

Appendix 4

Public Opinion

A large number of public opinion polls concerning international affairs and Canadian defence and foreign policy issues were conducted in Canada between July 1986 and July 1987. The following is a summary of how Canadians responded to questions involving issues of national and international interest.

Canadian Defence Policy

The release of the Canadian Government's White Paper on national defence in June generated considerable interest in the public's views on defence policy. A key issue was public support for the purchase of nuclear-powered submarines for the Canadian Armed Forces. In a poll commissioned by the Department of National Defence and conducted by Decima Research Ltd in March 1987, 1,000 Canadians were asked to respond to the following statement:

If Canada is to build submarines to defend Canadian sovereignty in the Atlantic and the Pacific and particularly in the Arctic, most experts feel that these submarines would have to be nuclear-powered--although they would not be armed with nuclear weapons--to do the job effectively.

Some people say that if the submarines need to be nuclear-powered in order to do the best job then we should go ahead and build that type of a submarine.

Others say that we should under no circumstances build submarines which are nuclear-powered.

Which one of these two points of view best reflects your own?