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# Editorial

Probably no one believed the statement by the Prime Minister in the recent election campaign that child poverty would be eradicated by 1990. It is perhaps an indictment on our society that we do find such a statement unbelievable yet we can live with the knowledge that a certain percentage of Australian children will have to live in poverty throughout all or at least part of their childhood. We have documented the effects of poverty on children. Do we really think that these children will be able to survive and to develop to their full potential? We have enough proof to know that priorities of our society should change if all children are to get a fair deal. However we also have enough experience to know that priorities in the community are unlikely to change very quickly. Children do not vote and hence their needs do not score high on the list of political priorities. Programs for children are often first on the hit list for funding cuts if these need to be made in Government spending. This can be seen at a State level where funding to family welfare agencies and other agencies working with families often caught by poverty are struggling for funds. It would be tremendous to see, if perhaps a pipe dream, the Federal Government working directly on its promise to

eradicate child poverty by providing adequate funding to families in poverty and those organisations working with them. Once children are assured of an adequate financial environment the problems of developing and living in today's community will not be solved but will give children a far greater chance in the world.

Certainly poverty is not the only trap for children. Those children born with some form of disability still, along with their parents, have a struggle to exercise their rights for full participation in the community. Certainly for these children some positive changes are occurring however there are still many gaps in provision of supports. The Children's Bureau in conjunction with the Human Resource Centre is conducting a workshop on Children and Disability in Melbourne in August 1987. This workshop will identify the programs which are available and their benefits as well as problems and gaps in services. A report of the workshop will appear in the journal later in the year.

*Margarita Frederico*

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