

European Integration

AN important development towards the long-term objective of European integration occurred as a result of the coming into force on January 1, 1958 of the treaties which provided for the establishment among Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and The Netherlands of a European Economic Community (Common Market) and of an Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). The movement, begun at Messina in June 1955 by the foreign ministers of the six interested countries, was followed by inter-governmental negotiations conducted in Brussels and by several meetings of the foreign ministers which led to the drafting of the treaties. These history-making documents were signed in Rome on March 25, 1957 by the heads of government or their foreign ministers, and they were ratified in the following months by the parliaments of the six countries. While the treaties came into force on January 1, 1958 the full implementation of their provisions will extend, in the case of the Common Market, over a period of from 12 to 15 years.

Common Market

Under the first treaty, the six countries will set up a common market by eliminating progressively after January 1, 1959 tariff and other barriers to trade between themselves, and by adopting a common tariff towards third countries. Trade in agricultural products among member countries will be subject to special conditions and dispensations. The member countries propose also to facilitate the freer movement of labour and capital, to harmonize social policies and to promote internal growth through a common investment fund. The treaty provides for the association of dependant overseas territories and certain other countries in a quasi-free trade area arrangement. Under the second treaty, there will be created an agency for the pooling of research and development activities for the exploitation of the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

As previously agreed, the foreign ministers of the six countries met in Paris on December 19, 1957 with a view to selecting the site of the new Communities and to name the members of the institutions to be created. These comprise a Parliamentary Assembly with advisory functions, a Council of Ministers which will make decisions on policy matters relating to the Treaties, Commissions or High Authorities which will administer the Treaties, a Court of Justice, an Economic and Social Committee, an Investment Bank and a Secretariat. Unable to agree then, the Ministers decided to meet again in Paris on January 6, 1958, but this time after two days of discussions they succeeded only in reaching partial agreement. The Ministers left it for a subsequent meeting to be held before next June 1 to decide on the location of the institutions for the new Communities and for the Coal and Steel Community already located in Luxembourg. It was, however, agreed in principle that the three Communities should have their headquarters together in the same city. Until such a site is selected, the various bodies are to meet in different cities according to practical considerations, mainly in Brussels and Luxembourg. The Ministers were successful, however, in selecting the permanent directors and members of the various institutions, and they distributed the posts about evenly among nationals of their countries. Thus, a