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SESSIONAL PAPER NO. 4  
(First Session, 1968)

NORTHERN HOUSING PROGRAM

DISPOSITION

Tabled	To Committee	Accepted as Read	Accepted as Amended	Deferred (to Session)	Rejected	Noted not Considered

## NORTHERN HOUSING PROGRAM

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development secured Treasury Board authority in 1965 to undertake the provision of rental houses for Eskimos in the Northwest Territories. This program, together with a subsidized purchase housing program, constitutes the Department's housing program for Eskimos in the Northwest Territories. During the two years of its operation, more than 500 three-bedroom houses with floor areas of 700 square feet each have been provided in communities in the Eastern and Central Arctic. It is anticipated that all Eskimo families in the Territories will be adequately housed by 1971.

### Administration

#### (a) Services

The Eskimo Rental Program provides basic furniture to a maximum value of \$500 per house with the tenant expected to add the remainder gradually when he can afford to do so. Included with the furniture is a set of dishes, some cutlery and household cleaning tools. In the same manner, services are supplied on a quota basis with additional amounts of fuel oil and electricity to be paid for by the occupant, provided, of course, he wishes to use them and can afford to pay for them. These quotas are set at:

Fuel Oil:

3 bedroom house	-	1890 gallons per year
2 bedroom house	-	1710 gallons per year
1 bedroom house	-	1080 gallons per year
1 room house	-	810 gallons per year

Electricity:

3 bedroom house	-	1920 K.W.H. per year
2 bedroom house	-	1800 K.W.H. per year
1 bedroom house	-	1440 K.W.H. per year
1 room house	-	1200 K.W.H. per year

Water delivery and sewage and garbage pick-ups are based on each settlement's ability to handle these services, but eventually similar quotas to those now in effect for oil and electricity will be established.

#### (b) Rents

The maximum monthly rents which have been set for the various sizes of houses in the program are: \$37 for a one-room unit; \$42 for a one-bedroom house; \$62 for a two-bedroom house and \$67 for a three-bedroom house. The minimum rent for all the housing involved is \$2 per month and the tenants charged this amount are pensioners, Eskimos on welfare due to ill health and unemployed persons who are without employment opportunities. In Frobisher Bay, where there is some employment available, the average assessed rent is \$35 per month, while in Crise Fiord, where very few such opportunities exist, the average rent charged is \$15.

#### (c) Local Participation

One of the conditions required for Treasury Board approval of the program was that management, wherever possible, be carried out by the tenants themselves and that real authority and responsibility be transferred to this group as quickly as they could demonstrate the ability to handle it. With this objective in mind, an adult education program takes place in each settlement prior to the construction of the houses.

Housing associations comprising all tenants are formed and in turn a council is elected from this group. This council, with the area administrator or his representative as chairman for the first year and as secretary for the second year, has a voice in the location of the houses and, once constructed, assumes responsibility for their maintenance. As the association develops it can accept additional responsibilities such as rental collections and contracts for services and can assume complete control of the program within the settlement; the development of each association will be dependent only on its willingness and ability to administer the

various phases of the program.

As an incentive towards eventual home ownership, a tenant in the rental program is credited with 33% of the rent paid towards the purchase of a future house. In addition, a credit of \$100 per year can be added to the same account for satisfactory upkeep and maintenance of the rental house.

#### Construction

Initially, all rental housing was constructed by Branch employees with limited participation by local Eskimos. In 1967, however, contracts were awarded to cooperatives for the construction of eight houses in Igloodik, thirteen in Whale Cove and thirty-two in Pelly Bay. Requests have already been received from the cooperatives in Holman Island and Gjoa Haven for similar contracts and it seems very likely that other communities will follow suit.

The construction of rental houses in 1967 was seriously handicapped by the late deliveries of units by the contractor. Unfavourable ice conditions in Hudson Bay added to the problem with the result that some of the houses in the Keewatin Region could not be completed. The one exception was Pelly Bay, where the houses were airlifted from Churchill in the spring and completed and occupied by fall.

#### Expansion of the Program

The Northern Administration Branch is trying to rationalize and consolidate the disparate housing programs which are now available in the Northwest Territories for Eskimos, Indians and people of white status.

To this end, the Department is seeking the approval of Treasury Board to extend the benefits of the rental housing program to Indians as well as Eskimos, and to offer a common subsidized purchase housing program to both groups. The Branch holds the view that these programs ought to be made available as well to low income persons in the Territories who are neither Eskimo nor Indian. The provision of housing for persons in this category is, of course, the responsibility of the Territorial Government, but the Branch will look sympathetically upon an initiative on the part of this government to expand or restructure its housing programs so as to bring them in line with those approved on the federal side. The importance of a common approach to housing problems cannot be overemphasized. The Department plans to move into the Delta and Lower Mackenzie communities with the federal programs in 1969, and into the Southern Mackenzie in 1970. Because the majority of these communities have mixed population, it would be disheartening and disruptive were the new housing programs to be introduced to only one segment of the population.

It is expected that before April 1st, 1969, the Government of the Northwest Territories will be asked to administer, on behalf of the Government of Canada, the housing programs for Eskimos and Indians. The Northern Administration Branch suggest that this is another reason in favour of a single approach to the housing needs of the three main groups concerned.

#### APPENDIX

##### Number of Houses Shipped or Constructed

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Eskimo Rental</u>	<u>Indian Rental</u>
1966-67	194	98
1967-68	340	71
1968-69 (EST)	353	81
1969-70 (EST)	<u>207</u>	<u>100</u>
TOTAL	1094	350

Size and Approximate Cost of Houses

3 Bedroom	700 sq. ft.	\$9,000
*2 Bedroom	670 sq. ft.	5,500
*1 Bedroom	340 sq. ft.	3,400
*1 Room	280 sq. ft.	2,500

\* Supplied as resale or welfare housing prior to approval of rental program. Due to difference in freight rates, an average cost for all settlements has been used.