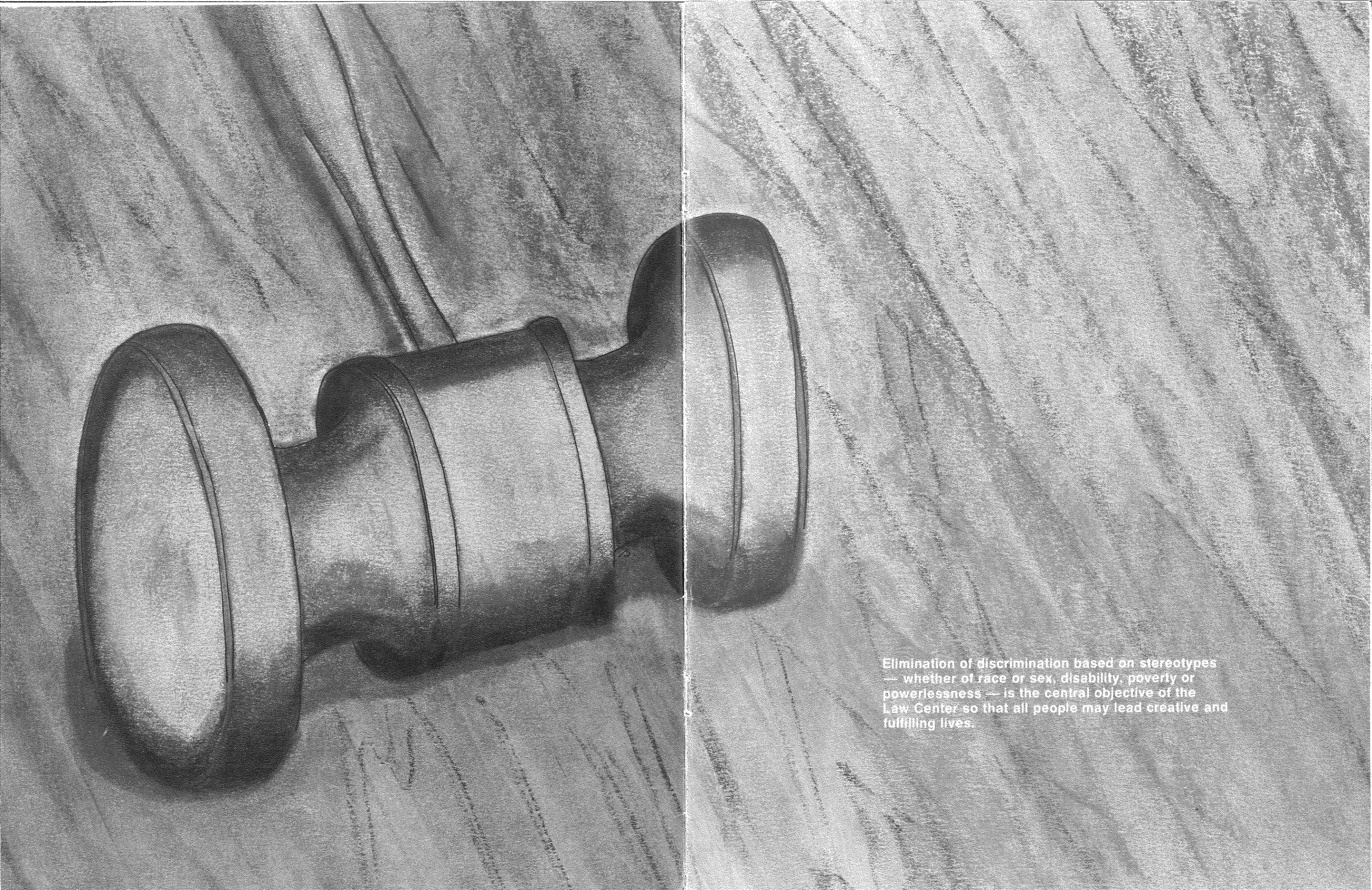




**PUBLIC INTEREST
LAW CENTER**

OF PHILADELPHIA



Elimination of discrimination based on stereotypes — whether of race or sex, disability, poverty or powerlessness — is the central objective of the Law Center so that all people may lead creative and fulfilling lives.

