

access to basic facilities and amenities. Using these criteria, only 27.3% of on-reserve housing was found to be "completely adequate"; 11.4% of the housing stock was deficient in all three dimensions; and 61.3% were deficient in one or more aspects. In particular, 47% of the stock failed to meet basic standards of physical house condition and 38% lacked one or more of the following basic amenities: running water, indoor toilet and bath or shower. The report also stated that while 2.5% of Canadian households live in crowded conditions, 36% of reserve households are overcrowded. "Crowded conditions" are defined as a dwelling with more than one person per room. Over the period 1977 to 1984, the average number of persons per on-reserve household decreased from 5.4 to 5.1 (compared to 2.9 for the general Canadian population) and the incidence of households with more than one family remained in the range of 18-20%.

It is generally recognized that housing conditions for off-reserve people are similarly desparate, although there are no national figures on off-reserve housing conditions for Metis, non-status Indians and off-reserve status Indians.

The figures that are available dramatically demonstrate the magnitude of the housing crisis in aboriginal communities both on and off reserve; a crisis that has an impact on other concerns such as health and education. Housing conditions for the aboriginal population have always been significantly below those of other Canadians, a fact that says more about their socio-economic status than perhaps anything else.

## **20. Northern Issues**

A substantial portion of the aboriginal population of Canada lives in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. The land mass covered by the two northern territories is immense. Aboriginal people living in this region have concerns covering the whole range of human and governmental activity along with concerns about wildlife and the environment. The complexity and range of northern issues may surprise many. Any of the following subjects could be appropriate topics of Parliamentary study such as: