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Chair

The Honourable Maxime Bernier

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● (1535)

[*English*]

The Chair (Hon. Maxime Bernier (Beauce, CPC)): Welcome, everybody, to meeting number 26 of the Standing Committee on National Defence.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motion adopted by the committee on Monday, February 23, 2009, we will continue with our study on Arctic sovereignty.

We have the pleasure of having with us the associate director of the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, Mr. Robert Huebert.

Mr. Huebert, you have seven to eight minutes, and after that the members will have a discussion with you. Thank you very much for being with us.

Dr. Robert Huebert (Associate Director, Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary): Thank you very much. It is indeed my pleasure to be here. I applaud the committee for its examination and work on this critically important issue.

There are about four major points that I want to make. The first one is the issue of why we care about Arctic sovereignty and security. The issue, of course, has reappeared before successive Canadian governments since...well, Confederation, to be honest. We are facing an Arctic that is in massive transformation. It is in transformation all the way from the physical component to the cultural and livelihood element, to economics, and to geopolitics. It is virtually impossible to find another region of the world that is engaged in such a degree of change, literally before our eyes. The critical issue, however, when we consider Arctic sovereignty and the growing necessity for Canada to take this even more seriously than it has in the past, is accessibility.

One of the critical points about the changing nature of the Arctic is that there is both the perception and the reality that it is becoming more accessible. Countries as far away as South Korea have now become major players on the commercial side for the development of industry in the Arctic region. Countries such as China have an advanced Arctic research program. Indeed, China has one of the world's largest Arctic scientific vessels; in fact, it is larger than any ship we have in the Canadian navy. We have before us today an issue in dealing with the climate change that is making it accessible.

If that were not enough, we also have the recognition that the Arctic is probably the last major source of undiscovered resources for the world. The U.S. Geological Survey has conducted a series of studies that has led it to make the estimation that 30% of all undiscovered natural gas is in the Arctic region and up to 13% and possibly more of all undiscovered oil reserves in the world is also there. The Russians are about to complete the development of a gas field in the Stockman offshore region that will be the third-largest gas-producing sector in the world. In Canada, we have already moved from being a zero producer of diamonds to being the third-largest producer of diamonds, on the basis of three mines in the Canadian Arctic. In other words, it is indeed a treasure trove.

The third element of transition that makes it so critical for Canada also is that we have a changing northern population. One of the factors that most Canadians are unaware of is that the Canadian Arctic contains the youngest population of all regions. As such, it has some of the most challenging and difficult social and educational issues of this country.

As the world starts to come to the Arctic, the issue of how we actually enforce security and sovereignty in this region becomes critical.

The last point, and this is the one I really want to focus on, is the changing nature of the geopolitical circumstance. We have had a tendency in Canada to look at the last 15 years of cooperation and basically non-activity in the circumpolar north—with one or two important exceptions, such as the Arctic Council—and say that things will continue into the future. I am here to tell you today that there are in fact indicators that this geopolitical certainty is becoming questionable.

First and foremost, through the impact of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea we are seeing boundaries being revisited and redrawn as we speak. They pertain primarily to the continental shelf, and we can see possibilities of disputes coming into the forefront with the United States and Russia, and possibly Denmark.

We see some efforts to ensure that these disputes are resolved in a peaceful manner, but we are also seeing indications of other types of disputes over boundaries. The Europeans, in a recent document, have let Canada know that Europe is going to be taking the American position on the status of the Northwest Passage. We do indeed, despite what I know some of your preceding witnesses have said, have a sovereignty issue developing regarding the Northwest Passage.

● (1540)

We also have a coming boundary issue involving the Beaufort Sea. The Americans are about to release a report in which they call for a moratorium on all Arctic fishing within the region that they believe to be their waters, and there is a very definitive overlap with regard to the Beaufort Sea.

There is a more troubling issue, however, from a geopolitical perspective, and that is that if we look at both the policies and the current armament programs of our circumpolar neighbours, since 2004 we have seen a growing flurry of policy statements from all of the Arctic nations, as well as several non-Arctic states, as they begin to revisit their own Arctic security policies. Norway, Russia, and the United States are increasingly taking a unilateral approach to how they perceive their Arctic security.

Beyond simply documents, beyond simply saying it in paper form, all three of those countries have also reinstituted rearmament programs that will touch on the Arctic. I've made available for the committee a brief summary of some of those developments. The Norwegians are now about to redevelop their military with an extremely capable war-fighting, albeit small, northern capability. In November they signed a contract with the Americans to buy the 48 F-35s. They have also figured out how to put an Aegis combat system on a frigate, the first nation in the world to figure out how to do that on such a small capability. The Russians are both rearming their submarine force and engaged upon a program of rebuilding aircraft carrier capability, of which they say the majority, if not all, will be deployed in Arctic waters.

No one is at this point suggesting that we are resuming the bad days of the Cold War, but one does not have to be a rocket scientist to put together undetermined boundaries, the promise of great wealth, and the rearming—to a limited but nevertheless vigorous capability—of the major powers of the international system and to recognize from a historical perspective that usually when you mix those factors together, the international system tends to have difficulties in the area of cooperation.

Ultimately, Canada is facing a new Arctic. It is an Arctic that we can perhaps try to ensure becomes cooperative. Perhaps we can ensure that these new developments are marshalled in ways that provide for the proper security of the region, but that, if mishandled, could in fact hearken back to some of the more difficult times of the 1980s.

What, in conclusion, would I suggest that Canada has to be focused on and aware of? First and foremost, Canada has to make sure that its instrumentation is first-class. What do I mean by "instrumentation"? I mean that our surveillance and enforcement capabilities are equally as strong as those of our circumpolar neighbours. Even if we are able to mitigate some of the harsher edges of some of the disputes, we will need these forces to know who is coming into the Arctic, and we will need to have these forces to ensure that Canadian laws and regulations are enforced. The Arctic will remain a harsh environment, and to talk about anything but the best capabilities is simply to set ourselves up for failure in the long term.

We also have to ensure that our decision-making processes are geared to the Arctic. If any region of Canadian policy requires an all-of-Canada approach, it is the Arctic. DND cannot do it alone; DFAIT cannot do it alone; the coast guard cannot do it alone. They all must work together. In my estimation, the issue is one in which the government has to be, at its most senior levels, made cognitive and, quite frankly, to bump heads together.

