

Letter to the Editor
New York Times
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Standing By the A.C.L.U.

To the Editor:

Re: "Supporters of A.C.L.U. Call for the Ouster of Its Leaders" (news article, Sept. 26):

As longtime former leaders of the A.C.L.U. we unequivocally reject the calls for replacing the current A.C.L.U. leadership.

Obviously, dissenters within the A.C.L.U. membership, even if they represent a small minority, are free to voice their views. But in our judgment the A.C.L.U. has been extremely effective in recent years, both on substantive matters -- including the novel and important civil liberties issues spawned by 9/11 -- and in management of the organization.

The A.C.L.U. has ably defended the principles of the Bill of Rights, and its financial health has never been better.

As in every organization, mistakes may have been made. But the A.C.L.U. over the past five years has continued its overall record of excellence, and it deserves strong support.

Norman Dorsen, president 1976-1991
Aryeh Neier, executive director 1970-1978
Burt Neuborne, legal director 1981-1985
John Shattuck, legislative director 1976-1984
Mort Halperin, legislative director 1984-1993
Laura Murphy, legislative director 1993-2005