What is the Public Interest Law Center?

A private, non-profit law firm based on the premise that *all interests are best served when the interests of those who are least powerful in our society are effectively represented*. Unless ordinary citizens have skilled, experienced and resourceful counsel on important public questions they will be ignored, at best, or victimized.

To have the greatest impact Public Interest Law Center lawsuits are usually class actions — cases in which groups of people and their organizations are represented.

We are not just courtroom lawyers. Like private law firms we provide client organizations with continuing counsel in legislative, administrative and public activities to achieve their objectives and effect institutional change.

The firm acts as advocate for and counsel to a broad range of client groups whose constituencies are diverse, but who find unity in their common battle against discrimination and abuse of power. Some of the groups for whom we have acted as special or general counsel are:

Asociacion Puertorriquenos En Marcha	Pennsylvania Association of Older Persons
Aspira de Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania Association of Retarded Citizens
Community Service Center for the Deaf	Philadelphia Council of Neighborhood Organizations
Disabled in Action of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia NOW
Friends of the Earth of Delaware Valley	Philadelphia P.U.S.H.
Grey Panthers	Resurrection
NAACP (all Philadelphia branches)	Sierra Club
National Council of Senior Citizens	
Paralyzed Veterans of America	

Some People the Law Center Represents

Seven persons saw three policemen smash through a porch door and beat EDGARDO ORTIZ with nightsticks and a black jack and continue to beat him after he was handcuffed. The 26 year old father of three with no prior police record was treated for serious injuries of the head, neck, back and legs at Episcopal Hospital after being beaten further and taunted for being hispanic at the police station. No disciplinary action has been taken by the Philadelphia Police Department or District Attorney against any of the officers involved.

Twenty-five year old JOYCE BROCK has cerebral palsy requiring her to use crutches and a wheelchair. She is one of 13 million Americans, otherwise mobile, who cannot physically climb on and off the standard public bus. A graduate of Penn State University, she was forced to withdraw from Graduate School in Social Work because she could not use available public transportation to travel to school and field-work placement. She has to pay \$25 a week out of her \$135/month disability income for private transportation to physical therapy treatments.

LARRY is a 10 year old boy who arrived in Pennhurst State Hospital as a baby. Left alone without toys or attention, he spends his days in the middle of a bare cell, one hand strapped to his waist to prevent him from hitting his own face in desperation and boredom. One of his eyes has already been destroyed.

MOSES DICKERSON, qualified as a welder in Alabama, was not permitted even to take a welding test at U.S. Steel's Fairless Plant but was assigned to janitorial services. Other black workers represented by PILCOP were three times more likely than white workers to be assigned to the Open Hearth section of the plant, in part because one personnel manager felt that "blacks can take the heat better" according to testimony in federal court.

All are victims of discrimination based on stereotypes.

What Does the Public Interest Law Center Do?

Any organization is best judged by its deeds. Here are a few examples of what we have done.

Jobs: The Heart Of Social Justice. Employment discrimination — because of race, sex, national origin, handicap or age — and the supply of jobs is central to the concerns of the Law Center's clients and hence to the Law Center's work.

The federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission called our employment discrimination program "the best project of its kind." The Law Center recruited and trained over 100 Philadelphia lawyers and then screened, referred, and sometimes participated as co-counsel in, over 250 discrimination cases.

The Law Center now focuses on employment cases of exceptional impact or which develop new areas of the law, such as:

Dickerson v. U.S. Steel, brought as part of the NAACP's national attack on discrimination in the industry has been strenuously contested as the first case to come to trial. After 58 days of testimony by experts and employees the federal district court upheld our prima facie case of discrimination and conspiracy between the company and union to deprive employees of their civil rights. The trial, completed in September and awaiting final decision, was the longest in the entire history of the federal court in Philadelphia.

In the case of *Zichy v. Philadelphia* we secured a judgment assuring pregnancy benefits from one of the largest employers of women in the state. Following the reversal in law wrought by the Supreme Court in *Gilbert v. General Electric* we successfully protected the opportunity to maintain that award on state law grounds in the Court of Appeals. We are also representing about 20 women's groups and labor organizations (including the Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers, AFT, AFL-CIO and the Philadelphia Labor Council, AFL-CIO Women's Rights Committee) in Commonwealth Court to see to it that Pennsylvania law continues to require pregnancy benefits.