I am often asked whether the icebreaker should be coast guard or navy. Quite frankly, I don't care. My attitude is, paint them pink instead of worrying about whether it will have a red or a grey hull, but we need that type of capability in the Arctic region.

Lastly, it is a time for Canada to not only have this capability, which of course many will characterize as unilateral, but we also have to take a leadership role on the circumpolar nature.

● (1545)

To a certain degree, the Norwegians provide us with an interesting model. They're doing everything possible to try to engage the Russians in cooperative efforts, but they are indeed arming themselves with a very robust war-fighting capability if things indeed do get worse in the long term.

So I leave you with this thought. The Arctic is transforming; the world is going to be coming to the Arctic. That is abundantly clear. We need to ensure that when in fact the world does start arriving in numbers in the Canadian Arctic, Canadian values, Canadian interests, Canadian security, and Canadian prosperity are protected.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Huebert.

I will give the floor to Mr. Wilfert.

Hon. Bryon Wilfert (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Professor, for being here.

You certainly have articulated some very important points. I read with interest your paper on *The Reluctant Arctic Power*, particularly dealing with the United States.

In terms of capabilities, which you talk about, at the moment we can't muster more than nine out of 20 CP-140s to patrol three coastlines. We can only get seven out of 14 CH-149 Cormorant search and rescue helicopters in the air, and we don't need to talk about the CF-18s and the C-130s. So in terms of the increasing importance, particularly after the Russian security report that has been released, can you outline to us the strategy you would like to see in terms of addressing some of those military capabilities? I will then lead to the sovereignty issues and the divvying up or the dividing up of the Arctic.

Dr. Robert Huebert: Certainly. In terms of the re-equipment, the major issue is that we have a long-term challenge before us. To be quite blunt, and this is quite frankly a bipartisan issue, we have not had a good record in our procurement policy. We have had an issue where we tend to buy a whole bunch all at once and then basically let them rust out. This is unfortunately a legacy that we can back up in terms of our assessment.

If we have ever needed to get a long-term procurement policy for our air assets, our naval assets, and our space assets, this is the time. We need to be drawing out exactly what types of replacements we immediately need. For example, the replacement for the coast guard icebreakers has to be a priority. We're going to be in the situation of having more ice coming into our Arctic as the ice actually disappears. So we need that capability.

In terms of the aircraft capability, we need to ensure that we have some means of proper search and rescue. Now, I'm not necessarily wedded to the idea that they all have to be flying a Canadian flag. They can be rented, they can be borrowed, they can be assigned, but we need to have that capability in the north.

So we have to be thinking about how we respond from a procurement position, first of all, to have it, to meet the immediate needs, but then the reality is the Arctic is going to be our third ocean. It's not going to be that we will buy all these things once and then we can forget about it. We will have to be thinking in the long term. I think the suggestions of what the Americans have done in regard to their carrier and their submarine programs give us some lessons that you can in fact build one ship, one set of aircraft at a time. This is to ensure that, first of all, it stays in Canada, which is always an important consideration, I think, for most Canadians, and rightly so, and second of all, that we are responding to this long-term program.

In terms of what we need, we need search and rescue first and we need the icebreakers, but then we need immediately after that the offshore patrol vessels and we need the replenishments for the long-range aircraft. At that point in time, we will then have to make a decision in terms of what we are going to be doing for fast air or the fighter replacement. It's all very expensive, but a long-term policy cries out for this.

● (1550)

Hon. Bryon Wilfert: Thank you for that.

In terms of various departments or a cross-governmental approach, which department do you believe should be actually taking the lead in monitoring, securing, and protecting our north?

Dr. Robert Huebert: There is no question in my mind that this should be with DND. DND has the experience on the two coasts. They understand what is necessary. They have shown the best track record of not only having a vision—once again, one can look to lead mark and vectors, and it doesn't matter in terms of the policy—but they also understand surveillance. I think they understand surveillance the best of all the departments in the context of how to operate with other departments. Other departments simply do not have the finances or training to deal with that.

Hon. Bryon Wilfert: Thank you for that.

What's your view on making NORDREG compulsory? Could you explain the importance this change would have on Arctic sovereignty? Do you see any potential constraints, and should this be in fact a priority for government?

Dr. Robert Huebert: I have absolutely argued in favour of making NORDREG compulsory. To take a metaphor from Calgary, the idea of having the Deerfoot Highway given a speed limit but then asking everybody to report whether or not they are speeding is ludicrous. I think it's equally ludicrous to turn around and say, if indeed we are, that the Northwest Passage is internal waters, which has total party acceptance on that particular issue. If we are serious that the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act has to be enforced, then you have to have reporting mandatory—full stop.

Hon. Bryon Wilfert: Thank you for that.

The Chair: You still have two minutes if you want to continue.

Hon. Bryon Wilfert: Professor, the Russians have been sending out two types of signals: one seems to be cooperation, particularly with Canada, on some of the Arctic issues and claims; the other is building up, as you said, their capabilities. Briefly, what's your assessment of that?

Dr. Robert Huebert: They've been developing this under key policies. They have been doing the classic bad cop, good cop. The bad cop for the Arctic is Chilingarov. He's the one who is making by far the most unilateral statements—the patrols are, clearly. The Russians are clearly developing a diplomatic technique of pushing those countries. On the one hand, they hope to show their good will in terms of cooperation, but they're also letting everybody know that underneath that cooperation is a very stiff steel fist, in my opinion.

Hon. Bryon Wilfert: Professor, there are conventions that deal specifically with partition of the Arctic. I'm thinking of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea under article 76. Could you briefly comment on that, and the implications with regard to oil interests, particularly?

Dr. Robert Huebert: The major thing about the partition is about oil. It's about the soil and subsoil.

If everybody does what they say they're going to do, which is to follow the rules exactly, then we may see this as an example of great cooperation. The test will be when we have an overlap with either the Americans or the Russians, which looks as if we will, and if we can mediate and decide upon it peacefully. I'm hopeful that the structure is in place that we can do so, but it is dependent on what happens in other events in the international system. The Russians would have been very willing to do so earlier. After Georgia, they've sort of signalled that they're not quite so willing.

Hon. Bryon Wilfert: Thank you for the clarity of your answers.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Bachand, go ahead, please.

Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Huebert, you made a very good presentation. It was extensive, but I sense that your reasoning turns on military capability.

