

*Government Orders*

Inuit will be guaranteed specific wildlife harvesting rights, including the right to harvest their basic needs as they have for thousands of years. Inuit will also have economic opportunities related to guiding, sports lodges and the commercial marketing of wildlife resources.

The Inuit of the eastern Arctic are perhaps more dependent on traditional pursuits than any other group of aboriginal people in Canada. Therefore, the agreement recognizes this dependence and safeguards Inuit interests.

Inuit will be entitled to compensation where developers cause provable damage to property or equipment used in harvesting wildlife. They will also be compensated when development projects cause loss of harvesting income or loss of wildlife harvested for personal use.

In addition to their role in wildlife management, the agreement ensures equal Inuit participation on boards responsible for land use planning, environmental and socio-economic reviews of development projects and water management.

Finally, I am pleased to inform hon. members that the Nunavut land claims agreement will help the government achieve one of its key green plan objectives. That is to complete Canada's system of national parks. Following consultations with Inuit and other local residents, at least three national parks, one in each of the three regions of Nunavut, will be established in the settlement region within four years of proclamation of this agreement.

• (1020 )

I want to emphasize that the Nunavut land claims agreement and Bill C-133 which will implement it do not affect or diminish any rights of other aboriginal peoples guaranteed under section 35 of the Constitution Act. In fact, the final agreement explicitly protects the traditional livelihood and hunting activities of all other aboriginal groups on lands within the Nunavut settlement area. This was a key objective of the government.

As a sign of their commitment to accommodate the interests of other aboriginal groups, the Nunavut Inuit have negotiated overlap agreements with the Inuvialuit in the western Arctic and the Inuit of northern Quebec.

Negotiations are also proceeding with the Sahtu Dene-Métis in the western Arctic.

We are pleased that similar agreements have now been negotiated with the Dene of northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba, who also claim traditional use of certain lands north of the 60th parallel.

I remind hon. members that the Federal Court has ruled that the Nunavut land claims agreement protects any interests that the Saskatchewan and Manitoba Dene bands may have in the Nunavut settlement area. In fact this agreement may even give them legal rights they do not currently enjoy under treaty. Thus the Manitoba and Saskatchewan bands have agreed that they will not oppose ratification of this agreement. I compliment the hon. members who helped to facilitate that agreement.

Article 4 is a key element of the Nunavut land claims agreement. It requires the Governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories and the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut to negotiate a political accord to divide the Northwest Territories into two parts and to establish a new territorial government, a public government, in the eastern Arctic.

In this way Bill C-133 will lay the foundation for a new partnership between Inuit and Canada in the creation of Nunavut. It will enable a proud and self-reliant group of aboriginal Canadians to achieve long sought economic and political goals in the north.

It builds on the traditions and culture of the elders whose ancestors survived in that Arctic barren land for so many thousands of years. Yet this agreement passes on a lasting legacy to the children of the Inuit of generations to come.

It will guarantee Inuit a land base and give them the means and the rights to continue traditional pursuits that are at the very heart of their culture and to do it in harmony with all other Canadians.

Therefore, I urge all of my hon colleagues to give this bill their firm and decisive support. In that sense, Madam Speaker, I think you will find consent to move through all stages of Bill C-133 today, including Committee of the Whole, so that we might complete consideration of this bill.