

participation, whether it is our air force or our brigade as mentioned by Mr. Lambert—in view of our limited but expensive effort—of such importance on a morale basis for European countries? Should they not now be able to handle the manpower expense involved for their own defence? Can you see what I mean, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure whether you want to accept the question now, or not.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we can accept that now as a supplementary question but could you wait until the Minister has had a chance to answer.

Mr. HELLYER: This question is one that involves both the military and political considerations and I believe that the Canadian forces in Europe make a very effective military contribution because they are so good and because of the high professional calibre of the men in the force. I think, however, that one of the most serious considerations in this whole area is the possible political repercussions of either withdrawing or substantially reducing the contribution of Canada, or the United States in the continent of Europe.

Mr. WINCH: As far as Canada is concerned, Sir, not the United States.

Mr. HELLYER: Well, the two are related in a sense, because I have no doubt that what one country decided to do might have some influence on what the other would eventually do or be under pressure to do. For this reason my own view is still the same as is set out in the White Paper and that is that there is a requirement and fulfilment of our adherence to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization for us to participate in a tangible way in maintaining the force in Europe, and that this is particularly so from the standpoint of a demonstration of the political solidarity of the alliance; I think one of the most important facets of the alliance is to demonstrate its political solidarity to the maximum extent possible. I therefore feel, although this question should really be directed as much to Mr. Martin and his Department as to the Department of National Defence if not more so, that it would be felt amongst the capitals of the alliance that it would be just as important now as it has ever been for Canada to maintain a substantial contribution in Europe as a tangible demonstration of our assurance to the alliance and to the political solidarity of this group of nations.

Mr. WINCH: Gentlemen, I am going to have to put my question based on the statement which has just now been made by the Minister. He has stated that in his view, which he said he has not changed, there is a requirement for the maintenance of Canadian armed forces in Europe under NATO. I would hope that he would expand a little bit on what are the requirements, and particularly as regards his statement which he repeated more than once in his presentation this morning, that the policy of expanded mobility of the Canadian forces will allow us to supply troops, when required, under our policy, anywhere in the world as and when required. Now, if that statement is correct, and I assume as the Minister said it that it is correct, then I again ask him what are the requirements for the actual continued maintenance of our Canadian forces in Europe some 22 years after cessation of world hostility.

Mr. HELLYER: I think first of all there is a real advantage to having a force in being along the central front; that it does continue to contribute to the stability of that part of the world; that it has demonstrated over the years that what