

FOUR



DIRECT SECRETARY OF STATE TO ESTABLISH PILOT PROJECTS TO IMPROVE CAPACITY OF FRIENDSHIP CENTRES TO ASSIST DISABLED NATIVE PERSONS.

At present, there are approximately eighty Friendship Centres in urban centres across Canada. If these facilities were given additional funds by the Federal Government, they would be able to provide valuable referral services to disabled Native persons. To varying degrees, Friendship Centres perform the following functions:

- **Meeting Places:** The Friendship Centres all have meeting rooms which can be used by Native persons for both formal and informal gatherings.
- **Lodging:** Housing and lodging services, either directly or on a referral basis. The Centre in Vancouver, for example, is a large dormitory facility set up along the lines of a YMCA. In smaller Centres, there are hostel services provided, or staff members help individuals to find accommodation in the community. Along with this service, many Centres also provide meals on an inexpensive basis.
- **Workshops:** The Centres design, develop and put on workshops for the Native and Non-Native population in the community so that people can gain a better understanding of each other's culture and traditions.
- **Reinforcement:** A complete program of activities designed to increase and reinforce the awareness that Native persons have of their heritage. The objective here is to strengthen the sense of identity that Native persons have as they are going through the process of integrating into a Non-Native community.
- **Social:** A year-round program of pow-wows, dances, bingos, fairs, dinners and parades involving many members of the Native population.
- **Recreation:** A wide range of sporting events including athletic tournaments, sports meets with other community groups,—and other activities such as walk-a-thons and fitness programs.
- **Community Involvement:** Participation with other community organizations to promote greater integration of Native people into community life.
- **Counselling:** Staff members and volunteers provide counselling in the areas of employment, family living, alcoholism, other health-related matters, legal rights and education.
- **Referral:** The Centres make referral to support services in the community. These relate to such needs as employment, medical aid, rehabilitation, social assistance and welfare, legal aid, education, and financial assistance.
- **Interaction:** The Community Interaction Program. This program, operated by the Centres, funds projects in the community which foster interaction between the Native and Non-Native population. An example of this is the Ontario Task Force On Native People In The Urban Setting, a joint Native-Provincial venture committed to improving the quality of life for Natives.
- **Transportation:** Staff members and volunteers provide transportation for those who cannot otherwise travel to health centres, and other support service facilities in the community. This service is also provided on voting days.