In the matter before us, the sovereignty over the Arctic that is being claimed by a number of countries, I'm not sure that's our best asset. I don't mean we should get rid of our weapons and send doves to fly above the Arctic to show that we are pacifists. However, I get the impression that, regardless of the military equipment that Canada can afford to have—that's another problem—we won't be able to face the Russian or American navies.

For me, the military aspect weighs less heavily in the balance. I'm more in favour of relying on international cooperation; I'm more in favour of compliance with international law. On that point, and you mentioned this, there is a convention. In addition, the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf has just recognized that 230,000 km^2 belongs to Norway. I was in Oslo two weeks ago, and that was a major topic of discussion.

I wonder whether the solution doesn't lie in a mix of both, relying more on international law. I nevertheless want to reassure you with regard to the military aspect; I was in Oslo for a NATO meeting. The major discussion focused precisely on the Northwest Passage and the Arctic, and on the evolution of events. You know, I was at a NATO meeting three years ago to talk to them about the Arctic and about the opening of the Northwest Passage. It's as though I was speaking Chinese; my colleagues didn't understand me at all. Now, suddenly, everyone understands the issue.

I'm wondering whether, from a military standpoint, our traditional alliance with NATO isn't the best solution because we won't have to pay for everything you've mentioned. I believe that international law should settle the matter. That won't prevent shows of force by the Russians, who blow hot and cold by times. I don't think the military solution is the best one. Sticking to our NATO friends seems to me to be a better idea. However, I think international law should apply, through the UN.

I would like you to clarify your thinking. Do you still claim that Canada must acquire all the military equipment you mentioned? Wouldn't it be better to work with international laws? If some decide to brave international law and go beyond international law, what do you think of NATO as a police force to enforce international law in the Arctic?

● (1555)

[*English*]

Dr. Robert Huebert: Those are outstanding questions, sir, and thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to clarify on the international cooperation.

You're absolutely right, we need both. They cannot be separated. In fact, if there has been a critique with Canadian policy in the long term, it's that we've had a bit of a tendency to say we do either one or the other. The reality is that to do it efficiently in the Arctic, you need to do both.

Furthermore, even on the issue of the military, I would argue that the correct orientation would be security. The reason is that many of the enforcement capabilities we're going to need for such typical law and order issues—such as fishing regulations and environmental protection—can only be handled with the full, if not complete, participation of the navy and the air force. In other words, there's a bit of a terminology issue in terms of saying military versus security, because you're going to need the RCMP on board for enforcement but a lot of it's going to have to come from the military.

On your point about the interaction between international cooperation and military, I would draw your attention to this, in regard to Norway. As soon as Norway made its claim, as soon as Norway had its claim accepted by the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, the Russians resumed surface naval operations in the disputed zone for the first time since 1989. The *Ustinov* and another ship were deployed to each of the disputed zones that the Norwegians and the Russians have.

The Russians and the Norwegians, on the international cooperation side, have an agreement that they would be disagreeing on their continental shelf. So it gets back to this Russian dual policy. On the one hand they're saying yes, let's go cooperatively, but they're also sending very clear signals from a military position that frankly, in my view, escalate the situation and suggest why the two have to be completely hand in hand. You have to have the strength to back up the international cooperation. That is unfortunately the viewpoint of both the Americans and the Russians, and we are basically stuck in the middle.

Turning to the point on NATO, the challenge we have with NATO is that from a political perspective it is our NATO allies that create the biggest problem in terms of the Northwest Passage. The Russian position on the northern sea route is almost a carbon copy of our position on the Northwest Passage. We've never made common cause with them. In other words, we've never gone to the UN and said that we have identical positions and that we will back the Russians if they will back us. There was a whole host of good reasons not to do that, but the reality is that our positions are very similar.

So we've got this complexity when it comes to the Arctic that the countries that have been showing the greatest military issues to us, of course, are the Russians with their overflights and with their sailing into the disputed zones. But by the same token, from a diplomatic perspective, it is the European Union and the Americans, in very recent documentation, that have said clearly that the Northwest Passage is an international strait and therefore Canada does not have complete control over international shipping.

So we are indeed headed into a complicated time, but the answer is that we've got to have the capability backed by good diplomacy. We need both. It's complicated, but I can't see us doing one without the other.

● (1600)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Huebert.

I will now give the floor to Ms. Leslie.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much for your presentation. I'm new to these issues, so I very much appreciated your being precise and the good explanations you gave. I hope you'll bear with me on some of my questions that may seem a bit simple to you, perhaps.

You talked about Arctic security being a bit about the ability to respond, and I think you said you don't care whether it should it be the coast guard or the navy, we just need to do it. I think about the ability to respond and the coast guard, and it seems to me that the coast guard may be in a better position to respond quickly. It's something that's much less costly.

I'm just wondering if you have thoughts about the coast guard being able to carry out these functions. You said your preference was for DND to run things.

Dr. Robert Huebert: Let's be very clear in terms of the cost. Everything is expensive. When the coast guard is talking about replenishment of its existing capabilities—and it desperately needs to replenish them—you are talking, as a minimum, $720 million per ship. That's probably going to get you a straight replacement cost. The realistic cost to get a modern-day icebreaker that is going to be required for the next 20 to 30 years and to operate successfully, you're talking probably $1 billion each. This is equivalent to anything that the navy is doing in the context of its Arctic offshore patrol vessel. There is no cost savings whatsoever.

The coast guard is by far better in terms of experience of operating in the Arctic. The navy is going to have to rely on the coast guard for training, there's no question whatsoever. But by the same token, the navy has shown that it has been able to sustain funding in a way that exceeds the coast guard. In a perfect world, we would not have starved the coast guard. The coast guard now is facing the current situation that its operating budget is being cut today, which is quite frankly ludicrous, in my view, given what is coming down the line.

The ice services are alleged to be receiving less funding. The navy tends to politically be a stronger voice in Canada. That's what leads me to say that in that particular context, you need to have the navy involved in that aspect. But the bottom line is you need both of them operating together. You need the navy's ability to sustain, to have surveillance, but you need the coast guard's experience in the Arctic. You can't have one without the other, quite frankly.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Thank you.

When we're looking at increasing our presence, my understanding is that the real question is the Northwest Passage. Looking at your recommendations, the second recommendation of yours is "improve Canadian surveillance and enforcement capability". Do you see this concentrating around the Northwest Passage, or do you have bigger boundaries in mind?

Dr. Robert Huebert: I would say the Northwest Passage is but one of the boundaries. We are going to have the issue in the Beaufort Sea; we're going to have the issue in the continental shelf.

