

costs of social security programs. In 1981 there were nearly 2.4 million persons 65 years of age and over, or about 10% of the population. Projections based on census data indicate that by 2001 there will be 3.4 million persons 65 years of age or over, or 12% of the population. Projections for 2026 are 5.6 million to 5.8 million or 16% to 19%. This increase in a group which is predominantly non-participating in the labour force will have significant repercussions.

The combined old age security, guaranteed income supplement and spouse's allowance programs accounted for \$1.9 billion and assisted 1.7 million recipients in 1971. By 1982 the amounts were \$8.6 billion for nearly 2.4 million recipients. It is expected that expenditures will rise faster than the population increase since demographers are predicting that women will continue to live longer than men. Since working women on average have modest salaries, it may be expected that they will have moderate retirement incomes for the next 10 to 20 years. Indeed, older women as a group, unless they share retirement incomes with their spouses, make up a significant component of Canada's poor. This group will impose an increased demand for income support, community services and, in the longer term, institutional care.

A world assembly on aging under United Nations auspices was convened in Vienna in July 1982 to consider solutions to current and future problems of the aged. The Canadian position was documented in two reports. *Canadian government report on aging*, Department of Health and Welfare, Ottawa, was prepared as a co-operative effort of federal, provincial and territorial governments. The other report, presenting the views of non-governmental organizations working for the well-being of senior citizens, was prepared by the National Advisory Council on Aging.

**New Horizons.** This program, specifically directed to senior citizens, was established by the federal government in 1972. Its goal is to help alleviate feelings of social isolation or loneliness often experienced by older persons. In this self-help program grants are distributed to groups of senior citizens to enable them to become actively involved in planning and operating projects for their own betterment and that of other older persons in the community. Projects funded provide recreational services, community and information services, and activity and drop-in centres for seniors. By 1982, about one-third of the 2.4 million retired Canadians were active in the program.

### 6.9.2 Pension reform

Concern with pension reform arises from the knowledge that the increasingly larger portion of senior citizens will require adequate income in their post-retirement years. On average one of every two elderly Canadians is poor, that is, with income

sufficiently low to qualify for a guaranteed income supplement. This means that 50% of elderly Canadians have inadequate retirement incomes.

Various factors contribute to this inadequate income security provision; not the least is the inability to earn enough income to accumulate savings. Current thinking suggests that provisions for pension plans could be improved to reduce the number of elderly-poor. The Canada Pension Plan does not provide sufficient additional income beyond old age security benefits. Coverage of employees by private pension plans is not adequate for several reasons. Since many employer sponsored plans are not portable, labour force participants lose their pensions when they change employment. Small businesses usually do not have private pension plans. Thus slightly less than half of CPP/QPP contributors are members of employer-sponsored pension plans. Significantly, only about 11% of employees at the lowest income levels are covered, in contrast to nearly 85% of those earning more than \$30,000. Women, because of their low labour force participation, are not all covered by CPP/QPP and even fewer are covered by private pension plans. In 1980 about 45% of men in the labour force were covered by private pension plans but only 31% of women and the number of workers participating in employer-sponsored pension plans changed little in the following two years. Initiatives are being taken by all levels of government to deal with these concerns. In December 1982 the federal government published *Better pensions for Canadians* setting out proposals to improve pensions. A parliamentary committee was appointed to recommend means of implementing the proposals.

### 6.9.3 Family violence

The problem of child abuse has been recognized for many years and legislation has been enacted relating to neglected and abandoned children. The International Year of the Child in 1979 generally increased awareness of the full range of child abuse. Increased public sensitivity led to the implementation of reporting systems and registries to identify child abuse and to facilitate preventive and remedial action.

In January 1980, the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women documented the problem of wife-beating in a report *Wife battering in Canada*. The report estimated that about 25,000 women might seek shelter in appropriate centres if resources were available.

Physical abuse and neglect of the elderly have also become issues of concern though their magnitude is not known.

The health and welfare department established a national clearing house on family violence in January 1982 to provide information and support to professional groups, to educate the general public