

What is the European Economic Community? Is it open to us to join it or seek an association? If we could, would it be in our interests to do so?

### EEC Described

Let me first outline the nature of the European Economic Community. Six European countries seeking closer integration, partly for economic and partly for political reasons, signed in March 1957 what has come to be known as the Treaty of Rome, which provides for the establishment of their Common Market. By the end of this decade these countries will have abolished all tariff and other trade barriers against each other and will have erected a common tariff against imports from the rest of the world. In addition to this, the Six have set for themselves other important economic and social objectives. But, more important, the political objective of creating a nucleus of a united Europe lies at the very core of the movement which found its culmination in the signing of the Treaty of Rome. The countries concerned have never made a secret of their political purposes. Indeed, a committee which was recently established by the European Economic Community governments is now actively at work studying plans for closer political union on the basis of proposals put forward by France.

This brief outline brings out three essential facts: first, the European Economic Community is, above all, European; second, in addition to being an economic association it has overriding political aims; third, it is not a free-trade organization seeking members.

Might Canada join or become associated with the European Economic Community if we so wished? In the light of what I have just said, it is not surprising that the Treaty of Rome provides in the plainest terms for the accession of European countries alone to membership. As regards association, a group of articles of the Treaty (Part Four) make provision for the associate membership of overseas territories. Obviously this provision has no application to Canada. A further article provides that: "The Community may conclude with a third country, a union of states or an international organization agreements creating an association embodying reciprocal rights and obligations, joint action and special procedures." The Six have made it quite clear, however, that the countries to which this last article applies are the less-developed countries of Europe, such as Greece, which has already signed a treaty of association with the European Economic Community.

Treaties can, of course, be amended by the parties thereto, so let us go beyond the formal position. Is there any likelihood that the European countries would wish Canada as a member or as an associate?