Let me be very clear on this. Do I think the end of our policy should be about sovereignty, to say “we have sovereignty”? No. We need control. I don't care what you call it. You can go through an international agreement. But we have to ask what it is that we want the sovereignty for. We want the sovereignty to ensure that Canadian regulations, Canadian environmental standards, and Canadian northern communities are protected. If we can get that through an international agreement, I'm all for that too. So sovereignty is a means. This often gets misunderstood in the press. I think that we sometimes lose ourselves in that argument. I think that's a critical distinction.

● (1605)

Ms. Megan Leslie: If we had international agreements or if we had some decision through arbitration, say, of Hans Island or the Beaufort Sea, then we're good there.

Dr. Robert Huebert: As long as the regulations reflect our interests.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Okay. Thank you.

I don't know if you had a chance to look at the transcripts from earlier questioning of other witnesses.

Dr. Robert Huebert: I've read some.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Okay. There was a professor, Madame Lalonde, who was here. My colleague Jack Harris was asking a question to her about some reading that he's been doing about this idea that the U.S. may back down on an international strait concept if we start talking about the fact that an international strait would create some pretty serious security issues for North America from other countries. Do you have any thoughts on that?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Yes.

I was in the group that had considered the possibility that perhaps we could enter a quid pro quo with the Americans. The idea was that we're never going to get the Americans to say it's an internal water, simply because of the precedent that sends out for places like the Strait of Hormuz. They simply will never do it. What many people had thought is that the Americans would be willing to at least agree not to say anything—in other words, not push us on the issue, and if we have a ship coming through trying to get through without permission, they would remain silent on it. In other words, we would still agree to disagree but they would not actively support.

On January 8, 2009, the Americans released their long-awaited Arctic policy, the first one in ten years. They made it very clear that they are not backing down on that position, nor are they interested in backing down. My discussion with state officials is that the Americans simply see that as a non-entity. I'm very much more pessimistic than I was maybe four months ago.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Okay.

I don't know if this is an area you can speak to, but on the changing nature of Inuit self-government, what role would regional Inuit governance bodies have?

Dr. Robert Huebert: From an international perspective, we have to convince our circumpolar neighbours about the importance of the Inuit and the manner in which this makes the Arctic an exception. I don't know how many arguments I've had with Americans or with Norwegians who say there is nothing in international law about aboriginal issues, *ergo*, these are moot points. And I think it goes right to the heart of our entire set of arguments.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much. That is on time.

Now I will give the floor to Mr. Hawn, please, for seven minutes.

Mr. Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thank you, Professor Huebert, for being here.

I have a whole bunch of short questions but maybe not short answers. We talk about icebreakers. Is the *John G. Diefenbaker*, in your view, a viable piece of kit? Given, we may like more of them, but the *Diefenbaker* itself, is that a viable piece of kit?

Dr. Robert Huebert: The reality is that we need at least three of them. The nature of refit, the nature of the geography, and the fact that the *Louis S. St-Laurent* is already about 45 years old and the remaining four medium-class icebreakers we have are approaching 35 to 40 years means we need the replacement. We're not going to have the medium-class for much longer, so we need three of them, to be honest.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: We've talked about a long-term plan and regular re-equipment, and so on. The Canada First defence strategy obviously is intended to be a 20-year plan with some of the elements we've talked about. What is your view of that—enough, not enough? And if it's not enough, where do we get the money to make it enough?

Dr. Robert Huebert: On a policy intellectual perspective, I say it's very much in the right direction.

My concern is implementation. I've seen a series of very good policy statements come from both the Liberals and the Conservatives in the past, and the problem has always been that within two to three years of their release, we have faced the usual cycle of an economic crisis, at which point they immediately get thrown out.

The issue, in my mind, is implementing the types of policies we've started to see develop, I would argue, since the Martin-Harper recognition of the importance of the Arctic.

● (1610)

Mr. Laurie Hawn: Fortunately, we don't have an economic crisis right now.

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): We'll quote you.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: You talk about having common cause with the Russians, and that's something most people obviously wouldn't intuitively think about. Do you think we can ever trust them?

Dr. Robert Huebert: We can trust the Russians.... As we teach in our first-year political science courses, countries don't have friends; they have interests. We can trust them when we have shared interests. And in terms of the management and transportation of northern shipping, we both have very strong interests to make sure it's done properly. In that regard, it's not an issue of trust; it's an issue of common interest.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: When we get to the development of resources and of counterclaims about the Lomonosov Ridge and so on, at some point there is going to be some international law come down that says who owns what and whatever, which not everybody may like or accept. What do we do when somebody—whether it's Russia or the U.S. or whoever—says they appreciate our international law, but they're going there anyway? How do we, Canada, deal with compliance or deal with enforcement of compliance in something that has been given to us?

Dr. Robert Huebert: For those of us who have a concern, that will be the worst-case scenario, the point at which that conflict will come. What happens if someone goes ahead, after they have been deemed not to be allowed to?

The reality is that for the types of disputes we're going to have, the resolution is not going to be coming from some form of arbitration above, but from negotiations. So we are going to be in a situation—and it doesn't matter if you're talking about the Russians, the Americans, or even with the French in terms of St. Pierre and Miquelon—where the final solution will be a negotiated solution among the countries involved.

So presumably you're going to have to have buy-in to whatever that ultimate agreement is. I think the crisis would come at that point, whether or not we are going to see the Canadian public accepting if we seem to be backing down on issues. To my mind, that is going to be the more critical point.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: And that's where I come back to the Russians and common interests and so on. Do you foresee a possibility or the day when they would just negotiate all that kind of stuff, but if they don't get the right answer they would continue to thumb their noses at us?

Dr. Robert Huebert: What will mitigate that is the fact that they have to sell their oil and gas somewhere. So the question is, can we develop with our allies a strong enough position to ensure that this type of situation does not arise? In other words, the Russians sell most of their gas to Poland and to Germany, which of course are NATO allies. Can we ensure that we speak with a common voice so that if the Russians do start becoming so unilateral, that can be reined in? That will be the key to our success, not a military response, to be honest.

Mr. Laurie Hawn: Okay.

One of the things that we are mandated to study here is Arctic sovereignty but with a view to climate change and impact and so on. What is your view of climate change in the Arctic at the moment, and the impact that will have on military operations or operations up there in general, in terms of adaptation or opportunity?

