

Great Decisions: Is Common Market A Blueprint for New Europe?

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of topics which will be discussed by Great Decisions groups this year. The material presented here was furnished by the Foreign Policy Association, New York. The subject this week is the "Common Market-Blueprint for a new Europe?"

French President Charles de Gaulle has uttered a firm "non" to Britain's application for entry into the European Common Market. That one word may well determine the political and economic climate in Western Europe for the next 25 to 50 years.

De Gaulle's veto has blocked — at least for the time being — any further chance of progress toward a goal which the U. S. and Western Europe have been trying to achieve for 15 years. That goal is a political and economic union embracing most of the countries of Western Europe and cooperating closely with the U. S. to form a North Atlantic community.

It is toward this "grand design," as it is called, that the U. S. has worked since it launched the Marshall Plan after World War II to help Western Europe rebuild.

French President Charles de Gaulle has his own version of a "grand design."

De Gaulle prefers a tightly-knit continental community of sovereign states — with France supplying the leadership. At the core of this com-

munity would be a close liaison between France and West Germany.

Conclude Treaty
The two governments, in fact, have just concluded a treaty pledging close collaboration in defense, cultural and foreign affairs. Linked to France and West Germany would be the neighboring nations of Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

These six countries are already allied in the thriving Common Market, which is speedily eliminating all tariffs and other barriers to trade among member nations.

When Britain applied for membership in the Common Market in 1961, de Gaulle did not hide his lack of enthusiasm. He reasoned that Britain would be reluctant to sever its advantageous economic ties with the other nations of the British Commonwealth. Unless those ties were loosened, stated de Gaulle and others, there could be no entry for Britain.

Furthermore, British presence in the Common Market might frustrate French aspirations for Continental leadership. In de Gaulle's mind, Britain, an Anglo-Saxon country, is not truly Continental. He reasons that Britain would continue to have close links to the U. S. And if Britain were to join the Common Market, then the U. S. would gain a powerful voice in Continental councils.

A Third Force
Such is not the character of the new Europe de Gaulle has in mind. In his vision, the

Europe of the future would see a full blooming of French grandeur.

The French-led coalition would, in de Gaulle's view, be powerful enough to take an independent position in disputes between the U. S. and the Soviet Union. As a third force, the union of Western European countries might then hold the balance of power in world affairs.

The third force concept is a major reason behind France's determination to develop its own nuclear weapons. De Gaulle believes that a nuclear force, however modest, will enable France to speak with authority and free it from overdependence on the U. S.

Despite de Gaulle's "grand design," it had been widely assumed that the slow and tortuous 15-month-old negotiations on the terms of British entry into the Common Market would end in success. In the last few months, for instance, the British have agreed to many of the economic stipulations laid down by the Common Market.

At a January press conference that stunned heads of state throughout Western Europe he spoke disdainfully of the British hopes for admission. "She is insular, she is maritime. She differs profoundly from the Continentals," he said in contrasting Britain with the Common Market members.

Growing Sluggish
Until recently a majority of responsible British leaders

would have said that Britain could not afford to remain on the outside looking in. If excluded from the Common Market, they said, Britain would find its voice in world affairs diminishing. It would also find its economy growing increasingly sluggish as its products were shut out of Common Market lands by high tariff walls.

An influential minority in Britain argued against entry into the Common Market. This group said that Britain should not endanger its ties

to the Commonwealth for the sake of new Continental associations. If the Common Market were not willing to accept Britain with its Commonwealth ties, well then, Britain would be better off staying out.

Now, Britishers are beginning to reassess the situation. Some are stating that it will not be so disastrous after all if Britain does not join the Common Market.

Prices in Britain, for instance, are relatively stable, while prices in some Common

Market countries are rising. Despite tariff walls, therefore, British goods may still be able to sell competitively within the Common Market.

Danger to U.S. Exports

The U. S., too, sees difficulties ahead because of certain Common Market economic developments. Several months ago U. S. Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman called the Common Market's policies on agricultural imports "unreasonable and arbitrary."

Increased farm production within the Common Market—particularly in France — to meet increased demand, may also damage U. S. sales. This possibility is of immediate concern to the U. S. government. "We cannot allow our historic market to be taken away," Freeman said. But he was told that the Common Market could not adjust its policies to meet the needs of outside countries.

Furthermore, in 1962, the U. S. passed a Trade Expansion Act which gave President Kennedy the right to reduce

tariffs to zero on items in which the U. S. and the Common Market accounted for 80 per cent of world trade.

