

CANDY CANE CONTROVERSY

Passing out colored condoms on high school grounds is less controversial than religious-themed candy canes. That's what we've concluded after examining the controversy at Westfield High School in western Massachusetts.

Last December, six students from Westfield distributed 450 pieces of candy to fellow classmates. The candy canes contained notes declaring the J shape stood for Jesus and red and white stripes symbolized Christ's blood and purity. They were immediately threatened with suspension, and on January 2 were told they had to serve a one-day suspension. Their crime? Violating separation of church and state. Their response? A lawsuit.

The candy-cane distributing students got a boost recently when a new regulation issued by the U.S. Department of Education provided a list of students' rights that the authorities must respect. Among those rights is the right to pray in school, etc. Lawyers for the students were heartened by the news. They are invoking it in their brief, which seeks to get the U.S. District Court in Springfield to throw out their suspensions and allow them to distribute religious material on school grounds.

Things are looking up for the students as the U.S. Department of Justice has filed a friend-of-the-court brief on their side. Now had the students only settled for distributing condoms, the anti-religious cops wouldn't have uttered a word. Such is the state of freedom and morality in America today.