Dr. Robert Huebert: It's transformational. Every piece of scientific evidence in my discussions with the experts, such as Dave Barber, Canada's leading expert on ice science, and the Americans makes it abundantly clear: the Arctic is going to be leading the world in terms of the transformational nature that is coming before us.

In terms of the response from a military perspective, any time that you have a situation of such transformational magnitude, you will have uncertainty and insecurity. The armed forces will have to be there front and centre in the context of the management of that uncertainty, be it in terms of responding to the various disasters that will come when in fact we start seeing sea levels rise, when we start seeing the collapse of economic infrastructure, when we see the various acidification that is now being deemed one of the biggest risks to the food chain within the Arctic. The military is going to have to be there to help pick up the pieces.

The other and more chilling thought, and this is something that Gwynne Dyer in his recent book has explored, is that historically, when you have such dislocation, you will see an increase in conflict internationally. Now, it may not be in the Arctic, but it is going to spill over because of what happens in the Arctic. That becomes even more chilling.

● (1615)

Mr. Laurie Hawn: Going back to CFDS for a second, I know you're pretty familiar with it. Assuming that it progresses as laid out, what's your view of the numbers in there with respect to fighters, ships, you name it?

Dr. Robert Huebert: That's a hard one, because you need the capability and you need a surge capability—not now, but probably in about a ten-year period. I would say that, in theory, what is being proposed makes sense to me. In other words, there's nowhere that I'd say there's an obvious omission. With the possible discussion, I'm not seeing much of a discussion of what we do for our follow-up for Radarsat-2. I saw some discussion of the cost of light Radarsat Constellation, but I think that's being discussed. As long as you bring that in, then I'd say the picture is fairly complete if we follow through.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Professor.

Now I will give the floor to Mr. Bagnell.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Thank you.

Thank you for coming, Mr. Huebert.

My question is mainly about the Beaufort. I asked the government about the dispute, what they were doing to solve it, and the answer I got is that there's no dispute in the Beaufort, and then they went on that it's a well-managed situation. Yet the Americans are putting out oil and gas leases in the Canadian Arctic in the Beaufort, and we send diplomatic notes. And thank goodness the government is doing that; I commend them for that. But if they're sending diplomatic notes complaining, it's very funny that they would give me an answer that there's no dispute.

I'm wondering what you think Canada should do about this non-dispute.

Dr. Robert Huebert: I do think there is a dispute. I'm a little bit sympathetic to a government that says there isn't a dispute, because historically you never want to let a stronger opponent know that you're actually scared of them. When you acknowledge a dispute it sends them that signal. I appreciate that.

As a non-government academic, I can say quite frankly from where I sit that there is clearly a dispute, and it is about to be escalated. The U.S. Department of Commerce is going to enforce a moratorium on all Arctic fishing, once the Secretary of Commerce signs off on it. This includes the Canadian zone. They're saying they have the sovereign right to stop all fishing. It's a good idea, to be quite frank, and we don't understand what's happening, but the idea that the Americans are doing it unilaterally is problematic.

What we should be doing is entering into some form of a joint management scheme with both the Americans and the various relevant aboriginal groups, because we have a land claims issue due to the 1984 western Inuvialuit land claims agreement that gives certain fishing and marine cultivation rights to the Inuvialuit. There should be some element where we agree to disagree on the actual formal drawing of the borders, but engage in best practices for the harvesting of marine mammals and fishing, perhaps enforcing the precautionary principle until we understand this new fish stock.

We should also engage in a joint management scheme for the development of oil and gas. Let's be blunt here: the development companies are all the same. It doesn't matter if it's BP or Exxon Mobile. The ones that are on our side of the Beaufort are the same on their side. Through free trade we have a common market for the sale of oil and gas once it reaches North American soil.

In my mind, the ingredients of a successful joint management scheme to mitigate this from becoming a much more serious dispute are there. We need to have the political will to do so. If the Indonesians and the Australians, who went in when Indonesia was collapsing, were able to enter into a joint management scheme for the North Timor Sea, Canada and the United States should be able to do it.

This will not ultimately solve it. We will still have the disagreement about which interpretation of the 1825 treaty is correct. But if we handle the fish issue, the oil and gas issue, and the land claims issue, that will resolve where the points of the crisis will come forward. I think we should do it sooner rather than later.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Can the Inuvialuit go to the International Court?

Dr. Robert Huebert: No. The decisions that the ICJ gave for both St. Pierre and Miquelon and the Gulf of Maine issues cast certain questions about their capability in making decisions. We are much better off if we go to direct bilateral negotiations.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: If the Europeans and the Americans win their battle on the international strait in the Northwest Passage, it means those Russian bombers the government was so scared of when they weren't even in our airspace will now be in the middle of our Arctic. Do you want to comment on our chance of losing that, or what we should do on the whole issue?

Dr. Robert Huebert: I think there is a good chance, because the international community does not understand that the existence of aboriginals living on and off the ice as one unit makes the Northwest Passage different. Many individuals I discuss this with will say that the Philippines is an international strait, and the Gulf of Hormuz is an international strait. But I say that the ice cover makes this different; this is a fundamentally different issue.

The fact that out of 90 or so international voyages 87 have sought our permission probably strengthens our case today. But I entirely agree with the preceding witness, Suzanne Lalonde, who said the first one that's not American that goes through successfully without asking permission will set the worst type of precedent. The best way of handling this issue is something Canada actually led in the 1990s with the creation of an international agreement called the polar code. It basically said that if you were coming into the region you had to follow certain regulations. Unfortunately, the Americans squashed that, much to their regret.

● (1620)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll give the floor to Mrs. Gallant.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Thank you.

Canada has no submarines that can run properly below the ice. What are your thoughts on how we would deal with submarines from non-traditional allies that intrude into our territorial waters?

Dr. Robert Huebert: The non-traditional allies won't be a problem; it's a country like Poland, say, that's a new entry into NATO. We can probably handle it with the NATO underwater management scheme. Basically, NATO has an agreement. If you're a member of NATO and you're operating subs, you have to tell the other people. And you can ultimately in international courts say that of course we're letting the Polish or the British or the French subs up there because we're all NATO allies. Now, it might be a fig leaf, but we will always have that in international law.

The problem we face is what happens if the Russians or Chinese start running nuclear-powered subs underneath the ice cover. Well, there are two factors. First of all, we're fortunate that even if the Russians do it, they won't use it as a piece of international law, because then it would go against their claim. The Americans would immediately say, “Oh, great! Thank you, Russia. By the way, we've got one of our nuclear subs underneath your ice right now. So that must mean you're also an international strait.” The Russians, fortunately, are in a bit of a straitjacket.

