



NEWS RELEASE

Tuesday, March 25, 2008
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BCCLA APPEARS AT SUPREME COURT OF CANADA IN TWO GROUNDBREAKING CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS CASES

The BCCLA will make oral submissions to the Supreme Court of Canada on Tuesday, March 25, 2008 in *B.C. Transit, et al v. Canadian Federation of Students*, a case that involves a constitutional challenge to the advertising policies of Translink and BC Transit which allow for commercial advertising but not political advertising on government-controlled public transit vehicles.

Grace Pastine, Litigation Director for the BCCLA: "Government should not be able to escape the reach of the Charter by creating quasi-governmental bodies to carry out government work. The BCCLA has long held the position that it is not the business of government to approve or disapprove of what Canadians say unless the government can demonstrate that to do so is justifiable in a free and democratic society. We don't believe the government can demonstrate that in this case."

The BCCLA will argue that the Charter applies to the advertising policies of Translink and BC Transit, and that the advertising policies unreasonably infringe the respondents' rights of freedom of expression. The BCCLA is an intervenor in the case, and also appeared as an intervenor at the BC Supreme Court and Court of Appeal. Chris Sanderson, Q.C. and Chelsea Wilson of Lawson Lundell represent the BCCLA.

The BCCLA will also make oral submissions to the Supreme Court of Canada on Wednesday, March 26, 2008 in *Minister of Justice, et al. v. Omar Ahmed Khadr*. Omar Khadr is a Canadian citizen who has been detained by the United States in Guantanamo Bay since 2002 and has been put on trial in a proceeding before a Military Commission that is a violation of international law. Prior to charges being laid, Canadian officials interviewed Mr. Khadr in Guantanamo Bay and passed on summaries of the information collected to the American government.

The BCCLA is an intervenor in the case and will argue that by gathering evidence from Mr. Khadr and sharing it with American military authorities for use against Mr. Khadr, Canada's complicity in the proceedings violates Mr. Khadr's Charter rights to life, liberty and security of the person. The BCCLA will also argue that the Charter places Canada under a duty to fully disclose to Mr. Khadr evidence that may be relevant to his defense in the proceedings against him in Guantanamo Bay. Joe Arvay, of Arvay Finlay Barristers, and Sujit Choudhry, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto, represent the BCCLA.

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