or is not obscene.

That decision, if allowed to stand, would have lessened the work load of the Supreme Court and given the justices more time to devote to complicated matters of law and individual rights, such as the busing issue.

But last year's decision cut off the Supreme Court justices from personally viewing a number of appealed dirty movies and books. Now, however, by accepting appeals from jury obscenity convictions, the Supreme Court justices have private showings of controversial indecent movies, such as CARNAL KNOWLEDGE.

Perhaps we can't blame the Supreme Court justices for finding it more fun to watch nude movies and read sexy books on the job than to tackle complicated busing cases. But, please, let's not hear any more about how overworked the Supreme Court justices are.

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