

Supply—National Defence

principle which has existed since time immemorial. These conditions are supposed to be the keystones of the mobile command.

We want to know a number of things about mobile command and we are raising these questions now. I hope that the minister can give us some clarification. We are certainly giving him warning that when he and his officials are before the Defence Committee these matters will be studied in very great detail.

Mr. Hellyer: That is fair enough.

Mr. Lambert: However, we want something more at this time. We want to know why the government has decided on this concept of a baby expeditionary force, because that is all it is. It will be composed of segments of our armed forces which will be deployed in units of the required size to meet Canadian commitments and undertakings anywhere in the world.

For example, we want to know how the sea lift will be performed. We want to know who is going to provide the lift for the tactical air support. Does the minister anticipate that this mobile force and any segments which may be attached shall be required only within a narrow radius of Canada? What are we going to do if we have to go to the far end of South America? How does the minister expect to get this tactical air support down there? Will it have to travel to the Far East or the Middle East, across wide expanses of sea? How are these aircraft to be transported. Are they to be taken on the *Bonaventure*, or has the minister plans for some other type of ship to take these aircraft? Has he plans to purchase ultimately huge transport aircraft which as of now are just a gleam in some designer's eye? Or does he plan on flying these CF-5's in formation and then have them line up at some sort of aerial service station for refueling? These are all fundamental matters.

Let us suppose that the aircraft reach their destination. Who is going to furnish the supply train? Who will supply spares, ammunition, fuel and carry out repairs? Are we going back to the concept that Canada will supply everything, that the force will be entirely self-contained? Are we to be responsible for the supply train for what I call this baby expeditionary force? This, I am sure, has long been rejected, yet we must see what the minister is thinking in this regard.

I do not see how we are going to be able to maintain this type of aircraft with the limited resources we have at the present time. How is the refuelling to be done? I have heard rumours that the department wants to convert four of the CF-130B's into tankers. Our fleet of Hercules aircraft is already committed to other transport tasks. They are going to provide long range transportation for our troops. If one takes four of these from that task it means that one will have to have a commitment of six aircraft. I say this because there is always the regular maintenance of these aircraft and their periodic removal from service. Breakdowns occur. For example, the Zambian airlift required six aircraft, not four. We all know that one of the aircraft which flew out to Zambia had to be rotated back to Canada in less than a week for its periodic check and overhaul. Therefore we are going to require six aircraft, not four, and at the present time we do not have this particular type of aircraft in sufficient numbers, certainly not if the minister means to carry troops and equipment in sufficiently large numbers to be effective.

• (4:40 p.m.)

Again, this is a mobile force. Just how mobile is it? The hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre made reference to the M-113 which is an armoured personnel carrier. This is all very well for those people out in the forward battle positions. What about their supply? I venture to say that our ground forces today, in so far as supply is concerned, are very little more mobile than they were at the end of world war II. They are roadbound on wheels. We have few if any tracked vehicles to assist them. We have few if any aircraft at the very front. I know that there are now a few helicopters. I do not agree that we should have continued as we have. This is a point that we have raised, that the Defence Committee raised in 1963, and to which I have referred to many times in the past, namely, that in so far as our ground forces are concerned they are not mobile and have not been, any more than they were in world war II.

We are supposed to be operating in Europe so that the use of tactical nuclear arms is such that the underlying principle is mobility and dispersement. How can our forces disperse and how can they be mobile when they do not have the equipment?