

## Living Conditions

Late in 1965, the Government approved a five-year rental-housing programme designed to provide suitable living accommodation to all Eskimo people in the Northwest Territories. By the summer "sea-lift", in 1966, the first 231 rental houses (all of them with three bedrooms) were sent to Baffin Island and erected on gravel pads. In 1967, an additional 260 houses were shipped to Baffin Island and the Keewatin settlements. Houses are supplied with basic furniture - an oil-burning stove, a space-heater, a table, beds and household equipment. Under the rental plan, tenants pay monthly amounts according to their family income and resources. Eskimo councils assist in administering the programme in home communities; home economists and adult-education officers help the Eskimo families to adapt to new accommodation. Over a five-year period the \$12-million programme will make available 1,600 three-bedroom houses for Eskimo families. These will be in addition to 1,000 houses already built under previous programmes for the Eskimo people.

In the summer months, the Eskimo people like to move into tents, either within the settlement or along the coastline, where hunting and fishing is good. Snow houses are only used on extended trips or in emergencies on the trail.

With the expanding building programme for housing and schools, electrical services are being standardized throughout the territories to make easier the maintenance, expansion and replacement of installations.

In many remote settlements, water is expensive and difficult to obtain. It must be hauled by truck or sled from building to building; in the winter, ice must be cut. These factors rule out the provision of normal plumbing facilities, owing to the high consumption of fresh water.

In most settlements, snowmobiles are beginning to replace the teams of husky dogs that the Eskimos have used over many generations.

## Health

The Eskimo people are steadily building up an immunity to disease; increased contact with people from "outside" will undoubtedly result in increased immunity. Health facilities range from the modern hospital at Frobisher Bay to lay dispensaries operated by a teacher, trader, policeman or missionary at remote settlements.

The main problem faced by the Northern Health Service of the Department of National Health and Welfare is to provide health care with a limited staff to comparatively small groups of people scattered over 900,000 square miles. It is impossible to assign a doctor to any one of the remote settlements (where Eskimo populations may vary between 70 and 400 people). The alternative is to assign doctors on a regional basis, make them as mobile as possible with the use of aircraft and provide two-way radios as a link with nurses or lay dispensaries in outlying settlements.