

# NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MINISTERIAL MEETING, PARIS, DECEMBER 15-18, 1952

SINCE APRIL 1952, when the reorganization agreed to at Lisbon came into effect the North Atlantic Council has been meeting continuously in Paris. Member countries have appointed Permanent Representatives to speak for them at the Council, and from time to time some Ministers have attended Council meetings. In this way much useful work has been accomplished in strengthening the defences of the Alliance, particularly now that NATO has passed from the initial planning stages to the operational stage, where more attention must be given to the day-to-day problems that arise from integrating the national forces at the disposal of Supreme Commanders into an effective international defensive force. This growing defensive co-operation has brought with it a closer integration in other fields, and the Council has, therefore, had to deal with all manner of questions arising in the political, economic and social fields as well as problems of a more strictly military character. It has always been recognized, however, that there was great advantage in providing an opportunity for Foreign, Defence and Finance Ministers of the NATO countries to meet together to go over the many questions of common concern, and it had not been intended that such meetings of Ministers should only take place at critical times. There was general agreement that a meeting of Ministers would be useful before the end of 1952 and, consequently, one was called under the chairmanship of Mr. Kraft, Foreign Minister of Denmark, for the main purpose of hearing reports on the progress in the civil and military spheres and reviewing the operation of the organization and its plans for the immediate future.

## Report of the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General, Lord Ismay, presented his first report to the Council. In this he outlined the organization of the International Secretariat, which was established after the Lisbon meeting, and reviewed the various activities in the civil field which had been undertaken by the Council. His report described the development of close working relations between NATO's civilian and military authorities, which is particularly necessary when it is realized that the responsibility for final recommendations to NATO members of all questions, military as well as civil, rests with the Council.

The Secretary-General's report also described the constructive work of the Council in the fields of civil defence, and of the non-military aspects of the Treaty covered by Article II. Under this heading, the Council had devoted particular attention to questions of over-population and to social, cultural and informational matters. The question of adequate public information on NATO subjects remains one of the most important, requiring continuous attention and development.

As has been their practice, the Ministers took the opportunity of their meeting to exchange views and information on political problems affecting their common interests. Particular attention was paid to the struggle in Indo-China, to the European Defence Community Treaty, and to the situation in Eastern Germany. These discussions had been carried out from time to time by Permanent Representatives in the Council and have proved to be one of the most useful developments in NATO. On this occasion it was noted in particular that, despite repeated declarations of the Soviet Union favouring a German peace treaty and German unification, no reply had been received to the proposals of the United Kingdom, France and the United States sent three months ago to the U.S.S.R.

In the military sphere, the Council approved several recommendations put forward by the Military Advisers. The European command structure for the defence of