- **Fund-Raising:** The Centres raise money to support their own activities, as well as for activities in the community at large. For example, many centres hold walk-a-thons to raise money for the Cancer Society.

**Self-Governed:** The Friendship Centres are run by elected Boards of Directors which are comprised of Native and Non-Native persons. Not only do they direct the policies and programs of the Centres, but they play a key role in building bridges to other community services and programs. In Regina, for example, the President of the Board of Directors of the Friendship Centre also sits on the City Planning Board.

**Yearly Justification:** The Friendship Centre program began in 1958, with the first facility established in Winnipeg. Not all Centres provide the complete range of services listed above, but many more would do so if they had the finances to hire, train and keep skilled staff members. At present, the Friendship Centres receive $4.9 million from the Department of the Secretary of State to be used as core funding. That means the funds cannot be used to finance their program activities. The programs that do exist are financed from other sources, such as private enterprise, foundations and provincial governments. This other funding during the present year amounts to $18.5 million. All of this additional revenue must be justified anew each year, in order to continue in subsequent years.

**Overworked, Underpaid:** Under the existing budgetary limits, the 300 full-time staff members in Centres across Canada are badly overworked and underpaid. One reason for this situation is that the expectations of Native and Non-native members of the community for service from the staff members is very high; frequently it is unrealistic. A survey was conducted in the summer of 1981, by an independent management consulting firm. This survey of 17 Friendship Centres revealed that the work of full-time staff members averaged 72 hours per week, with weekly salaries between $190 and $300. Aside from salary, there was no other compensation, such as holiday pay, sick pay or training allowances. This latter is a critical lack since the extension of programs can be done at present time only through the up-grading of existing staff members.

The 1981 survey also indicated that if the Federal Government were to take over the administration of these Centres, and operate them with Government staff members to provide the same scope and quality of services, the cost of running the Friendship Centre program would exceed 200% of the present budget and cost Secretary of State 5 times its current financial commitment.

**No Failures:** One other thing should be pointed out about the funding that the Centres receive. Over the past ten years, the Federal Government has provided the program with $5 million for capital expenditures. The administrators and staff of the Centres have parleyed that original investment into assets now worth $15 million. During the period, no Centre has failed financially.

**Disabled Left Out:** This is the backdrop against which the needs of disabled Native persons must be considered. While disabled persons can be included as part of the client group receiving services from Friendship Centres, the specific needs of disabled persons do not receive any special attention. Program funding is stretched so thin, and staff members are so completely occupied with other activities, that there exists no leeway under present economic conditions for extending programs to cover the special needs of disabled persons.

**The Recommendation:** The Special Committee recommends, after considering the potential of these Cen-

**"Under the existing budgetary limits, the 300 full-time staff members in Centres across Canada are badly overworked and underpaid. One reason for this situation is that the expectations of Native and Non-native members of the community for service from the staff members is very high; frequently it is unrealistic."**