

"I personally see nothing more disappointing than, when you go into a community, to see a group of southern Canadians building houses for the local people. We have kids who have gone through the school system and we have people who have been trained as carpen-

ters, but because the tendering system doesn't allow local contractors to get many of these contracts, we end up with imported labour building houses for the community (Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, Issue No. 28A:95)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada provide the necessary funding to meet the housing needs of all Aboriginal and northern people living on-reserves, off-reserves, and in the North. Not only is there a backlog of new units, but there is a lack of funding to renovate existing units. Particular attention must be paid to the needs of victims of abuse, seniors, the homeless and the disabled. On-reserve particular issues which must be addressed include the existing backlog of approximately 11,000 housing units and the additional demand for housing created because of Bill C-31. In the North, there is a critical shortage of over 3,500 units which necessitates a greater need for resources. As a first and crucial step towards preventing that backlog from worsening the federal government should immediately reinstate CMHC funding for the Northwest Territories to at least 1991 levels.

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada recognize that Aboriginal people have particular cultural and practical housing needs which are not being addressed due to the rigidity of current federal housing programs. Building codes, design requirements, and material and labour specifications must be more flexible in order to permit the type of housing which meets the needs of Aboriginal and northern communities and utilizes local resources.

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada recognize that the only way to provide the flexibility that Aboriginal people need to ensure the delivery of the kind of housing best suited to their particular needs is through self-government for Aboriginal people.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Highlights of Aboriginal Conditions, 1981-2001, Part II, Social Conditions, Ottawa, Dec. 1989, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Alan Williams, ADM, DIAND, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, Issue No. 36.