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## A Council for Applied Social Research

### THE PROBLEM

One of the factors which has made our task, and that of the research staff, much more complex is the shocking lack in Canada of research in the area of social development and the inadequacy of up-to-date statistical data. The Senate Committee, in pursuing the task of informing itself about the causes and dimensions of poverty, has repeatedly found that adequate data and applied social research were not available. There is no authoritative source to which the Committee could turn for information or to which it could refer problems for study.

The problem is not new. The Economic Council of Canada, in their *Fifth Annual Review* (1968), after recommending the establishment of the Special Senate Committee on Poverty, went on to suggest a longer-term strategy:

The longer-term measures which we propose consist essentially of building up with all reasonable speed the knowledge and understanding necessary for the elimination of poverty in Canada. These measures would amount to a comprehensive evaluation and reappraisal of the structure of all policies, both governmental and private, having a major bearing on the problem of poverty, including a careful evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of new proposals such as the negative income tax and other forms of minimum income guarantee. The work would draw on the skills of specialists in different social and behavioural sciences. It would have to be well co-ordinated under the direction of persons experienced both in research and in the assessment of the practicability and administrative efficiency of existing and proposed programs.<sup>1</sup>

In their *Sixth Annual Review* (1969), the E.C.C. point out:

Perhaps what is most lacking in the development and implementation of effective anti-poverty policies, however, is a mission-oriented focal point . . .