


UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

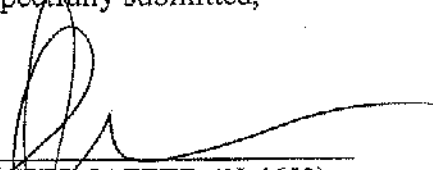
 AMERICAN CIVIL  
LIBERTIES UNION; and AMERICAN CIVIL  
LIBERTIES UNION FOUNDATION,

Plaintiffs,

**PETITION TO SET ASIDE  
DEMAND FOR RECORDS**

04 Civ. 2614 (VM)

Respectfully submitted,



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September 8, 2006

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AMERICAN CIVIL  
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LIBERTIES UNION FOUNDATION,

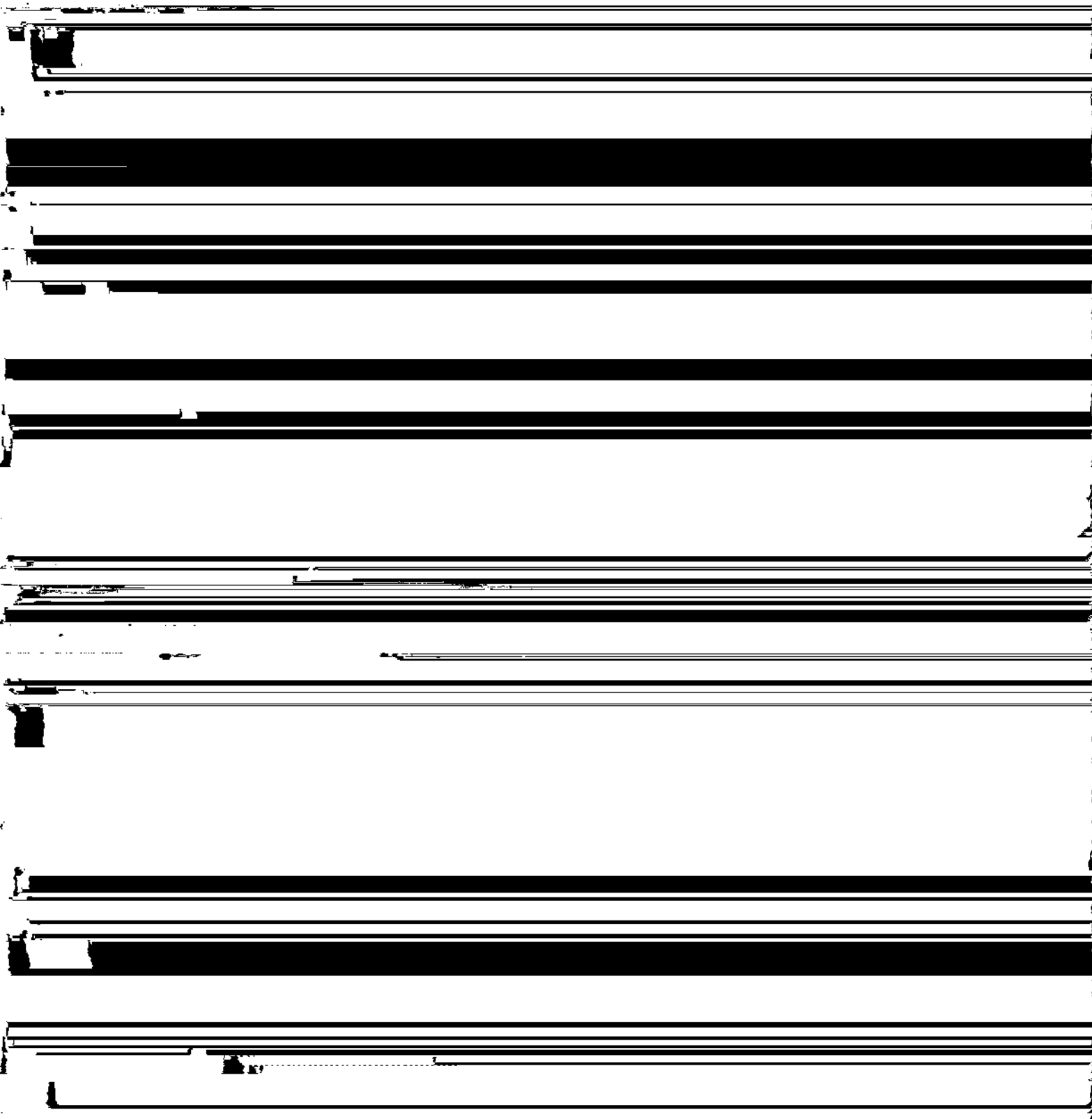
MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF  
PLAINTIFFS' PETITION TO SET  
ASIDE DEMAND FOR RECORDS

