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HOUSING AND WELL-BEING



"One of the things so very important in community life, whether in Sioux Lookout, in B.C. or anywhere else, is housing. It is important because it has all the ingredients to make the family work.." (Mr. Eno Anderson, Executive Director, Shibogama Tribal Council, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Issue No. 27A:46)

"Overcrowded housing is not by itself the reason why so few young Inuit are graduating from high school, but the pressures of overcrowding, the lack of quiet places to study, etc. surely don't help. Overcrowded housing did not by itself cause the TB outbreaks in Repulse Bay and Rae-Edzo, or the E. Coli 0157 outbreak in Arviat that claimed several lives last year, but the overcrowded and run-down housing definitely contributed to their spread. The cost in financial terms of providing adequate housing in the north is high. The cost in human terms of not doing so is much higher." (*Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Ms. Kaynene Nookiguak, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, Issue No. 13:12) (emphasis added)

The poor health and social conditions of Aboriginal people are well documented. (See Appendix C) The discrepancy between Canadians as a whole and Aboriginal people continues to be disturbingly wide. Addressing the housing crisis is an essential precondition to solving health and social problems.

A recent study¹ notes the health problems among Aboriginal people which can be attributed to poor housing conditions ranging from psychological and physiological effects to specific diseases. The report concludes that the most serious health problems facing Canadian Indians are injuries resulting from accidents and violence, and, in order to reduce these problems, attention must be paid to factors such as the physical and social environment in the home and community.²