

The Sub-Committee believes that this enhanced child value benefit, in conjunction with enhanced employment opportunities and the other initiatives that the Sub-Committee has recommended, will ensure that Canadian children do not live in poverty.

C. ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

The Assembly of First Nations indicated to the Sub-Committee that it would like to be recognized as warranting special attention, given the special nature of the social and economic needs that must be addressed if Aboriginal Canadians are to be less dependent on government. The Assembly would prefer to provide employment and economic development opportunities to Aboriginal communities, on or off reserve; it sees the solution to Aboriginal poverty not as more social assistance, but instead as direct measures that provide employment opportunities, education and training opportunities, and a stronger traditional economy. Such initiatives, while not totally eliminating the need for social assistance, would certainly reduce it to a significant extent. What is needed is the promotion of self-reliance.¹⁶⁷

Although the focus of the Sub-Committee's study was directed to the more general phenomenon of child poverty in Canadian society, the Sub-Committee was struck by the harshness of conditions on reserves, in Aboriginal communities and in our cities. The Sub-Committee encourages the federal government to enhance its efforts to deal with these problems on several fronts.

The Sub-Committee recognizes the housing, educational, health and employment deficits being experienced by Aboriginal Canadians, and recommends that:

- C1 the Federal Government recognize that political self-government is of primary importance for eradicating child poverty among Aboriginal children, and that it consider negotiating appropriate financial and other arrangements with the Aboriginal communities.**

D. A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION

The Sub-Committee believes that what it has recommended is a comprehensive plan of action that will lead to the eradication of child poverty by the year 2000. It involves both service and income measures, and initiatives that are both short-term and long-term in nature. As well, it involves, as plan participants, the various levels of government, community and church groups, business, unions, and individuals themselves. To the greatest extent possible, families and children should be involved in the development of programs and services.

Implementation of the plan will require co-ordination, and the Sub-Committee believes that the Children's Bureau within Health and Welfare Canada is the appropriate co-ordinating agency, given the Bureau's mandate.

The Sub-Committee recommends that:

- D1 the Children's Bureau within Health and Welfare Canada be responsible for the co-ordination and implementation of the Sub-Committee's plan of action for the eradication of child poverty by the year 2000.**

¹⁶⁷ Proceedings, Issue 11, p. 7, 14, 19, 23.