Skipping to the more immediate, to Shattuck and others:

Until Maryland passed its dubious and deceptive gun law I could walk safely only by carrying a gun. The State Police actually told me to when I reported attacks on me by dogs running loose in violation of local ordinances. Vicious dogs, the manhood symbols of the local radical right.

With the passing of the law, I applied for a permit. I do qualify. But the FBI's files are "consulted." There is not only a complete meeting of the qualifications but there is also nothing in my record that says I should not get a permit. If I asked for it to carry money I'd get it. I was turned down. No hearing. I appealed and got a rubber-stamp rejection. No due process, not even the pretense. I then asked ACLU help. They refused because they are against guns. They can t be more against them than I am. But because they don't like guns they have no interest in such arcane matters as due process. And they have also become part of a cruel hoax, that the gun law means anything.

I saw Shattuck last May. In earlier correspondence he had not been encouraging. I dropped into his office early one morning, before he got there, and he saw me. At the end of the meeting he was encouraging and somewhat excited. As I left he introduced me to Wulff and told Wulff that he had asked me to write a long memo on what I asked of them, taking the case of which you know, of federal intrusion into my rights. And I had spelled out that it held the possibility of taking WC-related depositions. When I say spelled out I mean completely enough, with names and dates.

Something happened between that meeting and his response to the long letter I wrote as soon as I got home. He then complained that it was long and said no.

Then they take cases like George McMillan's?

My long history tells me that when anyone connected with the ACLU leaderships sees me or if he doesn't know of me learns, the collective conscience is offended and in order for them to justify themselves, I have to be villainous.

To put this another way, where I am concerned, there is little prospect they will do anything. Their help I could use. There is a clear history of polite and proper approaches never working with them. The alternative to the method I have used is doing nothing with them. So, I take the rough effort, not expecting anything and with nothing to lose if it does not work.

And with the advantage of leaving a record when it doesn't.

Maybe, some day, one of them will be embarrassed enough.

Minor aspect:

I knew Al Wirin in the mid 30s. He was then with the NLRB and worked as an investigator for the committee for which I worked. He got a little activist when he was investigating RCA for us. He was part of the investigation. He is the one who went to their offices. He leaked some of what he got for the Senate to Jim Carey of the union. He got in trouble for it. I don't recall how but I was of minor help to him. The fact, regardless of this, is that we were friendly and did know each other.

After he retired I wrote him asking if he would undertake to try to get me some money owed me in Los Angeles. He hasn't had the simple decency to respond. And he can t live in Los Angeles and not have heard of the work I have been doing, my appearances there have been that numerous on radio and TV.

In summary, I know an ACLU that is not consistent with its public image.

Dear Jim, Re ACLU 3/26/74

It had been my intention to give you an explanation of the pointed letters I have written ACLU people before getting into anything after yesterday's mail. Interruptions prevented it. I do not now have time for a full explanation but in the time before I awaken Lil, a partial explanation.

It is not merely that I resent the role in which I have been cast. Nor, personal as it may seem, is it really personal.

Their silence in and after Dallas is like a topic sentence.

I had dealings with the ACLU beginning in the middle 30s. They did some good work then. This good work was then and too often since has been a mask for not good, including some very anti-deomcratic things. The top hierarchy has been Establishmentarian, in its own special way.

Back in the 30s it was part of the red hunt, not leading the fight against it. Even if one assumes that red hunting was a proper endeavor what the ACLU did was very wrong because, as always happens, most victims are not red. However, I considered and consider it wrong under any circumstances. I then worked with two members of the board who fought a losing fight against what amounted to the ACLU's support of the Dies committee. That business got so bad, so vicious, that one of these men, a very able and exceedingly effective lawyer, was disbarred.

The man with whom I was involved in the fight with Dies, a fight Dies picked, not I, had been an ACLUer and was so close to its top leadership that on their vacations together Roger Baldwin did what even today would be regarded as unseemly, displayed himself to this friend's wife. I was writing a book on Dies and that was my crime. When a law was actually passed to get this friend and me, the ACLU was silent. When we at worst were doing no more than exercising first-amendment rights and were hailed before a grand jury for it, there was no ACLU lawyer who would represent us. In fact, we had a helluva job getting a lawyer, even though my friend could pay.

He was one of the pre-eminent redbaiters of that day, Gardner "Pat" Jackson, then lobbyist for Labor's Non-Partisan League, earlier public relations director of the Sacco-Vanzetti committee. He then knew Frankfurther. I met Frankfurter and others through him. Including quite a list of the prominent lawyers of that day, a number later federal judges, some still prominent in law schools. One was Dean Acheson. The first palce we went for a lawyer was Acheson's law firm. Drew Pearson finally got his firm, a senior partner named Roberts, to represent us. Edgar Turlington, a fine conservative gentleman, did the work. He was with me at one of the series of Dies executive sessions before which I was. It is he who came when the FBI locked me in its offices in an effort to get me to sign a false, incriminating statement. (That was the beginning of my education in saying "no" and not changing!) When the overt Dies attack on us was bracketed with blackmailing the USAttorney by holding up his appointment to a federal judgeship (Dave Pine) and came upon some speeches on the floor of Congress and the ACLU divorced itself and I was relatively young, I saw a different face than the ACLU presents in public.

Skipping to the summer of 1966, I took David Isbell, of the Coving/~~Burling~~ tonnBurling firm- again Acheson's , to the Archives several times. With what I had by then learned of the Zapruder film, it shook him. I asked for ACLU representation in seeking suppressed evidence withheld from me. FOI had been passed. I was told to write Monroe Freeman a letter. To date there had been no response. What Isbell then did reflects the impression he took from the Archives and my work: he sent me to another ACLU lawyer named Rockefeller, on 19th St., I think perhaps the Associations Bldg., so he would know me and pepresent me if and when the Feebies came after me! Paranoid they could be, principled they were not.

In my view all the history of the FOI law would have been different if it had been tested before Nixon started reordering the courts. I hold the ACLU responsible. It copped out.

You know that Bud made an effort with me, as I recall at least twice with him and Speiser. Once he took us to lunch at Chez Francois. Bud correctly anticipated that they would not touch any principled case that dealt with assassinations. They are and were hungup on this. I am sure this is the reason they would not touch FOI cases for me.