

CCLA HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>OUTCOME</u>
1. In its April 1973 publication, Indian Life and Canadian Law, Civil Liberties reported the following:	
a) Twenty-one Indian families applied for and failed to receive public housing. In fact, the applications were not even acknowledged.	Summer 1973 - all 21 of these families were admitted to public housing in the community concerned.
b) In 1960, Indians had been promised electricity at Grassy Narrows reserve. On the strength of this promise, the Indians moved their homes to another site. In 1973, they were still without electricity.	Winter 1974 - electrical facilities were being installed - more than 40 band members were employed in the project.
c) Legal Aid services have not been effectively available to Indians. Lawyers are often located many miles away from the centres where Indians live.	The Ontario Legal Aid Plan began to develop travel warrants to facilitate consultation between reserve Indians and urban lawyers.
2. In briefs and public statements, CCLA protested the following welfare practices of the 1970's.	
a) Welfare recipients had their welfare benefits suspended or cancelled without a hearing.	Certain Ontario legislation states that welfare recipients generally must receive notice and have an opportunity to reply before being removed from welfare rolls.
b) Welfare recipients were required to sign forms which gave welfare administrators the right of access to their residence.	This practice appears to have been discontinued.
c) The Toronto welfare department refused to grant allowances to applicants who lived in homes blacklisted by the department.	This practice has been discontinued.
3. Through surveys in the 1970's CCLA exposed loopholes in legal aid service - large numbers of arrested people never consulted counsel while in custody. Even requests for phone calls were denied.	The Legal Aid Plan introduced in Toronto, a plan for night duty counsel.

ACTIVITY

OUTCOME

4. In the late 1970's, CCLA revealed that, of 200 certificates of commitment to an Ontario mental hospital, 70% were improper.

The Ontario Mental Health Act has been amended to tighten both the procedures and the criteria for involuntary civil commitment.
  
5. CCLA rallies were held to protest the 1974 Fort Erie search and strip drug raid, the excesses of the federal government's first national security bill, and the plan to restore capital punishment.

On the Fort Erie raid, the Ontario government reversed its position, from insisting on an internal investigation to ordering a full-scale independent royal commission.

On the security Bill, a number of significant amendments were added extending the safeguards and restricting the powers.

The Bill to restore capital punishment was defeated.
  
6. In the early 1980's CCLA wrote a widely publicized letter to the Ontario Attorney General complaining about a number of unfair practices at the Grange Commission on the mysterious baby deaths at Toronto's Sick Children's Hospital.

The Commission inaugurated a number of corrective procedures.
  
7. In testimony before the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Charter, CCLA proposed a number of amendments.

A number of these proposals were adopted and introduced in a speech by the Minister of Justice explicitly acknowledging the CCLA contribution.
  
8. In a delegation to the Ontario Solicitor General, CCLA called for guidelines on the police use of video cameras in public washrooms.

A short while later, the government issued such guidelines.
  
9. CCLA instigated the one-day closing of 28 of Toronto's 32 public libraries in protest against C-54, the federal government's 1987 pornography Bill.

The Bill died on the order paper.
  
10. Within a couple of months after first reading of a Bill to replace the War Measures Act, CCLA met with the Minister of National Defence and proposed a number of amendments.

Following second reading, the Minister appeared before the Parliamentary Committee and introduced a number of amendments explicitly recognizing CCLA's contribution to his thinking. But, when CCLA appeared before the Committee, it continued to criticize the Bill. The Minister arranged for a private meeting involving his officials, and both CCLA and the Canadian Bar Association. Following that meeting, even further amendments were made to the Bill. It was finally enacted in substantially modified form.