

Government of NATO countries met, in Paris, for the first time and a special meeting of Defence Ministers was held in April 1958 to review the implementation of the important decisions taken in December. In May 1958, the Foreign Ministers of the NATO countries met in Copenhagen to discuss various political and economic problems of concern to NATO and in particular the important questions relating to a possible East-West Summit conference.

At the December meeting, the Heads of Government together with Finance, Defence and Foreign Ministers were concerned with the major military and political problems facing the Alliance, with particular reference to the implications for NATO of the Soviet scientific successes in the immediately preceding months and the measures required of the Alliance to meet the situation. The decisions taken, as outlined in the Declaration and Communiqué released at the close of the meeting, included measures to strengthen the Alliance in the interests of collective security and a forthcoming attitude on disarmament and negotiations with the U.S.S.R. It was agreed in principle to establish stocks of nuclear warheads and place IRBM's in NATO countries where required in accordance with agreements to be worked out bilaterally between the United States and host countries; to promote the co-ordination of research, development and manufacture of modern weapons; to encourage through the pooling of scientific information and facilities an increase in the effectiveness of national scientific effort; and to promote closer economic co-operation between members of the Alliance. At the same time emphasis was placed on the desire of all NATO countries for an acceptable disarmament agreement with the U.S.S.R. and offers were made to resume negotiations in the UN Disarmament Committee, or at the level of Foreign Ministers. These decisions guided the activities of the Council during 1958.

NATO's activities during the period under review were also marked by the efforts of member governments to improve and extend NATO co-operation in non-military fields, and to develop greater unity within the Atlantic community.

The North Atlantic Council appointed at its meeting in May 1956 a Committee of Three Ministers, consisting of Dr. Martino, the Foreign Minister of Italy, Mr. Halvard Lange, Foreign Minister of Norway, and the Hon. L. B. Pearson, then Secretary of State for External Affairs for Canada, to advise the Council on ways and means to achieve these objectives. With the aid of questionnaires, supplemented by consultations at the ministerial level with representatives of the other NATO governments, the Committee of Three submitted a report which was approved in principle by the Ministers at the meeting of December 1956 and all recommendations accepted. The report was an important landmark in the development of NATO activities in the non-military field. It stressed the need of members of the Alliance in present circumstances to develop common policies by full and timely consultation on issues of common concern.

Thus the period under review was extremely active for the NATO Alliance, and the Organization, despite differences which any group of 15 sovereign countries is bound to experience from time to time, still displays much resiliency and continues to be as necessary in the face of Soviet policy and actions in Europe and elsewhere as it was at the time of its establishment in 1949.

Canadian Contributions to NATO.—Canada continued in 1957-58 to support NATO with contributions of Armed Forces to the unified NATO commands, with material assistance to other NATO countries and with financial contributions to common budgets. The 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade, which in late 1957 replaced the 2nd Infantry Brigade in the Soest area of Germany, carried out extensive training exercises independently and also in conjunction with other NATO forces in the Northern Army group in Northwest Europe. The Canadian contribution of an air division of 12 jet fighter squadrons to SACEUR remained unchanged. The Royal Canadian Navy had 40 ships assigned to duties connected with the defence of the Canada-United States area and for the protection of any convoys under the control of SACLANT.