The issue is what happens if a country such as China, somewhere in the future, starts to do it. Where we need to have it firmly entrenched is in the fact that we have complete surveillance capability and the ability to go to the international protest when somebody such as China, if it ever were to come into the water.... In other words, if we can show under good governance systems that we know what's happening under the ice, and then can protest it.... I'm not talking about sinking. No one is ever talking about that, because the environmental issue would be such a disaster. But you simply go and say that of course we knew the Chinese were there; we knew as soon as they came in; they shouldn't be there; those are internal waters. And then we make the point to the Chinese, asking how they would like it if we were in the Taiwan Strait. There are various diplomatic ways we bring pressure on them. And that's how we respond to it in that particular context.

But the critical point is that we have to have the ability to know what is going on and we have to have the ability to be willing to play a little bit of diplomatic hardball afterward.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: I'm going to get back to that after I ask this question, just in case we run out of time.

Previously you said we need to have the ability to enforce compliance. Are you saying that as a consequence of Canada's inability to enforce everything with respect to environment, fishing, and security, Canada's sovereignty over the Northwest Passage has, by default, been capitulated?

Dr. Robert Huebert: No, I wouldn't be so harsh in that context. In fact, what our operators have done, and they've done it superbly.... Because of the lack of limitations, what they have done—and this has worked in our favour because of the harsh conditions—is basically said to anyone who may be breaking our rules that if they don't follow our rules, we're not going to share this information with them; we're not going to give them this assistance. And Radarsat has been an important tool. The Canadian Ice Service has been an important tool. Coast guard assistance has been an important tool.

The problem we're facing now is with the diminishing of the ice, with the greater globalization of the technologies of new types of ships that can come in, that type of stick doesn't work any more. In other words, the operator's stick is not going to be such a major issue in the future. This is where we have to be able to say, ultimately, either with a coast guard vessel or a navy vessel, that if someone simply says they don't need our Radarsat, they don't need our escort, and they're going through, we can then, with RCMP on board, embark on the type of arrest we did when we were in fact involved with the turbot crisis with the Spanish. In other words, it may get risky, but that is how you do enforcement in the long term.

● (1625)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: We had some members of NATO, particularly the British, who feel that regardless of any intrusion into our territorial waters, they may be called upon to help patrol the waters because we just don't have the capability at this point. What are your thoughts on that? Is that something that's going to be necessary?

Dr. Robert Huebert: No, it won't be necessary. The British do a lot of talk in that regard, but the reality is they are way behind us in surface capabilities. Where they have a better capability, of course, is with their nuclear-powered subs. We know they've been going to the North Pole since 1987 on an annual basis with the Americans. But in terms of any form of enforcement, you really need to have the surface capability. That is where the short-term and medium-term threats will come to Canada. And in that regard, Canada is still ahead of the British.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: You may recall the Russians planted a flag on what we feel is our territory. Now the ambassador from Russia to Canada has said that was sort of like climbing Mount Everest and planting the flag, that it really meant nothing in terms of claiming territory. Do you buy that?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Well, they also said at the same time that it's like the Americans planting a flag on the moon; it didn't mean anything. It meant everything. When the Americans had Apollo, it basically said that their intercontinental missiles had that accuracy. In other words, it's a signalling.

What you really have to look at, when the Russians planted the flag, is what Chilingarov, the Russian scientist, said. He was the one who planted the flag. He was also a Duma member, and now he's the special representative to the Russian president. He said of course this is Russian territory; it goes beyond the spirit. And he said yes, they would be able to cooperate with the Canadians—and he said this on CBC—as long as the Canadians go along with everything they say, because after all, everybody knows the Canadians are paper tigers.

The Chair: Thank you.

Dr. Robert Huebert: So that becomes the more chilling part.

The Chair: Perfect. Thank you, Professor Huebert.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bachand, you have five minutes.

Mr. Claude Bachand: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

People have come here to tell us that it might perhaps be a good idea for us to have resources to detect submarines in two passages in the Northwest, M'Clure Strait and Lancaster Sound. You don't necessarily see a submarine, but you can hear it go by; there is an audio signature. We can know whether it's a Russian, Chinese or British submarine. Do you think that would be a good solution?

I go to NATO meetings, where they increasingly talking about changes in arsenals. Today, the international arsenal doesn't consist merely of boats and aircraft. It's something else. We realize that Russia, among others, can use energy as a weapon against NATO countries and western countries. Moreover, it was said that certain things happened last winter when there was a dispute between the Ukraine and Russia: part of Europe hasn't been supplied for a number of months. The international community was wondering who was right. The Russians said that Ukrainians were diverting some of the gas, and the Ukrainians said that the Russians had actually shut off the valve.

On the diplomatic front, it's important to develop major energy sources. Negotiations are currently underway to determine how to divide the Caspian Sea, which is extremely rich. I went to Azerbaijan and I can tell you that the people there are very interested in those discussions. I very much like the fact that can be used as a weapon. The weapon that Russia is using can be turned against it. If it no longer has a supply market or a market to sell its gas, it will be stuck with that gas. When we talk about new arsenals, we can also talk about cyber attacks, of which Estonia has been a victim. Other things are currently brewing as well.

I think the solution lies in determining the limits of the entire continental shelf. Once the continental shelf has been divided, and everyone has respected the limits, a police force will be necessary to enforce the international decision. Will Canada do that only at home? Will the United States do it at home? There could be an international police department, such as NATO, that would be responsible for enforcing the international decision that could follow from a violation of the international treaty.

● (1630)

[*English*]

Dr. Robert Huebert: Thank you, sir. That is a wealth of critical importance.

In terms of the energy weapons, I agree with you entirely: you have to start looking modern.

In terms of the surveillance capability, where Canada's trying to develop it—and I'm a firm supporter of it—is in the listening acoustic capabilities. But we are just experimenting with it right now. It's a program of Northern Watch. We have to ensure that not only is it properly funded, but once the Canadian development of this is created, we in fact go ahead with the deployment.

The third major element of your point is the issue of who should be the ones who are monitoring the north once it is divided. Be aware that we are probably not going to get the answers from the commission until about 2030, 2040. So we have a very long period. The commission is doing about two to three reports a year, and there are a hundred before it right now, so you can just do the math in terms of how long it will be when the Canadian report is ultimately deposited in 2013.

