

France and the Federal Republic of Germany which found the Soviet proposal of Nov. 27 on Berlin unacceptable and reaffirmed the determination of the three Western occupying powers to maintain their position and rights in Berlin, including the right of access to the city. In addition, after hearing reports by NATO military commanders on the strength of NATO Forces and the continuing increase in Soviet armaments, the Ministers emphasized the vital need to improve the defensive power of the Alliance.

Two Ministerial meetings of the Council were convened during 1959. The regular spring meeting of Foreign Ministers was held in Washington on Apr. 2-4. A special ceremony at the opening session marked the tenth anniversary of the Treaty, which was signed in Washington on Apr. 4, 1949. The Council directed its attention to the central problem posed by the Soviet Union's pronouncements on Berlin and Germany. Discussion centred mainly on the Western position for the negotiations with the Soviet Union scheduled to commence at Geneva later in the spring, upon which there was general agreement. The Ministers expressed desire to see outstanding problems solved by negotiation and confirmed the principles contained in the Council's declaration on Berlin of Dec. 16, 1958.

The year's work of the Council culminated with the meeting of the Foreign, Defence and Finance Ministers held in Paris Dec. 15-17 and again on Dec. 22 following a meeting during the intervening period of the Heads of Government of the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the Federal Republic of Germany to consider preparations for an East-West Summit conference. In addition, the Foreign Ministers of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Canada met on Dec. 21 to discuss arrangements for convening the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee. The NATO Ministerial meeting was therefore concerned not only with its traditional review of the international situation and current NATO defence problems but with the more important matters relating to the forthcoming East-West Summit negotiations and preparation for negotiations with the Soviet Union on disarmament, both in the ten-nation Disarmament Committee and at the Summit. Agreement was reached on the arrangements for convening the Summit conference and the meetings of the Disarmament Committee, and for ensuring that there would be full consultation with NATO in preparing the Western position for these meetings.

In addition, the Permanent Council, together with its subordinate committees and its international staff, continued to devote its attention to international, political, economic and military developments of direct concern to the Alliance, reviewed the defence plans of its members, dealt with expenditures of funds on commonly financed military installations (infrastructure) and studied the measures required to ensure peacetime readiness and civil defence.

Canadian Contributions to NATO.—Canada continued in 1958-59 to provide contributions of Armed Forces to unified NATO commands, material assistance to other NATO countries and financial contributions to NATO common budgets. The Canadian contribution to the integrated forces in Europe comprised an Infantry Brigade Group stationed in Germany and an Air Division of twelve modern jet fighter squadrons at bases in France and Germany. During 1959 the Canadian Government decided to re-equip the eight day-fighter squadrons of the Air Division with a modern strike and reconnaissance aircraft, the CF-104. With the establishment of the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD) in 1958, Canada participated fully with the United States in the defence of the North American Continent, which harbours the main retaliatory forces of the Alliance and is an integral part of the NATO area. In addition, a substantial part of Canada's naval forces has been assigned to the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) for the protection of convoys and for the defence of the Canada-United States region, should an emergency arise.