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Ivory Tower Justice

So-called "liberals" continue to hail the recent "rights of suspects" decisions by the United States Supreme Court as an advance in human progress, a necessary shoring up of the Bill of Rights.

Some of them seem to endow this court with a wisdom beyond that of the framers of the document which is the heart of our country's law.

Our country grew strong, materially and spiritually, long before these times. The spirit of freedom was alive in the U.S.A. long before the 1960s. It was alive long before the recent decisions in behalf of the rights of Communists and crime suspects.

The recent decisions are highly gratifying to legalistically-inclined "liberals," many of whom say they are simply explicit statements of what the Constitution already guarantees.

Whatever else is said, the new decisions are encouraging to Communists and criminals. They come in the midst of a permissive era, a time when too many lazy and gutless parents say "yes" or "it doesn't matter" to any misbehavior of their children from bed-wetting and 3-year-old arrogance to serious delinquency. Lee Harvey Oswald's mother still insists her son was working for the CIA.

Short on the heels of the Warren court's new permissive decisions came two horrendous crimes of mass murder in Chicago and Austin. It would be foolish to say that the slayers took the high court's rulings as signals. It would be equally foolish to embrace the opposite conclusion that there is no connection between permissiveness and the increasingly frequent outbursts of violence that blister American existence.

It would be foolish to assume that there is no connection between exhortations to bloodshed and violence and the actual outbreak of bloodshed and violence.

The months to come will show whether crime and violence will continue the sharp upward spiral that has been characteristic of the 1960s — rioting,

the assassination of a President, rape, robbery, fraud, mass murders that stun the reason.

Whatever the cushioned, over-intellectual cocktail circuit's reasoning and experience may be, angry, violent, brutal and unreasonable men and women are still at large in society. And whatever habitual dogooders may think, there is an unruly element in society that would commit any crime that struck its fancy but for the threat of punishment — especially sure, quick punishment. This is true of the family, the group, the scout troop, the army platoon, the town or the metropolis. And virtually everyone who has not lived a sheltered life knows it.

As Rex Karney, editor of the Rockford, Ill., Register-Republic, said:

"I wish Chief Justice Earl Warren of the United States Supreme Court had spent a year or two of his career working as a police officer. If he had he never would have written the majority decision (further restricting questioning of suspected criminals) handed down by the Court . . .

"I've never been a police officer either, but any person who has been in the newspaper profession for any length of time becomes acutely aware of the problems faced by the thousands of dedicated men society hires to protect itself from predators. Law enforcement is one of the toughest of jobs. Justice Warren's decision . . . made it even tougher.

"I'd like to see Chief Justice Warren spend a few Saturday nights around a police station in Washington, Chicago, New York or Rockford. I'd like to assign him a few rape and murder and robbery investigations. Mr. Warren is so isolated in his judicial position that he has lost track of what's going on in the rest of the world."

The things that are going on beyond the ivory tower are not all pleasant to behold. And much of the ugliness, which is highly personal when experienced in terms of fists, knives, bullets, or bruises, broken bones, slashes and death, certainly can be traced to the liberal high priests of our secular society who proclaim to all: "You can do no wrong, for there is no such thing as wrong."