



PRESS RELEASE

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The United States Coast Guard ship and three United States Navy vessels which sailed this summer to the Canadian Arctic regions in support of the joint weather programme being carried out there by the Governments of Canada and the United States have now returned to east coast ports. It was announced in Ottawa and Washington on July 12 that the four ships (the ice-breakers USS "Edisto" and USCGC "Eastwind", the cargo vessel USS "Whitley", and the USS "LST 533" which was to serve as a cargo vessel) with Canadian and United States representatives aboard, were sailing to the Arctic.

During the summer they resupplied the joint weather station at Alert, Ellesmere Island, which was established during the spring of 1950. A stock of supplies and equipment required for this station was taken in by United States Navy water transport in 1948 and by Canadian and United States Air Force transport aircraft in the spring of 1950 when the station was set up. The joint weather station at Resolute, Cornwallis Island, opened in 1947, and the station at Eureka, Ellesmere Island, established by airlift in the spring of 1947, were also resupplied.

En route to Alert, the icebreakers proceeded through heavy polar pack ice of up to 30 feet in thickness, the heaviest encountered in five years of Arctic resupply operations. The USCGC "Eastwind" reached 82 degrees 36 minutes 45 seconds latitude, within 445 nautical miles of the North Pole, while passing the northeastern tip of Ellesmere Island. This is believed to be the northernmost point in the western hemisphere reached by any ship under its own power.

The ships en route to Resolute, the major resupply port for the task group, found Lancaster Sound completely free of ice and encountered only a few small fields of scattered ice in Barrow Strait, a favourable condition which had not been enjoyed by some of the former resupply missions. Excellent weather, except for fog, continued throughout the four days the ships were anchored off Resolute weather station, Cornwallis Island.

The USS "Edisto" carried two helicopters and the "Eastwind" one helicopter, all of which were used extensively and to great advantage in short-range ice reconnaissance and for the transportation of Canadian Government surveyors and other field technicians to locations where astro positions, terrain elevation, geology, wildlife and other reconnaissance field studies were accomplished.

/Long-range.....