

three years, the goals for 1954 being firm commitments, while the goals for 1955 and 1956 are provisional and for planning purposes. Following the practice established at the last Ministerial meeting, the Council released no precise figures. It can be said, however, that the forces planned for the end of 1954 are to be somewhat larger in numbers and substantially better in quality than those now in existence.

The broad lines of future NATO defence planning to meet the threat of aggression over an extended period were agreed. Member countries would have to be prepared to maintain a high level of military preparedness, while at the same time strengthening their economic and social structures. To insure that their forces were adequate either to discourage attack or, if war came, to hold up the enemy until the full strength of the alliance could be mobilized, member countries must see that these forces are furnished with the most modern equipment possible and are ready to go into action rapidly. In this connection, the Council's Military Committee has under way a comprehensive re-assessment of the organization and use of the NATO forces in the light of the effect of new weapons and was asked to keep the Council informed of its progress. These studies will be aided, it is hoped, by information on nuclear weapons which the President of the United States is seeking Congressional authority to provide to the NATO Supreme Commanders. The Council also recognized that this long-term defence plan had important financial implications, particularly with respect to replacing obsolete weapons, and that it would have to keep these under continuous review.

Military Matters

The Council took note of a report by the Military Committee on the progress made during the current year in NATO military planning and organization. It also heard statements by the NATO Supreme Commanders supplementing this report. Admiral Sir John Edelsten, Commander-in-Chief Channel, spoke of developments in his command (which covers the area of the English Channel and the Eastern and Western approaches to United Kingdom ports), since he and his colleague, Air Marshal Boothman (Commander-in-chief for Air, Channel) took up their joint appointments earlier this year. Admiral L. D. McCormick, Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT), outlined the progress made in the plans of his Command for safeguarding the lines of communication across the Atlantic. And General A. M. Gruenther, Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), referred to the remarkable progress so far made, but emphasized the tremendous work still to be done in improving the effectiveness of the forces under his command and maintaining public interest and support for the defence effort.

The Council approved a recommendation that a new light-weight .30 calibre cartridge be adopted as standard small arms ammunition for NATO use. This recommendation arose out of an agreement reached by Belgium, Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States, and announced during this Ministerial meeting, that this should be the new standard round. Tribute was paid to Mr. Claxton for Canada's contribution to this remarkable achievement.

Secretary-General's Report

The Council also considered a report by the Secretary-General on the progress recorded in a number of fields of NATO work since the previous