But this feature of the bill assumed British membership in the Common Market. Without British membership—and the addition of its industrial production to that of other Common Market countries—there will be few items on which this figure is achieved.

Thus de Gaulle has seriously affected the U. S. plan to eliminate some important

trade barriers. With all this maneuvering over complex economic and political questions, it is sometimes hard to recall the vision that gave birth to the Common Market concept. It was a vision that saw a fully integrated Western Europe, working in harmony with the U. S. toward a more prosperous and more peaceful future. In this context the U. S. faces a number of difficult questions and must make a number of agonizing policy decisions.



COMMON MARKET NATIONS—This United Press International newsmap shows the six nations comprising the European Economic Community, commonly known as

Common Market, and potential nations which probably will be admitted on a limited basis. (UPI)

By WILLIAM ANDERSON
United Press International
Brussels—(UPI)—Surveying the economic ruins of post-war Europe, Sir Winston Churchill predicted: "If Europe were once united in the sharing of its common inheritance, there would be no limit to the happiness, to the prosperity and glory which its three or four hundred million people would enjoy."

The continent is still a long way from fulfilling this Churchillian prophesy but it has nevertheless made impressive strides toward unity since he spoke at Zurich university on Sept. 10, 1946.

The force behind this drive toward a united Europe is the European Economic Community (EEC), better known as the Common Market.

The Common Market came into being through the treaty of Rome signed on March 25, 1957, by the representatives of West Germany, France, Italy and the Benelux countries.

Its preamble states that membership nations are "determined to establish the foundations of an ever closer union among the European peoples."

Three-Stage Union

The men who wrote the treaty realized such a union, amounting to a peaceful revolution, could not be achieved overnight.

They therefore envisaged the union in three stages — customs union, economic union and finally political union.

The first two steps are already well under way under the guidance of the Common Market institutions. The question of political union is appearing much more rapidly than many European politicians are ready to admit and perhaps before the community is ready for it.

An example is President Charles de Gaulle's present opposition to British membership in the community.

Tariffs Slashed
A common agricultural policy should be effective

by the end of 1969, resulting in stable markets for farmers, more efficient farming and better livelihood for the agricultural population.

Official target date for free movement of capital, goods, services and manpower among the six nations is 1970 but actually may come as early as 1967.

Top "Eurocrat" is 61-year-old German National Prof. Walter Hallstein. As chairman of the Common Market's Executive Commission Hallstein averages 16 hours' work a day and will hop a jet for the United States as casually as most people would take a subway to work.

Since the inception of the Common Market the economies of the Common Market nations have expanded more rapidly than any other trading block in the world.

GNP Risen 20 Per Cent
Gross National Product has risen by over 20 per cent. Industrial production is 36 per cent above what it was when the market was inaugurated. Unemployment has dropped and in several countries a shortage of manpower is appearing.

It is difficult to state how much of this is due to general world economic conditions and how much to the Common Market. But there is no disputing the fact that trade between the six nations has increased by 73 per cent due primarily to the slashing of tariffs and ending of quotas. Although only halfway through the economic union program, the market is a success.

Further proof of its success is in the number of nations trying to become full members or enter into association with the six. Association allows limited membership to nations who politically or economically feel they cannot become full members.

Besides Britain, Denmark, Norway and Eire are negotiating for full membership. Sweden, Switzerland and Austria, Portugal,

Spain, and Turkey want association. Israel and Yugoslavia are negotiating comprehensive trade agreements with the EEC as a whole as distinct from individual members.

Greece Is Associated
Greece became associated on Nov. 1, 1962. Eighteen former French and Belgian colonies in Africa have just completed signature of a special association under which the European six are to provide 800 million dollars worth of technical and financial aid in the next five years.

The U. S. is watching progress of the Common Market through a full scale embassy accredited to the Hallstein commission. Inter-European farm produce is becoming cheaper because of the Common Farm policy. France can now market its grain in Germany cheaper than can the U. S. Cheaper grain enables the Europeans to raise hogs, chickens and eggs more economically.

The internal market is protected from outside dumping by variable levies which can be raised or lowered as necessary.

American poultry farmers are estimated to be losing \$10 million a month because of this practice. Germany, the traditional American poultry market, is now buying from Holland.

The European reply to U. S. protests has been that the Common Market was not created for the benefit of the U. S.

Fears persist that the Common Market will become inward looking rather than a force for expanded world trade. This is one of the reasons why British membership of the community is regarded by free traders as important. Since British membership would almost automatically mean adherence of Norway, Denmark and Eire as full members, the free traders feel that a 10-member community plus all associate members would have such a variety of trading interests it could not look inward.

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