Litigation has begun (*Taylor v. Department of Labor*) to enforce and make meaningful the federal government's Philadelphia Plan, designed to end discrimination in the construction trades. This case seeks effective enforcement mechanisms, including community monitoring systems to be operated by our clients who are organizations of minority workers.

The Law Center has analyzed discrimination against Hispanics in CETA and Public Works programs and the police department preparatory to litigation on behalf of the grossly under-employed Spanish-speaking community.

The Law Center won a judgment on behalf of people with epilepsy holding federal handicapped employment statutes enforceable in the Courts (*Drennon v. PGH*). We are handling 40 cases of employment discrimination against disabled people and have won all 18 which have come to a decision in federal and state administrative processes.

We provide continuing counsel to South Philadelphia's Older and Middle Age Worker Employment Discrimination Ombudsman Project, and on its behalf supported an attack on mandatory retirement in the United States Supreme Court.

We are developing — with community organizations, labor, women's and minority groups and environmentalists — activities to expand the supply of jobs in the Philadelphia area including suits to enforce recent federal laws giving a priority in procurement contracts to labor surplus areas.

The Low-Floor Bus

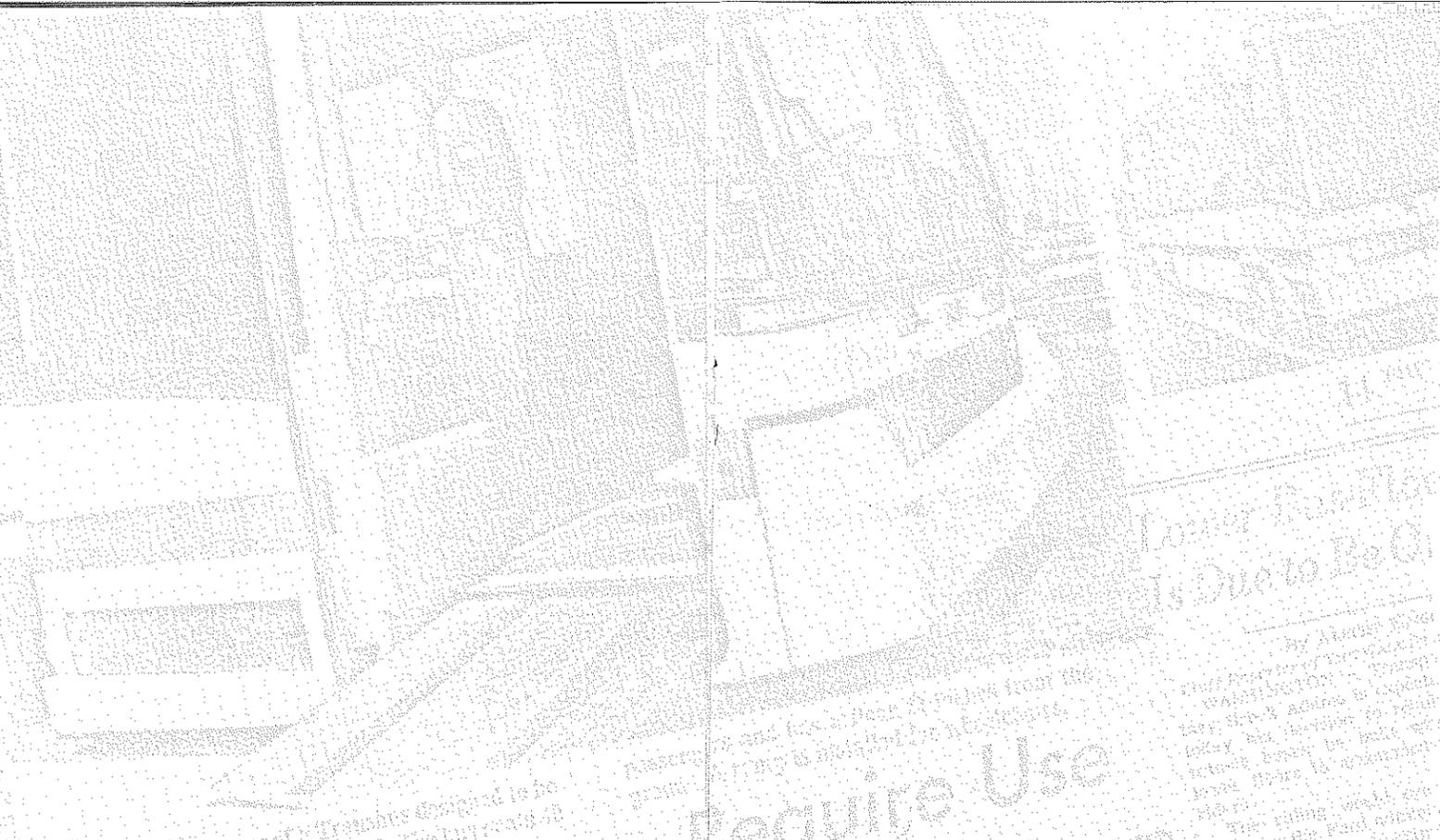
By Tom Winter
The first "low-floor" bus, which has no steps, was introduced by General Motors in 1974. The bus was designed to be accessible to the elderly and disabled. It was a major breakthrough in public transportation. The bus was designed to be accessible to the elderly and disabled. It was a major breakthrough in public transportation. The bus was designed to be accessible to the elderly and disabled. It was a major breakthrough in public transportation.

