

In Yellowknife, where the population between 1986 and 1991 grew by 29.9%, the Mayor estimated that over the course of the year there are approximately 700 instances where people do not have the benefit of shelter:

"They include literally the entire spectrum of the population, from those who arrive in town for some particular reason, find they want to stay here and have no place to stay, from those who have been removed from their housing, to those with children and families who just can't find a place to live within their means" (Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, Issue No. 29A:97)

The Committee visited a number of communities where the shortage of housing was critical. In Rankin Inlet for example, there is a waiting list of about 100 and there are approximately 225 public housing units. The families are forced to live with other families while they wait. In Iqaluit the waiting list comprises 30 singles, 14 couples and 17 families.

In Kuujuaarapik, an Inuit community of 500 situated in Northern Quebec, witnesses indicated that, housing has not kept up with the population growth. Some families have been waiting three years while others double up with other families.

Effect of CMHC Budgetary Reductions

The Hon. Don Morin, Minister responsible for the NWT HC reported that the 3% housing cap announced in the February federal budget in fact translate into a 55% cutback in new construction and urged the government to reinstate housing resources at least to the 1991 level. (*Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Issue No. 26:26)

The Minister also outlined for the Committee what the impact would be if the funding was not reinstated:

- The number of families in need of housing will grow.
- Social and health related problems for aboriginal people will increase as a result of continued and increasing overcrowding and inadequate housing conditions.
- NWT funding commitments to social housing will grow at the expense of other social, health and education programs.
- There will be permanent loss of construction and other jobs in the private sector. The reduction of the federal social housing budget will result in the loss of 155 to 198 full time jobs in local communities in the NWT.
- Decreasing opportunities to develop a greater sense of independence and responsibility within the northern population, as a result of the continuing lack of affordable, suitable and adequate housing.

The Minister's concerns were echoed by a number of witnesses in Northern communities:

"The forecasted reduction in federal housing dollars will only assist in compounding these problems. The end result will be a greater dependency on other federally assisted programs, such as health and social benefits. What little the federal government saved against the national deficit would be offset by a greater dependency on government programs. What is to be gained by this?" (Mr. Peter Scott, District Manager, NWT Housing Association, Keewatin District, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, Issue No. 28A:115)

Witnesses in Fort Norman described what amounts to a freeze on housing allocations and expressed grave concern about future levels.

"As far as we understand it, everything's on hold right now. the HAPs and everything. We don't know what is happening next year at all. The budget has been put back until October as far as we know." (Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, Issue No. 29A:22)