

## JAPAN-CANADA HOUSING PLANT

A \$1-million joint Japanese-Canadian prefabricated-housing plant is to be established in Gimli, Manitoba. Mr. Jean-Luc Pepin, Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, who announced the venture, stated that it combined the technology and production developments of Misawa Homes Company Limited of Tokyo, with the wood-producing capabilities and Canadian marketing experience of Greenwood Forest Products (1969) Limited of Penticton, British Columbia.

The new company, called Misawa Greenwood Homes Ltd., plans a production schedule of one-and-a-half houses every eight hours. Homes can be completely finished and ready to live in seven days after the components arrive on the job-site.

Although Japanese capital is backing the project, control of the company will remain completely Canadian.

## WOOD TO JAPAN

It was also announced by Greenwood Forest Products' president J.L. Dobi, that an agreement had been reached with Misawa Homes for the export to Japan of 12 million board-feet of western white spruce, lodgepole pine and aspen, valued at over \$1.5 million. The lumber will be shipped over a five-year period.

It was through the efforts of the Department that the principals of the two companies involved — Chiyoji Misawa, president, and Yusuke Katoaka, chief research executive, Misawa Homes, and Mr. Dobi — were brought together.

Mr. Misawa and Mr. Katoaka met in Ottawa recently with Bruce Howard, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, and officials of the Department to complete the agreement.

The use of specially-designed equipment, patented adhesives and highly automated mass-production methods for construction of wall, floor and roof panels are some of the manufacturing methods used to build the houses.

## COMMUNITY IN ARCTIC COMMUNICATIONS

A new communication technique designed to encourage community involvement and development through the combined use of telephone and radio has recently been inaugurated in the Canadian Arctic. Called Comminterphone (for Community Interaction Telephone), this unique social experiment is a joint undertaking of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Bell Canada, the federal Department of Communications and Bell-Northern Research. The sponsors hope that the data gathered from the one-year experiment will affect an improvement in the technique of communications.

Comminterphone was first demonstrated at a two-day symposium entitled "Communications into the

Home" held at the Canadian Natural Science Library, Ottawa, by the Royal Society of Canada.

It combines the availability of residential telephone sets with the coverage capability of radio. By dialing a designated telephone number, the conversations of as many as four individuals can be aired at once over a low-power radio-transmitter and broadcast within a five-mile radius. This broadcast can be received by anyone listening with an AM domestic radio-receiver within the immediate area. Listeners wishing to add spontaneous comments or announcements over the system would simply dial the number to get on the air.



*Willie Adams, a resident of Rankin Inlet, adjusts the Comminterphone conference unit in the telephone exchange building of a small northern community.*

## TYPES OF TRANSMISSION

The experiment, which began in November 1971, is centred in Rankin Inlet, Northwest Territories, a community of 500 people located 1,300 miles north of Ottawa on the western shore of Hudson Bay. Preliminary evaluation of Comminterphone over a two-month period indicates that three types of transmission were aired over the system: community announcements, notices of public events and information, such as weather reports, spontaneous conversations, discussion and expression of opinion at the discretion of the sender, and home programming, self-created entertainment, such as singing. The spontaneous conversations were almost 92 percent dominated by the Eskimo language.

Rankin Inlet, a relatively isolated region of the NWT, was chosen for the experiment because of its predominantly Eskimo population and its dearth of communications media. It has no newspaper, no wire service or radio station in the normal sense, but it does have a dial telephone system within the community itself. The only external communications link is by high-frequency radio telephone. In addition, printed notices are posted in local stores or delivered by hand to homes.

The experiment will continue until November,