

*Government Orders*

This area, as well as the adjacent offshore areas, is the traditional homeland and hunting grounds of some 17,500 Inuit. It is in this area of the eastern Arctic that their ancestors have lived for many thousands of years and in a remarkable way have persisted and survived on the Arctic tundra. Today they wish to continue to live with the freedom to guide and choose their own destiny within Canada.

The Nunavut land claims agreement ensures that the Nunavut region will always be home to the Inuit. It provides lasting protection for Inuit land-based interests as well as the rights and benefits that will enable them to pursue socio-economic development.

The agreement provides Inuit with ownership of more than 350,000 square kilometres of land in the settlement region out of the total area of two million square miles. On more than 10 per cent of the area they will own, the Inuit will also own the mineral rights. In the rest of Nunavut, Inuit will share in the management of wildlife and the environment and in the economic benefits of future development.

The land provisions of this agreement are extremely important not only for Inuit but for all Canadians. By replacing the legal uncertainty of aboriginal claim to title with clearly defined rights to lands and resources, by establishing certainty of ownership and the delineation of those boundaries and by clarifying the rights of natives and non-natives in the settlement region, the Nunavut land claims agreement will open up this huge area of Canada for future orderly development.

That will mean jobs for Canadians, including Inuit and other aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples living and working in northern Canada and throughout Canada. It will mean additional wealth and prosperity for northerners and other Canadians as we replace uncertainty with a stable and predictable economic and legal framework.

The Nunavut land claims agreement will bring enormous benefits to the north in the form of new investment, an improved standard of living and a brighter outlook for the youth of the region.

The agreement also includes significant financial benefits for Inuit of the settlement region. Over the next 14 years capital payments totalling \$580 million in 1989 dollars will be made to the Nunavut trust, which will manage the money for the benefit of Inuit.

• (1015)

I should indicate that in comparison, the government through the programs of financial assistance to Inuit is presently spending hundreds of millions of dollars to support the eastern Arctic. We want to replace welfare with self-reliance. That is the purpose of this settlement payment and the land base and the accompanying public government which we will speak of when we debate Bill C-132 later today.

The Nunavut land claims agreement foresees the day when resource developments will generate significant revenues in the settlement region.

Inuit interests are well protected in that each year they will receive 50 per cent of the first \$2 million in royalties paid to the government on any resource development for which royalties accrue within the Nunavut area. They will receive 5 per cent of all royalties in excess of \$2 million on the public lands which are outside of land owned by the Inuit.

This agreement is about much more than land ownership and capital transfers. It is about acknowledging the special needs of the Inuit. It is about protecting their traditional lifestyles and pursuits.

One of those needs is employment training. To ensure that the Inuit can play a full and meaningful role in the institutions of government and in the private sector economic initiatives, a \$13 million training trust fund is to be established under this agreement.

It is a great misfortune that much of the work done in the administration of projects in the eastern Arctic is done by southerners, non-Inuit. We want to make a visible change to provide much greater opportunity for Inuit to be involved in the architecture and production of their own destiny.

As well, Inuit employment by government will be increased. Firms owned by Inuit will be assisted in competing for government contracts.

As hon. members know, a common feature of land claim settlements is to guarantee the aboriginal claimant group a central role in wildlife management. The Nunavut land claims agreement is no exception. Inuit will have equal representation on a board that will be established to oversee wildlife harvesting in the settlement region.