

Chapter II

THE NEW EUROPE

Perhaps the first point to be emphasized about Europe today is that it is still passing through a complex process of transition that began quite soon after the end of the Second World War. This transition has already had rather a profound effect on Canada's relations with European countries and on Canada's position in the world power-structure.

Decolonization

Shortly after the War, rather more quickly than the administering powers had anticipated, the movement toward independence in former colonial territories gained sufficient momentum to sweep away in less than 20 years most of the overseas possessions of the European powers. More often than not the break was accompanied by violence and bloodshed (India-Pakistan, Palestine, Indochina, Indonesia, Algeria, the Congo) and by sharp international controversy, especially at the United Nations. Canada's policies on such issues, which aimed at easing the rupture of old colonial ties, tended to diverge more and more from those of its European allies and even close friends, placing some strain for a time on relations both bilaterally and in NATO.

Moving toward Integration

One of the most remarkable changes in Europe has been the post-war recovery of the Western European countries. As a result, they have regained strength and vigour and have acquired a new sense of confidence and purpose. More populous than the United States, they now have a combined GNP close to that of the United States. In terms of education, science and technology, they rank second only to the United States, though