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## 'No danger' says MoD as subs are checked

**THE Ministry of Defence at Faslane has stressed there is no danger to the public nor to Royal Navy personnel following an announcement that Britain's nuclear submarine fleet is to undergo a series of safety checks.**

There was said to be unprecedented activity at the Clyde Submarine Base after it was revealed that nine of the Navy's 20 nuclear-powered boats — including four which form the basis of the Polaris force — might be suffering from cracking in their nuclear reactor cooling circuits.

The Ministry said that "as a prudent precaution all submarines are to be checked."

He added: "The boats will be staying at sea and will be inspected when they come into port."

The Ministry confirmed that a fault had been found in a boat undergoing a refit in England.

But their local spokesman denied suggestions by CND Scotland that there was any danger . . . or that there had ever been any danger from an accident involving a reactor cooling system on a British submarine at Faslane.

The CND were making the most of the announcement to promote their ongoing battle against nuclear weapons.

Faslane peace campers, who had been protesting at Rhu Spit over proposals to blast there, moved back up the loch and flew a radioac-

tivity flag from a small boat.

Non-plussed though, the Ministry man said the fault had been discovered on a submarine which he refused to name.

There were stringent safety checks and regular refits to ensure that no danger occurred on the submarine fleet, he said.

### POLICY

He also confirmed a statement from the Ministry in London that Britain's nuclear deterrent remains operational despite the scare.

"At least one Polaris boat is on patrol in accordance with naval policy," he said.

The Polaris, Valiant and Churchill class submarines were all put into service in 1972.

Experts say they are the oldest nuclear-powered vessels and the most likely, therefore, to be suffering from wear and tear due to age.

Certainly, there was a great deal of activity at the Base at the end of last week, and national newspaper and radio and television bulletins carried extensive reports about the safety checks taking place.