A guiding principle of the Committee's work has been that a G.A.I. scheme to replace the present social-assistance hodge-podge must provide welfare recipients with at least those levels of income which they currently receive. While many communities provide benefits which are lower than provincial standards, there are certain "fringe benefits" available to welfare recipients. For instance, the general rates may sometimes be supplemented by the municipality or "special" benefits provided for special circumstances such as funeral expenses, a gastric diet, or other extraordinary needs.

On the basis of these and other factors, the Committee decided that the sum of $3,500 should be adopted as the initial benefit level for a family of four for the year 1969. The provision of a $3,500 income floor, on a national basis, as a social right, represents a substantial gain for the great majority of families with little or no other income. For instance, $3,500 represents about $1,000 more than the amount received in 1969 by a four-person welfare family where the lowest benefit levels prevailed. This amount would have been almost $500 higher than the provincial average for that year. In addition, this guaranteed income floor represents a great step towards the elimination of regional disparities and the current discrimination against families because of the province or municipality in which they happen to reside.

The amount of $3,500 is the basic guarantee level recommended for families of four. Adjustments in this amount for families of other sizes would be accomplished through the use of the Family Size Equalizer Points system described earlier in this section. Under this system, families of four are allotted 7 points. The value of a single point then is derived simply by dividing the recommended basic guarantee level of $3,500 by 7. The result is $500. Guarantee levels for other family units are calculated by multiplying the number of points allotted to that family (for example, 5 in the case of a two-person family) by the value of one such point, $500. The operation of this method of adjustment for family size is shown in Table A 2.

TABLE A 2

Income guarantee levels by family unit size, 1969

Family unit size	Family Size Equalizer Points	Family size equivalent	Income guarantee level
		$	
1	3	3 × 500	1,500
2	5	5 × 500	2,500
3	6	6 × 500	3,000
4	7	7 × 500	3,500
5	8	8 × 500	4,000
6	9	9 × 500	4,500
7	10	10 × 500	5,000
10	13	13 × 500	6,500

SOURCE: Staff Study.