Dear Fellow Member,

Enclosed is your personal copy of The Bill of Rights. Perhaps you will want to frame it. It is the heart and soul of our democracy and the reason for the existence of the American Civil Liberties Union.

In the Annual Report, which you will receive shortly, you will hear about good things and bad that occurred during the past year. Some battles for the Bill of Rights have been waged successfully and won. Other fortresses must still be breached.

Thanks in large measure to the Union, the State Department no longer can deny a citizen a passport without due process. A California court has ruled unconstitutional that state's loyalty oath for churches. This is a signal victory. And our members have organized two new ACLU affiliates, one in Oregon and the other in the border state of Kentucky.

Good deeds, all of them, and a credit to the Union. Then you come to the infamous Till case. The failure of the grand jury in Mississippi to indict Emmett Till's admitted kidnappers is part of the continuing pattern of condoning violence that we find in parts of the South. The Union's report by Allen Raymond on Government suppression of news (now published as an ACLU pamphlet entitled "The People's Right to Know") is our first major step toward stopping this dangerous form of censorship. And court tests of the Smith Act and other security measures, which, though aimed at Communists, threaten the civil liberties of all Americans, continue to be a major responsibility of the Union.

Chief Justice Earl Warren says that this generation will pass on to the next "a better Bill of Rights or a worse one, tarnished by neglect or burnished by growing use." The ACLU looks back with quiet pride on its accomplishments and its fight for the Bill of Rights on many fronts. More important, as the Chief Justice points out, is the task that lies ahead. This takes money. $72,500 is needed to enable the ACLU to end its fiscal year on January 31 in the black and with enough cash reserve to serve as a basis for taking on additional civil liberties work.

Place your contribution* - small or large - in the envelope at the top of this letter and mail it today. It will go to work for the Bill of Rights tomorrow.

*The ACLU's 23 integrated affiliates will share in the contributions made to this 1956 Special Funds Appeal just as they do in regular membership dues. See list of branches on envelope.

Sincerely yours,

John Haynes Holmes