

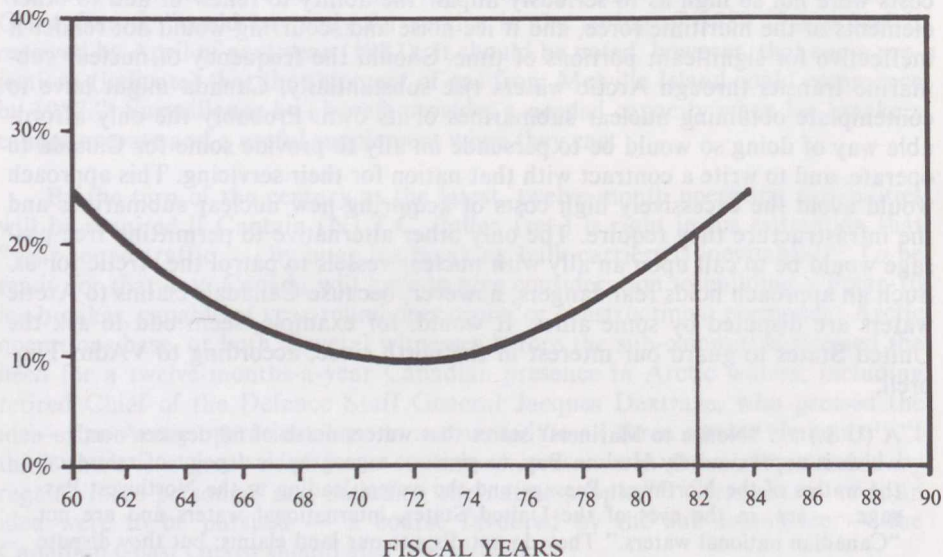
its disposal at all times a group of its own officers and enlisted personnel who are familiar with the conditions and requirements of operating vessels in the Arctic. Therefore:

The sub-committee recommends that the practice be established of regularly seconding some Maritime Command personnel to the Coast Guard for practice and training in Arctic navigation.

The current equipment situation

As previously indicated, Canada's maritime forces cannot meet requirements. Most estimates suggest they have only about one half of the major weapons-platforms they need.¹⁴ This situation developed over time, beginning in the 1960s when the money available to DND for capital acquisitions dropped to totally inadequate levels. Figure 1, taken from *Minister's Statement — Defence Estimates 1983/84*,¹⁵ shows what happened:

FIGURE 1
CAPITAL PROGRAM
AS A PERCENTAGE OF DND BUDGET



The de-emphasizing of defence by successive Canadian governments occurred at a time when detente seemed attainable; when there appeared to be "increased willingness to attempt to resolve East-West issues by negotiation".¹⁶ Optimism prevailed about prospects for the reduction of tensions. The possibility of conflict

¹⁴ See p. 43.

¹⁵ *Minister's Statement — Defence Estimates 1983/84*, *op. cit.*, p. 34, document dated 15 March 1983, tabled before the House of Commons standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence.

¹⁶ *Defence in the 70s*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.