Plaintiffs,

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES.....i

INTRODUCTION.....1



CASES

*Bates v. City of Little Rock*, 361 U.S. 516 (1960).....7

*Best Western Int'l, Inc. v. Doe*, 2006 WL 2091695.....4, 9

*Branzburg v. Hayes*, 408 U.S. 665 (1972).....7

*Brown v. Socialist Workers '74 Campaign Committee*, 459 U.S. 87 (1982) .....7

*Buckley v. American Constitutional Law Found.*, 525 U.S. 182 (1999) .....3, 4

*Columbia Ins. Co. v. Oceanic Indemnity Corp.*, 195 F.2d 572 (1st Cir. 1953) ..... 1, 2, 10

<i>Reno v. ACLU</i> , 521 U.S. 844 (1997) .....	4
<i>Rocker Mgmt. LLC v. Does 1-20</i> , No. 03-MC-33, 2003 WL 22149380 (N.D. Cal. 2003) .....	9
<i>Secretary of State of Maryland v. J.H. Munson Co.</i> , 467 U.S. 947 (1984) .....	1
<i>Shelton v. Tucker</i> , 364 U.S. 479 (1960) .....	7
<i>Sony Music Entm't Inc v Does 1-40</i> 326 F Supp 2d 556 (S.D.N.Y. 2004) .....	9

<i>Talley v. California</i> , 362 U.S. 60 (1960) .....	3, 4
<i>United States v. Morton Salt Co.</i> , 338 U.S. 632 (1950) .....	11
<i>United States v. Powell</i> , 379 U.S. 48 (1964) .....	11
<i>Virginia v. American Booksellers Ass'n, Inc.</i> , 484 U.S. 383 (1988) .....	1
<i>Watchtower Bible and Tract Soc. of New York v. Village of Stratton</i> , 536 U.S. 150 (2002) .....	3, 7

STATUTES

18 U.S.C. § 2709 .....	1, 9
18 U.S.C. § 3511 .....	1, 2

INTRODUCTION

As detailed in Plaintiffs' Second Amended Complaint ("SAC"), filed July 24th, 2006, an

[REDACTED]

form of a national security letter ("NSL") under 18 U.S.C. § 2709, on plaintiff [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] via its President and [REDACTED], in [REDACTED]

The NSL directed [REDACTED] to disclose the name, [REDACTED] addresses, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and other sensitive information relating to one of [REDACTED] clients. See Second

addresses, lengths of service and electronic communication transactional records, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



a. The First Amendment protects anonymous speech and association on the Internet.

The First Amendment protects against the compelled identification of an anonymous speaker. See *Watchtower Bible & Tract Soc. of N.Y., Inc. v. Village of Stratton*, 536 U.S. 150, 164-65 (2002) (striking down ordinance requiring individuals to obtain permit prior to engaging

