

nuclear-powered submarines. Nuclear-powered submarines are the only vessel capable of operating under the ice for sustained periods of time and this was part of the rationale for the decision to purchase such submarines.⁸

Parliamentary Comment

During Hearings before the Standing Committee on National Defence (SCND) NDP member Derek Blackburn asked the Associate Minister for Defence, Mr. Paul Dick, about military exercises in the Arctic. He said:

I refer in my final question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs announcement,...that there would be naval exercises for the eastern Arctic. Now, these exercises never happened as such. I would like to know why they did not happen....⁹

Mr. Dick responded:

I can say generally...that there was an increase in surveillance by aircraft this year, and it will be maintained or enhanced again next year. There was some activity in the eastern Arctic, in the waters, by naval vessels.¹⁰

At a later hearing Mr. Blackburn asked the Minister of Defence about Canada's surveillance capabilities in the Arctic and whether we were completely dependent on allies or considering developing a Canadian capability in this area particularly as a way of controlling the choke points. Mr. Beatty responded:

I guess we would have a couple of concerns, seeing as one likely would not be entering our Arctic through those choke points. Would it be possible for somebody...to get into the Canadian Arctic and

⁸ Ibid., p. 53.

⁹ SCND, Proceedings, 2 Dec. 1986, p. 51.

¹⁰ Ibid.