Now, on the issue of who should be there, I am of the firm belief that once they reach agreement it should be the circumpolar nations that should say to their operators that they have to cooperate. They work the best together. Let's ensure that the environmental, economic, and security issues are all worked on. That would be the critical point to lock everybody into a cooperative venture.

Don't bring in the outside world, because that makes it problematic. Keep it within the context of the Norwegians, the Americans, the Canadians, and if we are in good relations with the Russians in 2030, 2040, you bring the Russians in.

Mr. Claude Bachand: Should they be doing the policing, also?

Dr. Robert Huebert: They should be doing the security enforcement. It goes beyond just mere policing. You will have to have the top-level capability to ensure that the environmental standards are upheld. Just to think of policing, the RCMP or local police enforcement will not be able to do it.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bachand and Professor Huebert.

[*Translation*]

I'm now going to hand over to Mr. Blaney.

Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome to the committee, Mr. Huebert. It's a pleasure to see you. First I want to thank you for sharing your work with us. Thanks as well for the two excellent articles that you presented during your presentation. I've also had the chance to tell other stakeholders that, with your work and your knowledge of the Arctic, you are also contributing to Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic. I encourage you to continue what you're doing.

I was listening with some concern to my colleague opposite about the idea that we might not need traditional equipment such as destroyers, submarines and ships to ensure our sovereignty in the High North. You said in English that we needed to have capability backed by policy. In French, I would say, literally, "to have the means to achieve our ambitions". In that sense, I think you clearly indicated that the "Canada First" defence strategy is a step in the right direction, to the extent that we can build and deliver ships across the country.

You talked about China. We often consider the circumpolar countries. However, I believe you also alerted us to the possibility that other countries—I wouldn't say those countries have no business there—might find an interest there. I believe our country is going to take that into account, particularly with regard to China.

My question concerns the United States and the Northwest Passage. The Americans published a new document in January in which they again emphasized that the Northwest Passage is an international waterway. That obviously runs counter to our national sovereignty claims. Could you tell me about that document? Also, how can we continue to assert ourselves while respecting the "Canada First" strategy and the negotiations?

[*English*]

Dr. Robert Huebert: The American document makes it very clear that the Americans have recognized in the last ten years that their Arctic goes beyond Alaska. One of the big criticisms of American Arctic policy is that it has tended to be very parochial and to focus on just Alaskan events.

First and foremost, the Americans say the Arctic is changing, and changing in a manner that makes the circumpolar nature of it that much more important. The negative part of the document is that they have highlighted every single criticism they have of Canada. They talk about every single dispute, but they have failed to talk about the areas in which we cooperate. They say the number one priority is Arctic security, and then they criticize us for our position on the Northwest Passage, criticize us on the Beaufort Sea, and refuse to say anything about NORAD. NORAD is the critical point of air and aerospace Arctic security for the North American continent.

What this says to me is that it's good that the Americans are starting to think about it, but in typical fashion, they are not getting the full picture. They're tending to take it somewhat from a Washington-only orientation.

The one positive thing, which I would also add, is that they hold out the possibility that they will look for multilateral solutions. That seems to be a little bit of an olive branch being handed out. Whether it was just added for niceties or whether they are serious about it, I don't know at this point in time.

As for any negotiations, unfortunately it's very difficult to find for certain exactly where we are in talking with the Americans on this. Both the State Department and DFAIT tend to hold that quite close to their chest and don't tend to want to share it with academics.

● (1635)

Mr. Steven Blaney: So that's something that's going to have to be worked out between the two countries.

Here is a quick question. You mentioned that we need those ships and submarines, but also monitoring. I think you've insisted on the fact that it is important to be able to know who comes into our waters. Would you say that they are on an equal level in all this monitoring of the Canadian Arctic?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Enforcement means nothing, if you don't know who's coming. Let me add that when I say monitoring, it's not simply of what ships are coming but of what people are doing. We also—this is of critical importance—need to know the environmental monitoring, because that is going to be one of the critical points.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Bagnell, go ahead please.

[*English*]

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Given the 90,000 flights around the pole and tens of thousands of cruise ship passengers and increased activity of locals because of the open waters, do you have any comment on our dismal search and rescue capabilities north of 60, especially considering that we go to these international meetings and say we'll help out internationally, when we can't even cover our own Arctic?

Dr. Robert Huebert: The search and rescue issue is one of the critical points we have to be dealing with much more seriously. We've been lucky. We have had cruise vessels actually go up on the rocks. We had the *Hanseatic* beach off Cambridge Bay in the mid-1990s. Fortunately, she did not sink. She did not turn over. And basically, I don't think we learned the right lessons in that context.

We're not going to be able to do it by ourselves. This is where we have to have industry involved in these negotiations. We need to have the territories involved. This is one that needs to be improved, but it truly has to be an all-of-Canada response—not an all-of-Canada government response—for us to be able to respond to the type of crisis we inevitably will have in the Arctic region.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: When we extended our boundaries from 100 miles to 200 miles for the enforcement of the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act, one of the legal defences we gave for our ability to do that was the Canada clause in UNCLOS that covers ice-covered waters. Given that they're not going to be ice-covered shortly, will our defence still hold up?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Well, this is one way international law tends to work in our favour. Basically, once the law is written, everything stops. I mean, international lawyers have a little bit of this conceit that when they have figured the problem out, that basically stops time. I'm being a little bit facetious here, being married to a lawyer.

The reality is that the Canadian Arctic will remain the major ice cover for probably the foreseeable future. As the ice cap itself breaks up and melts, that ice is going to end up in the archipelago, basically because of the Beaufort gyro and the effect of Greenland. So we probably will be able to make our arguments and then have them supported in that regard, in my view.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: During the hearings on that bill at the transport committee, I think you remember that one witness said that we have one plane to cover the Arctic Ocean, one plane to cover the Pacific, and one plane to cover the Atlantic. Do you think that's enough air surveillance?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Well, of course that was a bit of a gross exaggeration.

In terms of surveillance, the biggest problem we have is that because we have had limited capabilities, we don't know how bad the problem is right now. For example, there are allegations that in the Davis Strait both the Greenlanders and the Faeroese come over and as a habit illegally fish on the Canadian side of the delimitation line. We don't know for certain, because we don't have that baseline. This is where, once again, it gets to the issue of the capability we need before we can even get into the fact that we need to protect a new fish stock. We need to protect a new livelihood in that context.