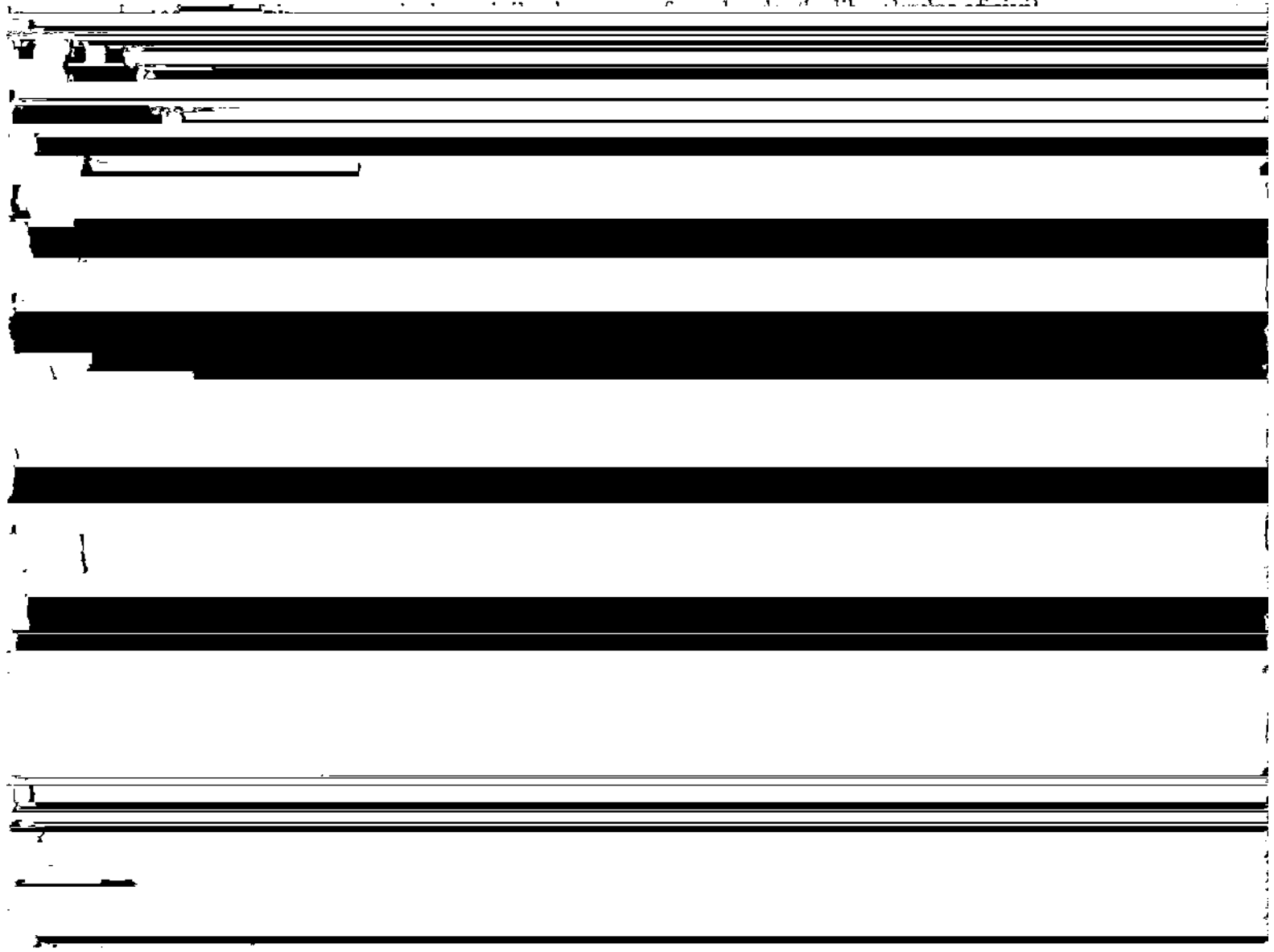
in public demonstrations. See also *United States v. Alvarez*, 565 U.S. 121, 130 (2002)

200 (1999) (striking down statute requiring petition circulators to wear identification badge

pamphleteering is not a pernicious, fraudulent practice, but an honorable tradition of advocacy and of dissent.”); *id.* (“Anonymity is a shield from the tyranny of the majority. . . . It thus

that speech over the internet is entitled to First Amendment protection. Anonymous internet speech in blogs or chat rooms in some instances can become the modern equivalent of political pamphleteering.” (footnotes omitted)); *see also, e.g., Doe v. 2theMart.com*, 140 F. Supp. 2d 1088, 1093 (W.D. Wash. 2001); *Dendrite Int’l, Inc. v. Doe No. 3*, 775 A.2d 756, 765 (N.J. Super. Ct. App. Div. 2001); *Polito v. AOL Time Warner, Inc.*, 2004 WL 3768897, at \*3 (Pa. Com. Pl. Jan. 28, 2004).

As one court cogently explained, the right to speak anonymously is particularly important in the unique context of the Internet. “The free exchange of ideas on the Internet is driven in large part by the ability of Internet users to communicate anonymously. If Internet users could



