



## NEWS RELEASE

British Columbia Civil Liberties Association  
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For immediate release

### **BCCLA files complaint against CSIS for using torture-derived information**

**Vancouver, B.C.** – The B.C. Civil Liberties Association has filed a complaint against the Canadian Security Intelligence Service for using information it knows is derived from torture. The complaint was filed with the Security Intelligence Review Committee early this morning.

“Canada’s laws and international commitments say that we will never condone torture, no matter the public emergency,” says Gratl. “Canada must be unambiguous about opposing torture in all circumstances, or else we risk the greater use of torture by countries who believe Canada is not opposed to this repugnant practice.”

The information that CSIS is using torture-derived information came from CSIS lawyer Geoffrey O’Brien. O’Brien, in testimony before the House of Commons Public Safety Committee on March 31, 2009, said that CSIS would use information the organization knows is derived from torture if lives were at stake. The Public Safety Minister contradicted CSIS’ lawyer on Thursday, saying that CSIS did not use information derived from torture.

“Either the Public Safety Minister doesn’t know what CSIS is doing or CSIS doesn’t care what the Minister is saying,” said Jason Gratl, Vice-President of the BCCLA. “Either way we’ve got a serious problem.”

Canada is a signatory to the United Nations Convention Against Torture, which says that no circumstances whatsoever may be invoked as a justification for torture. Canada’s domestic laws prohibit information derived from torture from being used in Canadian courts.

Gratl says that it is clear that policy is not strong enough to prevent use of information derived from torture, and that only legislation can prevent this tacit approval of torture. The BCCLA has drafted a proposed *Prevention of Torture Act* that would significantly strengthen Canada’s protection against torture by:

- making a criminal offence to use information derived by torture;
- prohibiting Canadian officials from transferring prisoners to face torture;
- creating a watch list of countries known to practice torture to prevent information sharing, extradition and deportation with those countries;
- placing a duty on officials to report knowledge of torture; and,

- establishing diplomatic protocols for the immediate repatriation of any Canadian citizen at risk of torture.

[BCCLA complaint >>](#)

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