IN THE MATION

STREET JOURNAL, Wednesday, July 24, 1975

Coming to Near on Bus-Floor Height, Use by Infirm

By GM Sales Share, Use by Infirm
The bus is designed to be accessible to the elderly and disabled. It was a major breakthrough in public transportation. The bus was designed to be accessible to the elderly and disabled. It was a major breakthrough in public transportation. The bus was designed to be accessible to the elderly and disabled. It was a major breakthrough in public transportation.



Disabled Sue to Require Use Of Buses With Low Step, Ramp

By DAVID C. HACKETT
By The Bulletin Staff
At March 24 of Southern Illinois, has been able to get on a bus only once in the past 3 years. That was at General's 81st birthday. The bus was not accessible to the infirm. The bus was not accessible to the infirm. The bus was not accessible to the infirm.

Technology Then

she added that the bus was not accessible to the infirm. The bus was not accessible to the infirm.

Access to Transportation: The Most Improved, Highest Technology, Accessible Bus. In a two year battle against General Motors and many transit authorities, 14 national and Pennsylvania organizations of the elderly and the disabled represented by the Law Center won a decision from the Secretary of Transportation requiring transit authorities to buy only the fully accessible low-floor, ramped TRANSBUS, effective in 1979. This victory came after seven courts had rejected related claims of the disabled handled by other counsel.

The National Academy of Engineering called TRANSBUS "the most desirable bus, the most easy and comfortable to use" for all riders. The stakes in the TRANSBUS case were enormous: 75 percent of the people who ride public transportation use buses, and 13 million elderly and disabled persons cannot ride present buses at all. In the course of the battle the Law Center won two Court of Appeals cases (including the first decision construing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, known as the Civil Rights Act for the Disabled) and numerous Congressional, administrative and public skirmishes.

Education: A Child's Right to Learn and Parents' Rights to Guide the Child's Schooling. A lawsuit which gained for handicapped children in Pennsylvania the right to free public education fitted to the needs of each child (*PARC v. Commonwealth*) sparked dozens of similar suits across the country and resulted also in the passage of three Acts of Congress.

This legislation restores to parents a place in the design of their child's education and in overseeing its delivery. It requires the assessment of each child's learning strengths and styles, the specification of teaching goals and techniques, and individualized education plans for each handicapped child.

The Law Center is actively challenging the state's implementation of the PARC decree in federal court. With our organizational clients the Law Center has prepared handbooks on the Right to Education, on implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and on Vocational Rehabilitation Rights. We have conducted six intensive training programs attended by more than 500 parents, lawyers and lay advocates so that these rights may be achieved throughout the state.

where on a bus... Road Clearance... The bus is designed to be accessible to the elderly and disabled. It was a major breakthrough in public transportation. The bus was designed to be accessible to the elderly and disabled. It was a major breakthrough in public transportation.

