

THE SETTLEMENT OF WESTERN EUROPE

The settlement of western Europe was long delayed after the war's end by conscientious efforts to arrange for the settlement of the whole of Europe to be undertaken, in Mr. Bevin's phrase, "under the umbrella of the Four Powers". In the last year, however, with the Soviet Union and its satellites in eastern Europe standing to one side, the United Kingdom, the United States, and France have taken the lead in three main political projects intended to produce a strong, united - and free - western Europe: the European Recovery Programme, the settlement of Western Germany, and Western Union.

EUROPEAN RECOVERY PROGRAMME

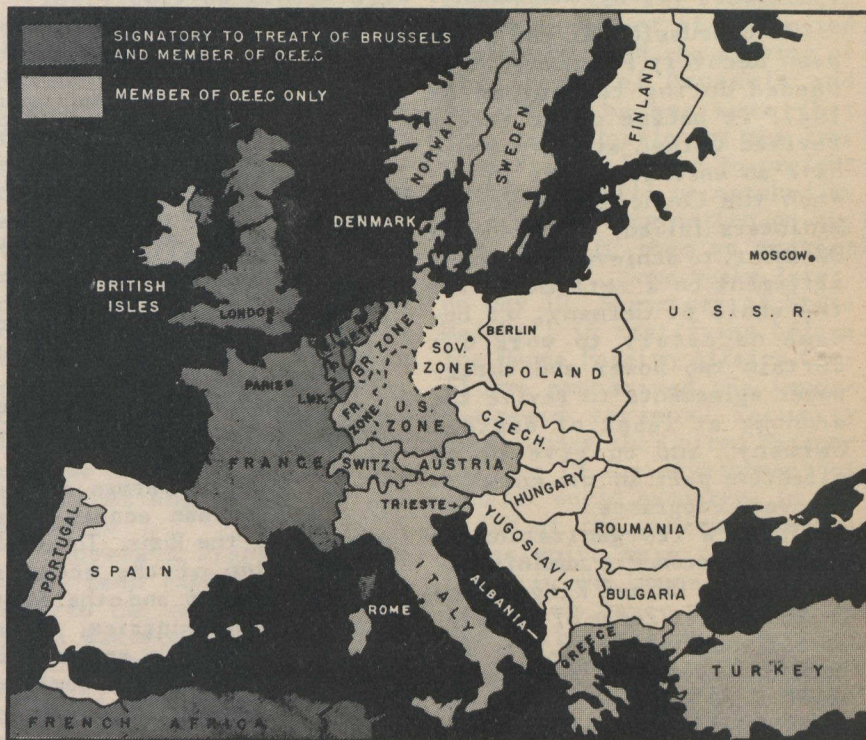
The course of subsequent events makes it likely that Mr. Marshall's Harvard speech on June 5 a year ago will mark 1947 as one of the formative years in the history of western Europe. Mr. Marshall promised generous United States aid to Europe, and public attention has for the most part fastened on that part of his speech. But he also said that before the United States Government could act, "there must be some agreement among the countries of Europe as to the requirements of the situation and the part those countries themselves will take...The initiative...must come from Europe".

The response of western Europe so far has been most encouraging. Sixteen countries met in Paris on July 12, 1947, and set up a Committee on European Economic Co-operation. The sixteen were Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. The Committee assessed the possibilities of European production, placed them against European needs,

and so estimated the help needed from the European Recovery Programme. These estimates were presented to Mr. Marshall on September 22 and the Committee adjourned to await United States action on them.

countries, and Greece and Turkey, have likewise exchanged views on customs unions during the past few months.

The second session of the C.E.E.C. got under way on March 15, 1948, in anticipation of



In the meantime, however, a second organization set up by the Paris Conference, the Study Group on European Customs Union, got under way. Meetings were held in Brussels opening November 10, 1947, February 2, 1948, and March 18, 1948, and some progress was made in technical discussions. Even more progress was made in discussions on regional customs unions. The great example was set by Benelux, the customs union among Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, which came into force on January 1, 1948. France and Italy have had particularly successful talks on the subject, and late in March Mr. Bidault and Count Sforza agreed to press on with them. The Scandinavian

final action by the United States Congress on the Economic Co-operation Act. (President Truman's signature was actually affixed on April 3). The Committee was converted into a permanent organization by a convention signed in Paris on April 16 by representatives of the sixteen countries concerned, and the Commanders-in-chief of the three Western Zones of Germany.

The Organization for European Economic Co-operation thus set up consists of an Assembly, a Council, an Executive Committee and a Secretariat. The Organization's duties are to screen requirements for United States aid and also - which is more important from the European point of view -