

Association of the German Federal Republic with the North Atlantic Community

(This article on the significance of the London and Paris Conferences follows the article which appeared in the last issue summarizing the Agreements resulting from these Conferences)

THE agreements signed in Paris on October 23 are a considerable diplomatic achievement, particularly in view of the doubts and dismay that prevailed when the European Defence Community Treaty was rejected by the French National Assembly on August 30. The Nine Powers that gathered in London only seven weeks later approached their task in the spirit that they could not afford to let the conference fail. In that spirit they were able, in five short days, to reach agreement in principle on a settlement providing for the association of the German Federal Republic with the West in a manner that would make possible a German defence contribution with adequate safeguards and would promote closer European unity within the framework of a developing Atlantic community. It is difficult to see how any better settlement could have been worked out at this time, given the inevitable conflict of national interests involved in issues of such importance. It is a settlement, moreover, which is firmly based on mutual confidence and non-discrimination and which, because it does not entail as great a measure of supranationalism as did the European Defence Community, is probably more in tune with public opinion in the countries concerned.

A Joint Effort

To this achievement all the participating countries contributed, but special mention should be made of the role played by the United Kingdom, which suggested the conference and made the preliminary soundings. Sir Anthony Eden's tireless skill as Chairman of the Nine-Power meetings, and his government's pledge to maintain troops on the European continent, were perhaps decisive factors. Other indispensable elements were the French agreement to German membership in NATO, the German Federal Republic's self-denying ordinance with respect to the manufacture of atomic, biological and chemical weapons and certain other heavy armaments, and the Franco-German agreement on the Saar, which is in a very important sense basic to the whole settlement.

Canada was represented at the Nine-Power Conferences in London and Paris and at the NATO Ministerial Meeting in Paris by the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Our general interest arose of course from Canada's membership in NATO and its stake in the collective defence arrangements of the West. NATO is one of the foundation stones of Canadian foreign policy