

Government Orders

For those who have visited the eastern Arctic this is a most beautiful part of the globe. It commands respect and admiration. Therefore we are in a way very proud to be part of this process here today because it holds great hopes for generations to come.

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to rise in this House on this historic occasion and add my sentiments to this debate and particularly to associate myself with the remarks of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the member for Nunatsiak and the member for Comox—Alberni.

I have the privilege of representing one of the overlapping groups, the Denesuline of northern Saskatchewan, in this House of Commons. I would have liked to make more extensive remarks in this particular debate. I will however reserve those remarks because the next bill is of a very similar content to this one and I think those remarks can be appropriately made there. I would like to save enough time to ask the minister a few questions during Committee of the Whole.

With that I would just like to say that this is an historic occasion. Canada is changing profoundly because of what we are doing here today. I appreciate being here for this event.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time, considered in committee and reported.

• (1325)

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development) moved that the bill be concurred in.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Siddon moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

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NUNAVUT ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development) moved that Bill C-132, an act to establish a territory to be known as Nunavut and provide for its government and to amend certain acts in consequence thereof, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee in the Human Resources envelope.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to address the House a second time on this important historic day to deal with the transformation that is under way in our relationship with the Inuit of the eastern Arctic.

Bill C-132 which has just been read the second time is entitled an act to create the territory of Nunavut. What we will be discussing for the next hour or so is the political development of a new legislative assembly in the eastern Arctic, a commitment that ties to the Nunavut land claims settlement agreement which we have just passed through third reading in this House.

It has long been a goal of the Inuit of Nunavut to have their own territorial assembly or government and not be tied to the government of the Northwest Territories. Article 4 of the Nunavut land claim settlement agreement establishes a commitment on the part of the federal government to recommend to Parliament the establishment of a Nunavut territory.

• (1330)

The land claim agreement and as well the political accord setting out the means of establishing Nunavut have already been signed. Indeed after the ratification vote on October 31 of last year, as we have already recognized in this House, the Inuit of the eastern Arctic ratified the creation of Nunavut by a very strong majority. I think it was 85 per cent of those who voted on that date endorsed the creation of Nunavut.