Building the Public Interest Bar

From its inception, the Law Center has taken as one of its purposes the development of an economic base for the practice of public interest law which will allow the private bar in general to provide representation to people who wish to assert public rights.

As such structures are developed, the Law Center can concentrate on other areas. Thus the Law Center for several years recruited and trained more than 100 private practitioners to handle discrimination cases before turning that referral function over to the Bar Association. Similarly, we have trained nearly 100 other lawyers, published a manual for the "Conduct of Section 1983 Actions", and operate the Bar Association's referral panel for police civil damage actions.

As the law is developed in the areas of disability law, elderly law, environmental law and the law of municipal accountability and the economic underpinnings of practice in those areas are put in place, the Law Center will train members of the private bar so that the number of lawyers available to our clients will expand.

Who We Are

The Law Center staff includes fifteen lawyers. Most have had substantial prior experience in civil rights, corporate, financial, criminal, and public interest litigation. Several have taught at major law schools and centers of community medicine. Some have served in ranking city, state and federal administrative posts. Others have written leading texts, edited professional journals, and done investigative reporting.

Investigators, social scientists, community workers and consultants are essential to the Law Center's ability to fully serve its clients. The firm currently has ten such other professionals with an average of eight years' experience in their fields.

The Law Center's chief administrative officer was deputy director and acting director of the Urban Coalition and for seven years served as deputy director of commerce and deputy city representative for the City of Philadelphia.

Ultimate responsibility for major policy decisions at the Law Center rests with its Board of Directors and executive committee. Membership in these two groups span a wide range of professions, interests and ethnic origins and includes ex-officio officers of the Philadelphia Bar Association.

Edwin D. Wolf was the first executive director of the Law Center and founded its predecessor, the Philadelphia chapter of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

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Public Interest Law Center Litigation Gets Results

When government agencies fail to comply with the law, the Law Center has brought suits which have successfully required the government to be responsive to the law and to the needs of its citizens.

Despite 5 congressional mandates, it took litigation by the Law Center to make the Department of Transportation act upon its obligation to require all new buses be fully accessible to elderly and handicapped persons. Reporting the victory, the *Wall Street Journal* on May 19, 1977 stated:

Carter administration sources noted that one pressure on the Transportation Secretary came from legal actions by groups representing handicapped persons to get "equal access" to public transportation.

Referring to a spate of recent suits on this issue, the official says, "the handicapped people were pretty much negotiating with a gun on the table."

Forty-two new three-bedroom houses were dedicated in July 1977 as part of a \$2 million settlement of the Law Center's six year lawsuit charging that the U.S. Department of Housing had damaged the East Poplar community by its policies. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported:

"These houses would have never been built if it wasn't for the Court's decision."

In August 1977 Pennsylvania, because of its budget impasse, attempted to discontinue a program which provides vital supplemental food to pregnant women, nursing mothers and infants in order to reduce the incidence of retardation and other disabilities. The *Evening Bulletin* reported that Law Center litigation forced the program to be restored within two days. That lawsuit was the only successful reversal of any program reductions by the state during the budget crisis and resulted in approximately 30,000 women and infants throughout Pennsylvania receiving \$655,000 in food supplements.

The Economics of Public Interest Law

There is no sustained funding for public interest law. The Law Center relies on contributions from attorneys, foundations and the citizenry at large. IRS regulations prohibit payments by clients.

Particular projects have been supported by restricted grants from the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, the Governor's Justice Commission and the federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare. But government grants depend on annual approval and appropriation and do not cover such vital areas as employment discrimination, the environment, Hispanic affairs and government accountability.

Cases are expensive and our opponents fight hard. Our most recent trial cost over \$70,000 in out-of-pocket expenses, not including professional or staff salaries.

In the three years of its existence, the Law Center, working on a shoestring, has compiled an outstanding track record against agencies and institutions with vastly greater resources. Contributions, however, are presently not sufficient to carry the Law Center's work forward, and our financial future is uncertain.

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. Any individual or organization contemplating a contribution or grant is welcome to contact the Administrative Officer or Chief Counsel for any further information.

**WITH YOUR HELP, WE INTEND TO CONTINUE AS ADVOCATES
IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST. WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL
JOIN WITH US.**

The following persons and organizations have contributed to the support of the Law Center.

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