● (1640)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Boughen, go ahead, please.

[*English*]

Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Dr. Huebert, let me add my voice to welcome you this afternoon in thanking you for taking the time to visit with us.

In your presentation, I think I heard you say that we'll have to defend our place in the Arctic. I'm wondering whether that means a strong military presence. Is that our defence? How do you view that?

Dr. Robert Huebert: I believe we need to defend it by cooperative means. In other words, one of the best ways of defending what we need to have happen is to ensure that our neighbours are on the same page. You can enter into an international agreement to defend Canadian interests. That is the best of all solutions.

Failing that, we then have to have the ability to defend our view, our environmental standards, and our view in terms of the role of the Inuit. That all comes into government capability.

The third element is that if push comes to shove—if we have somebody who ultimately strongly disagrees and is willing to engage against us—we have to have the ability to push back, or our claims mean nothing.

Mr. Ray Boughen: That leads me to my next question, which is whether we are at a point at which we should start to discuss this with Norway and the U.S. and others through NATO. Should we on our own start a program and start to discuss, debate, and have dialogue and see where we're going before we get to armaments and guns firing at each other?

Dr. Robert Huebert: That's easy. Yes. The reality is that it's restarting. We started these negotiations with all the countries. Once again, this is bipartisan. I give credit to both sides. It has been supported by the NDP. I haven't been able to find a Bloc position on the Arctic Council.

The Arctic Council was a means by which, from an international perspective, we were trying to deal with these issues in a period of time when the Russians were amenable, I think, or much more amenable, to these types of issues. Now, having failed to really push the Arctic Council, do we now reinvigorate that process? Absolutely.

Mr. Ray Boughen: Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: Monsieur Payne.

Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for coming, Mr. Huebert. It was nice chatting with you earlier.

I have just a couple of things in terms of surveillance. We heard several times that we should probably have more satellite surveillance, which would help us with submarines and a number of other things. Is this one of the things that you believe we need?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Just so that I'm perfectly clear, for the submarines you have to have increased underwater acoustic capabilities. We're not at the stage where satellites can do it yet—but yes, for the overall picture, absolutely.

Mr. LaVar Payne: During the committee meetings we've heard testimony from various other individuals on the risks in the Arctic, such as from smugglers, terrorists, and so on. Do you think those are the challenges that will come from those kinds of individuals, non-states, or from normal states?

Dr. Robert Huebert: There are two categories of risk. There is first of all the ones that are high probability, low impact—the type of company, for example, that says, "I have a ship that's pretty substandard. I'm still able to get insurance for it, and I'm going to take a quick run through the Northwest Passage to save a little bit of money." That is the type of thing Suzanne Lalonde had talked to the committee about. In my view, that has something of an element of higher probability. Ultimately, it's not as risky as say a terrorist infiltration.

Terrorists and organized crime has a much higher impact and lower probability, but it is still possible. We already have strong suspicions that organized crime did enter the north when the diamond industry opened up. It has never been proven conclusively, but in every other country diamonds and organized crime go hand in hand, so we have strong suspicions in that regard already.

In terms of terrorists, the logic of terrorism is that you look for weak points of entry. Right now the Arctic, because of the climate, is difficult to enter, but if it becomes more accessible and our southern borders are increased, it is only logical to expect that if you wanted to have entry you would go through the north. But once again, that's not talking about the immediate. You're talking more immediate to long term.

Do I foresee this as a spectrum? Absolutely. Are you saying high probability and high impact? Absolutely, in the long term.

● (1645)

Mr. LaVar Payne: Are there some ways we should address those issues specifically?

Dr. Robert Huebert: Basically, on each of the individual issues.... For example, with organized crime, you ensure that the RCMP is able to cooperate with those individuals who have had experience, let's say, with organized crime in diamonds. You ensure that you are able to monitor. It is an individual, almost issue-by-issue capability that you need. But I do think there is a need at the highest level to monitor to make sure that we do not make inadvertent cost cuts in terms of an economic crisis and all of a sudden we have to cut the RCMP's overall budget, without realizing that if we do that the piece of enforcement against organized crime collapses. There needs to be, almost from a government perspective, some surveillance.

The issue is that incremental cuts are going to hurt our ability to enforce. That's what's happened in the past.

Mr. LaVar Payne: I have just one more thing concerning surveillance, which I'm not sure anyone here has touched on today, and that is the Arctic Rangers. What are your thoughts around those individuals?

Dr. Robert Huebert: They are an amazing group, to be honest. With the type of traditional knowledge they give, the ability they have, the manner in which they can train our forces is excellent.

I think we are going in the right direction, and this started as early as around 1994, when we started beefing up the capabilities with better training, taking it more seriously. This is the way to go.

The problem we will face with them, however, is a capacity issue. Pretty well everybody who wants to be a ranger almost is at that stage, and, given the size of the community, we are going to have a problem if we try to expand it beyond what individuals are willing to come. That is going to be a really difficult issue for us to face.

Mr. LaVar Payne: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Professor Huebert. On behalf of our committee, I want to thank you for your presentation. It is very useful for the work of our committee. Thank you very much.

Ms. Leslie, have you something to raise?

Ms. Megan Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I've been asked by the usual member of this committee, Mr. Harris, to request that the deadline for submissions of a supplementary report be extended until noon on Friday, June 12, to allow for translation, so I assume I would have to make a motion for that.

If I can go ahead, the wording of the motion would be:

> That notwithstanding the Order adopted by the Committee on Monday, June 8, 2009, the deadline for the submission of dissident or supplementary opinions related to the Committee's report on health care services offered to Canadian Forces personnel be extended until Friday, June 12, 2009 at 12:00 p.m. (Eastern daylight time).

The Chair: Do you have a member who supports that? Mr. Hawn. Okay. Merci.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: It has been approved by the committee. Thank you very much.

I just want to inform the committee that if members wish to have a press release on the work that we are doing right now concerning our report that will be ready next week, we can have a press release. The analysts can work on that this week and at the beginning of next week. So if we have a press release, we would be ready to table that report on Tuesday, before the end of the day.

Do we have an agreement to go ahead with a press release?

Yes, Mr. Bagnell.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Yes, we're in agreement, but Bryon wants to see it before it's released.

The Chair: So next Monday we will have a draft of the press release and the members will be able to discuss it for our approval. After that we'll table the report on Tuesday with the press release.

Thank you very much.

The meeting is adjourned.

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