

Sweet v Parsley [1970]

Evidence

Stephanie Sweet was a teacher in Oxford who had a farmhouse. She used to ride to work every morning but soon she abandoned this practice and decided to rent out her property to several young people. She visited her house quite rarely, mostly to collect the rent and bills, and had no other control over the people who lived in her house. In June 1967, police officers with a warrant entered her house and found cannabis resin, LSD, and other substances. According to the Dangerous Drugs Act of 1968, Mrs. Sweet was convicted of managing the premises where the drugs were used.

Problematics

Mrs. Sweet made an appeal towards the police sergeant, Edmund Raymond Parsley, as according to the English Law practice, one can not be held liable without fault. In other words, the appellant cannot be accused of an absolute offense without mens rea. Mrs. Sweet had not known that any substances were being used in her house and could therefore not be accused of an absolute offense.

Resolution

The conviction was dismissed and Mrs. Sweet was declared not guilty for the breach she had known nothing about.

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