

NATO Ministerial Meeting, December 1962

The annual NATO meeting in Paris took place from December 13 to 15 and was attended by foreign and defence ministers of the member countries. The Canadian delegation was led by Mr. Howard Green, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and Mr. Douglas S. Harkness, the Minister of National Defence.

This year's meeting, taking place as it did shortly after the Cuban crisis, reflected an awareness that the diplomatic position of the Alliance had been improved and that the Western allies had been drawn more closely together in their appreciation of the value of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The proceedings of the meeting were summarized in a communique the text of which follows:

Final Communiqué

The regular ministerial session of the NAC was held in Paris from December 13 to 15.

Ministers reviewed the international situation. They noted that the Alliance is sound and vigorous, and that the dynamism of free societies continues to demonstrate its advantages in promoting world progress and well being.

Recent attempts by the U.S.S.R. to tilt the balance of force against the West by secretly stationing nuclear missiles in Cuba brought the world to the verge of war. The peril was averted by the firmness and restraint of the U.S.A. supported by the Alliance and other free nations.

Ministers also discussed the grave implications of the recent Communist actions in Asia.

The aim of the Atlantic Alliance remains what it has always been — peace, freedom, and security based on the rule of law. However, the Alliance is determined to respond appropriately to any hostile action affecting the security and freedom of countries of the Alliance subjected to threats and pressure. Regarding Berlin, the Council recalled and reaffirmed its determination, as expressed in its declaration of December 16, 1958, to defend and maintain the freedom of West Berlin and its people.

Vigilant Unity

In the light of their discussions, ministers concluded that constant vigilance and unity of purpose in a spirit of interdependence, as well as readiness to examine any reasonable possibility of reducing international tension, must continue to guide the policies of the Alliance. It is a prerequisite of any progress towards equitable settlement of outstanding international issues that the Alliance should maintain its defensive strength.