

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

22 East 40th Street New York, N.Y. 10016 (212) 725-1222

May 27, 1974

Dear Friend:

Bruce Severy teaches English at the High School in Drake, North Dakota. He has a problem.

The trouble began when Severy selected books for a class reading list: Slaughterhouse Five by Kurt Vonnegut, Deliverance by James Dickey and Short Story Masterpieces edited by Robert Penn Warren. The Drake School Board didn't like the books. Slaughterhouse Five was burned by the School Board. The other books were recalled. Severy then substituted Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451, which is about book-burning and censorship. It too was prohibited because it would be "a slap in the face of the School Board." And, Severy lost his job.

The American Civil Liberties Union has filed suit on behalf of Bruce Severy. We aim to help him stay in Drake, keep his job and let him use the books he has chosen for his class (which most of the students petitioned to read).

Several thousand times a year, ACLU lawyers go to court on behalf of the rights of Americans. Mostly, we win. For example, in recent weeks we won:

- * a Supreme Court decision that Ohio officials and National Guard officers can be made to pay damages to parents of students killed 4 years ago at Kent State.
- * a U.S. Court of Appeals decision which allows persons arrested and not convicted to have the F.B.I.'s files on them expunged.
- * a Federal Court decision that the C.I.A. may not withhold information from the public merely by asserting that the information is "classified."

We hope you will join the American Civil Liberties Union. By doing so, you will help defend the rights of Americans in the courts. And, of equal significance, you will join the 275,000

other Americans who find that their membership in ACLU makes them an increasingly effective force in the Congress and the state legislatures.

ACLU members were instrumental in getting started the campaign for impeachment of Richard Nixon. But we can't stop with the success of that campaign. We need Congressional action on specific legislation to prevent any repetition of the Water-gate events. No future President should have the power used by Richard Nixon to intrude on privacy (see the enclosed reprint of an ad for more on this problem). No future President should have the power used by Richard Nixon to mask his administration's actions in secrecy.

By joining ACLU now, you will defend the rights of people like Bruce Severy and you will become a part of our lobbying campaign in Congress. We need your help. Join the ACLU today. The more you contribute, the more we can do.

Thanks.

Sincerely,



Aryeh Neier
Executive Director

P.S. Free to new members--An ACLU Rights handbook written by legal experts. These books follow a question and answer format explaining the law and how to exercise legal rights. See return card for your choice.

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