

Aboriginal Self Government Long Past Due by Bernd Christmas

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17.3 billion dollars!!! That is how much the Canadian economy of Canada would benefit if First Nations peoples in Canada were to be allowed to control their own affairs. Back in the mid nineties the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples came to the conclusion that it would be more beneficial to have Aboriginal peoples control their own affairs rather than being lead around by the yoke of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

Today it costs the government of Canada about \$7.5 billion annually to undertake services such as health care, and education among others. If given complete autonomy including controlling their land, there would be a \$17.3 billion shift on the balance sheet by 2016. As a result of this shift, Aboriginal Peoples would end up contributing to the economy about \$9.8 billion. The \$17.3 Billion comes with consequences though. It would mean the loss of 4805 employees at the department across the country both at headquarters in Ottawa and the regional offices.

The bigger question we need to ask is why in the in year 2010 do we still have a federal law that governs the lives of a specific group of people. Can you imagine if there was a statute called the White Man Act of Canada or the Chinese Act of Canada or the....you get the picture.