

to ending Europe's historical feuds, but also as a prelude to greater political unity of Western Europe since they imply a growing measure of European government. Because it constitutes a departure from the basic political principle of nationalism and its gradual replacement by the new concept of supra-nationalism, the creation of the new Communities has been described by some European statesmen as one of the major developments in Europe since the French Revolution. These measures are actually part of the efforts made by European nations since the last war to work out special arrangements which tend to bring them gradually closer together in a European system, with the aim of giving to Europe economic prosperity as well as political stability and unity. This policy has already been given effect to by the creation of a number of organizations of European co-operation in numerous fields, such as the Council of Europe in 1949, the Coal and Steel Community in 1952, and the Western European Union, in its present form, in 1955.

While it is generally considered premature in Western Europe to proceed with important measures of political integration, such as those aiming at the creation of the United States of Europe, a number of non-governmental conferences of European "wise men" and political personalities have been held in recent months, reflecting an evident desire for further co-ordination of European foreign and defence policies. A similar preoccupation has been frequently expressed in other forums, notably in the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, concerning the need to rationalize and centralize the existing and proposed European institutions of inter-governmental co-operation in the economic, political, military and parliamentary fields.

Proposed European Free Trade Area

The entry into force of the Treaty for a Common Market gave renewed impetus to the negotiations for a European Free Trade Area which the United Kingdom had in 1956 proposed be set up around the Common Market by the members of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), which includes the six countries in the Common Market. In the proposal made by the United Kingdom, agricultural products were to be excluded. Early in 1957, a committee of the OEEC, found it was technically possible to associate, under one form or another, all 17 member countries of that Organization with the proposed Common Market through the creation of a Free Trade Area. (Under a Free Trade Area tariff and other trade barriers would be progressively removed as between members. Each member, however, would be free to maintain its own tariff and other forms of protection against the exports of non-member countries). Having accepted in principle such a proposal, the interested countries agreed in February to establish, within OEEC, working parties with the task of paving the way for more formal negotiations. In October, they decided to establish a ministerial committee, under the chairmanship of a United Kingdom Minister, to begin formal negotiations for the establishment of a European Free Trade Area. The deliberations in this body have been marked both by a general awareness of the complexity of the negotiations undertaken and by a readiness to achieve real progress.

Canadian Attitude

Canada has taken a lively interest, because of both political and trade considerations, in the developments which have led to the Common Market