

Ministers emphasized the value of close political consultation in regard to the constructive tasks of the Alliance, as well as in preparing to deal effectively with contingencies which may arise. They agreed that this consultation should be intensified.

### **Disarmament Effort**

Council reaffirmed that general and complete disarmament, under effective international control, continued to be a question of major concern. It emphasized the importance of reaching an agreement which would, step by step, bring peace and security to the world. It expressed the hope that the Soviet attitude, which has so far frustrated concrete agreement on any of the key questions at issue, would change.

Ministers took careful stock of the threats which face the Alliance and resources available for defence against them as established in the course of the 1962 triennial review. They agreed that it was necessary to increase the effectiveness of conventional forces. They further agreed that adequate and balanced forces, both nuclear and conventional, were necessary to provide the Alliance with the widest possible range of response to whatever threat may be directed against its security. They recognized that a sustained effort will be required to provide and improve these forces. Ministers invited the Permanent Council to review procedures in order to secure a closer alignment between NATO military requirements and national force plans, as well as an equitable sharing of the common defence burden.

### **Nuclear Discussion**

The Council also reviewed work done over the past six months in the exchange of technical information on nuclear weapons and the study of various suggestions for the further development and co-ordination of NATO nuclear capabilities. They decided to pursue and intensify exchanges in this field to facilitate the continuing review of NATO defence policy.

Ministers also noted, in accordance with the resolution taken during the Athens meeting, that, in a spirit of solidarity and interdependence, measures had been decided on to assist Greece in solving the special defence problems with which she is at present confronted.

At their separate meeting on December 15, defence ministers reviewed the report of the high-level group established to seek means of obtaining improved co-operation among member nations in research, development and production of military equipment. In approving this report, ministers reaffirmed their will to co-operate and their intention to translate it into positive action at all levels.

### **Economic Expansion**

Ministers noted that the free world had continued to advance towards an ever greater degree of prosperity. Only on basis of continuing economic expansion can