MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

A STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF HER MAJESTY's GOVERNMENT

By the Right Honourable GEORGE BROWN M. P.
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

The United Kingdom has applied to become a member of the three European Communities — the European Economic Community, the European Coal and Steel Community, and Euratom. I have been charged by Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to make clear to the member governments of the Communities the reasons for our application and its consequences as we see them.

We in Britain are conscious that this is a decisive moment in our history. The issue will shape our future for generations to come.

We believe the same is true for Europe as a whole. And we believe that the present opportunity may not easily come again. Unless Europe is united and strengthened she will not be able to meet the challenge of the world today. And we must all of us meet it, or Europe will drift further and further into the margin of events. None of us, I believe, envisages a role of that sort as being commensurate with the skills and wealth and wisdom of our continent. The world as a whole too, would surely be the loser. European civilisation has given so much to it in the past. It has so much still to give.

The European Communities are developing on an economic base. But we in Britain, no less than the present members of the Communities, do not see the issues only in economic terms. The balance of economic advantage for us is a fine one. Some of the most decisive considerations for us have been political.

Together we now have the possibility of gradually building up between us a true unity of purpose and action. But political power, and the ability to assert a European influence on events, must grow out of

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1) The text of this statement which was given by the author at a meeting of the Western European Union at the Hague on July 4th, 1967 is placed at the disposal of the Review by the kindness of His Excellency Mr. Oliver Wright, Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador to Denmark.
economic strength. That is why we have laid particular emphasis in our approach to this question on the technological aspects.

An integrated market and continuing progress towards economic union, the removal of national barriers which at present obstruct European industry from reaching its full potential, and the consequent development of technological enterprises on a truly continental scale - these are urgent requirements. I believe there is a close meeting of minds between us on these objectives. We are none of us big enough as individual countries to provide all the resources for development and research for which the sophisticated products of our times call with mounting insistence. Too often we have watched the enterprise and inventive genius of our scientists and technicians failing to attain their rightful fulfilment. The rewards go elsewhere, to those countries which can offer the vital element of a large enough market.

Britain's entry into the Communities would do much to redress the balance. In the preliminary discussions which the Prime Minister and I had with you earlier this year we found wide recognition that this was a common problem and one which we could contribute a lot to solve. In particular, our contribution in nuclear development for peaceful uses, in computers and in aircraft, should greatly strengthen the Community.

Of course there is some scope for progress through bilateral cooperation - for example with projects where respective governments control the purchasing programmes. But the field here is limited. In the commercial field, and it is the greater part of the field, let us have no illusions: there is no alternative for Europe to the development of a larger commercial market in which Europe-wide industries and companies can freely operate without tariff or other barriers. This alone will allow effective technological development. Britain's entry would bring the Communities within sight of attaining a market of three hundred million people - a population greater than either that of the United States or the Soviet Union. This, combined with our skills and research knowledge, would unite us be an extremely powerful unit. If we do not unite, then I believe that the 1970's will find Western Europe producing the conventional equipment of the 1960's and being forced to look outside Europe for the advanced equipment of the 1970's. But if we can achieve this unity, we can be confident that Europe will maintain a commanding position in the increasingly competitive markets of the world, with all that that implies, for the welfare and standard of living of our own peoples, and for our contribution to world development.