Homelessness In Toronto Essay, Research Paper

One of the largest growing concerns in Toronto is the constantlyincreasing number of citizens who are finding themselves living on thestreets. With the decrease in the number of jobs that do not require a high school diploma, the populationof homeless people has literally boomed. My questions are not as simple toanswer as they may appear. Why is a large portion of our community forcedto live on the streets? What has be done to decrease the problem? With the economical wealth attributed to the name “Canada”, one wouldhave to wonder why there is a homeless situation at all. This problem isespecially evident in Canada’s wealthiest city, Toronto. When it comes tothe affairs of the people, it is the government who should intervene. WhenI look at what the government has done with regard to the homeless problem,I have to doubt that everything is being done to eradicate it. The UnitedNations implemented a universal declaration of human rights. Article 25Section 1 of this declaration states: Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the healthand well being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing,housing, and medical care and necessary social services, and to the rightto security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood,old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. This is a step in the right direction. However, this is not enough.These rights are subject to the discretion of the government of the countrywho decides to obey these universal rights. How much is “adequate”? The government, both at the federal (mostly at federal) and municipal levels, is currentlyworking on new spending cuts. These cuts also include spending on welfare,unemployment and social services that are geared towards helping thehomeless. Spending cuts can be seen as a necessity to maintain the countryeconomically, but the reason for having a government in the first place isto take care of the people. How can this be done when money is being takenaway from those services that are necessary to uphold this obligation?Simply put, it cannot. Those obligations are served by nonprofitorganizations who depend on government grants to maintain a standard of

care for those who need the services. The blame cannot be placed only on the government. Such a system ofassistance depends on its beneficiaries to be honest and have someintegrity. Many recipients of these services attempt to “cheat thesystem”. With no will to search for work many of these recipients remainat home and reap the benefits of their weekly cheques. This causes thegovernment to create other services to control the amounts of money beingdistributed to those people. This process is costly and would beunnecessary if all of the recipients decided to take an honest approach tothis service. What can the government do to decrease the homeless population?Although there is no quick and easy answer to solve this difficult problem,Toronto has the means to attempt economical ways to research and come upwith ideas to solve it. Here in Ontario we have many excellentuniversities and colleges with equally excellent students who are takingcourses in the political sciences. If the government were to cooperatewith these universities and colleges and have them work in conjunction withthe current research groups, then the answer to decrease the homelesspopulation would be effectively answered. The government would encounterlittle expense and at the same time give the students a chance to implementwhat they are learning into real life situations. Everyone benefits fromthis idea and there are no losers. In conclusion I think that our homeless problem could eventually berooted out entirely if everyone were to take part in the care of theirfellow neighbour. If we were to stop being self-centered and startthinking about the other person who has less than us, I am sure that wewould benefit from it. It isn’t all that hard. A few advertisements onthe television and radio, a little push from our society’s leaders and wewould be off on the right track. That worked for the recycling program.Now we should try employing this idea for even better reasons. I doubt thatI will be around to see this idea in use all around the world, but I dohope that I can one day see it used here in Toronto. To assist all thehomeless here in Toronto would be a very nice thing to see. The best partof it all would be to know that we, as a society, would be able to worktogether despite all the barriers created by racism and our naive naturewhen it comes to other heritages.