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

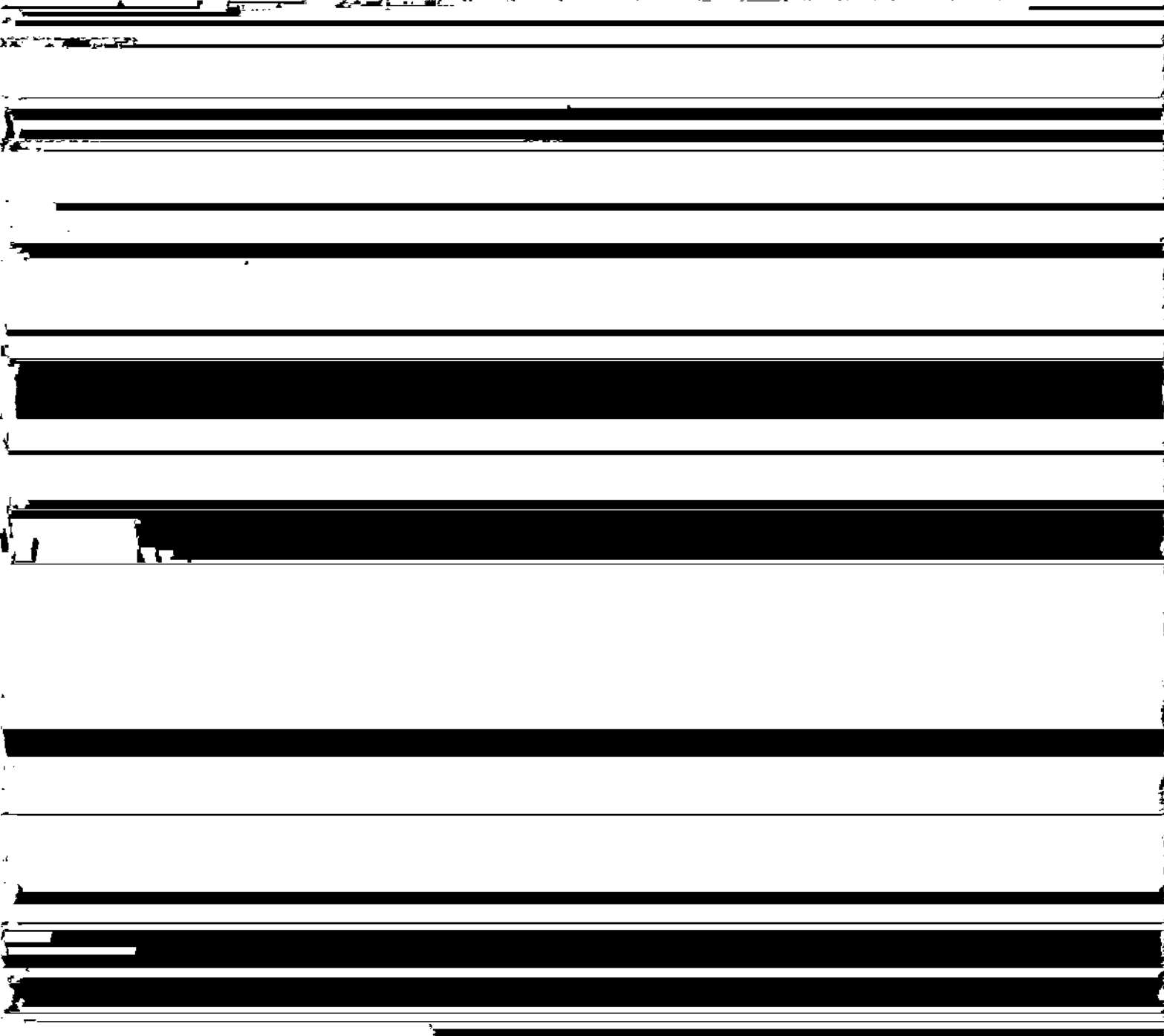
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

entered against the NAACP for its refusal to disclose the identities of its Alabama members to the state Attorney General, as required by a state statute. The Court overturned the judgment, finding that the state had not demonstrated a compelling need for the membership list. See 357 U.S. 449, 464-66 (1958). In *Gibson v. Florida Legislative Investigation Comm.*, 372 U.S. 539 (1963) the Supreme Court considered the constitutionality of a contempt judgment entered against the president of the NAACP's Miami branch for refusing to comply with a legislative





to justify discovery of Internet user's identity); *Cahill*, 884 A.2d at 460 (requiring defamation plaintiff to satisfy summary judgment standard to justify discovery of Internet user's identity); *see also, e.g., Best Western*, 2006 WL 2091695, at \*4 (following *Cahill*); *Highfields Capital*

*Management, Inc. v. Does 1-10*, 2006 WL 27475 (N.D. Cal. 2006) (following *Dandridge*); *Becker*

*Mgmt. LLC v. Does 1-20*, No. 03-MC-33, 2003 WL 22149380, at \*1 (N.D. Cal. 2003) (following *seescandy.com*); *cf. Sony Music Entm't, Inc. v. Does 1-40*, 326 F. Supp. 2d 556, 564-65

(S.D.N.Y. 2004) (applying heightened scrutiny using hybrid of other courts' factors, even though expression at issue "qualifie[d] as speech, but only to a degree" and therefore was entitled to only "limited" First Amendment protection).

§ 87(2)(b) cannot stand unless the

relyance. The government has not met its burden here.<sup>4</sup>



II. THE [REDACTED] NSL VIOLATES THE FOURTH AMENDMENT

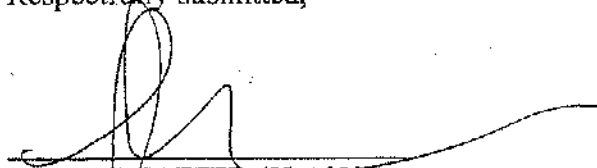
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■

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