

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

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"Self-discipline on the part of the executive branch will provide an answer to virtually all of the legitimate complaints of excesses of information gathering."

--Assistant Attorney General of the U.S., William Rehnquist, testifying in opposition to ACLU efforts to place legal limits on political surveillance before Senator Sam Ervin, March 9, 1971

Dear Friend:

A year after this testimony, Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist cast the deciding vote against the American Civil Liberties Union's suit challenging political surveillance by the military. That 5-4 decision by the Supreme Court was a great setback to ACLU's campaign to end government espionage against peaceful political activity.

Things have changed. The American public knows a little more now about "self-discipline on the part of the executive branch." The ACLU is pressing lawsuits on behalf of victims of the Watergate events and other targets of political espionage. We believe that now is a good time to get the courts and the Congress to impose the legal limits on political surveillance they were reluctant to consider just a year or two ago.

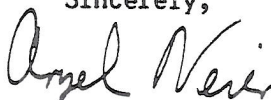
The American Civil Liberties Union works for the constitutional rights of American citizens in good times and in bad times. Founded in a bad time--shortly after World War I when Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer conducted raids* in which thousands of aliens were routed from their beds at night and summarily imprisoned or deported--the ACLU's court victories on behalf of the rights of Americans have become landmarks of history. In subsequent years, ACLU court victories have defended the right to privacy of all Americans against an ever more intrusive government.

Will you join the American Civil Liberties Union? More than 200,000 of your fellow citizens belong to the ACLU. Through their membership, they work for their own rights and the rights of all Americans--in good times and in bad times.

Join the ACLU today. Your help is needed. The more you contribute, the more the ACLU can do.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Aryeh Neier

*An early ACLU court case was instrumental in ending the Palmer raids.

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