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**SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN AMERICAN PERCEPTION
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY**

Public awareness of the European Community has increased substantially in the United States during the past five years or so, an important new survey of American attitudes on foreign policy has discovered.

When the question "Have you ever heard or read about the European Economic Community or the Common Market as it's sometimes called?" was put to respondents a full 63 per cent answered in the affirmative, compared with a total of 45 per cent when the question was asked in the spring of 1973. A total of 31 per cent also believed that ties between the United States and Western Europe had improved during the past ten years (see table 1).

These are some of the findings in a poll conducted by the Gallup Organization for the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations under the title "American Public Opinion and U. S. Foreign Policy 1979". The survey, which covered a representative sample of 1,546 members of the American public as well as 366 "national leaders", was carried out in November, December and early January. The leadership sample, representing Americans in senior positions with knowledge of and influence upon international affairs and foreign policy, included congressional and governmental representatives, businessmen, trade unionists, media representatives and educators.

At a press conference in Washington on March 12, Mr. John Rielly, president of the Chicago Council, attributed enhanced American awareness of the Community partly to the public's greater concern and interest in international economic issues. The survey reveals that these loom large in people's minds, with inflation and the decline of the dollar as the most pressing domestic and foreign policy problems confronting the country.

Another factor for the growth in significance of the Community in American eyes is probably the greater exposure it now receives in the United States media, Mr. Rielly said.

AMERICAN LEADERS BELIEVE COMMUNITY IS "HELPFUL" TO U.S.

The survey also put a series of more specialized questions about the Community to the leadership sample (see table II). Among them more than 85 per cent believed that the Community's impact on the United States had been "helpful", compared with less than five per cent who felt that its effect had been "harmful". Educators and business leaders were particularly positive in this context and labor leaders the most negative.

By contrast, labor leaders, together with special foreign policy groups, were most positive about the effect of the European Parliament on European-U.S. relations. Across the board nearly 70 per cent of the leadership group thought the impact of the European Parliament on trans-Atlantic relations was "good", compared with 16.4 per cent who thought its effect was bad.

The leadership sample also came out strongly in favor of the Community's new European Monetary System (EMS). A total of nearly 70 per cent thought EMS would have a "good" effect on the American position, compared with 19.4 per cent who thought its impact would be "bad". Business leaders and the administration were the most positive towards EMS and the trade unions, once again, the most negative.

American leaders were, however, more evenly divided in their assessment of American ties with Western Europe during the past ten years. Nearly 36 per cent of the leadership sample believed that ties between the two economic blocs were closer now than in 1969, while another 36 per cent or so felt they were wider apart.

CRUCIAL ROLE OF DOLLAR IN DECLINE OF AMERICAN PRESTIGE

One of the most surprising findings of the survey is the belief among those interviewed that the fall in the value of the dollar is the most important reason for declining U.S. influence in the world.

A full 94 per cent of the public is aware of the dollar's decline and 67 per cent of the general public and 66 per cent of the leadership sample feel "great concern" over the decline. Only 18 per cent of those interviewed believe the decline in American power and influence is due to the growing military power of the Soviet Union.

In the aftermath of Vietnam there is still a reluctance to commit United States troops overseas but this has been partly offset by an increased willingness to commit troops to such high priority areas as Western Europe and Japan, the survey finds. Some 92 per cent of American leaders would support the commitment of American troops if Soviet armies invaded Western Europe, 77 per cent in the event of an invasion of West Berlin and 81 per cent if Japan were invaded by the Soviet Union.

Among the general public, support for the commitment of American troops to Europe in the event of a Soviet Union invasion has risen to 54 per cent compared with 39 per cent when the last survey was conducted in 1974. In the case of West Berlin, support for an American military commitment has risen from 34 per cent to 54 per cent.

There is also a 16 per cent increase among leaders in favor of the United States "increasing its commitment" to NATO. This is reflected by a five per cent increase among the general public for such a move.

table I

A. Knowledge Of The EEC And Attitude Toward U.S. Ties With Western Europe

The Question: Have you ever heard or read about the European Economic Community or the Common Market as it's sometimes called?

Do you think our ties with Western Europe are closer than they were ten years ago or are not as close as they were ten years ago?

<u>Knowledge of EEC</u>	<u>Total Sample</u>		<u>change in % points</u>
	<u>1973*</u> %	<u>1978</u> %	
Yes	45	63	+18
No/Don't Know	<u>55</u>	<u>37</u>	-18
Total	100	100	

<u>B. Ties With Western Europe Compared To 10 Years Ago</u>	<u>1973*</u> %	<u>1978</u> %	<u>change in % points</u>
Closer	31	31	0
No Change	12	23	+11
Not As Close	39	30	- 9
Don't Know	<u>18</u>	<u>16</u>	- 2
Total	100	100	

*Based on a national population survey of 1030 respondents by the Gallup Organization on behalf of the European Community Information Service, Washington, D. C., in March and April of 1973.

table 11

Leadership Sample

	total	Admin- istra- tion	Con- gress	Govern- ment	Busi- ness	Labor	Media	Edu- cators	Reli- gious	Speci- al In- terest Groups	Speci- al for Policy Groups	Groups
EEC/Common Market's Effect on U. S. -----												
helpful	85.5	87.0	86.2	86.4	90.9	57.9	83.9	92.6	89.7	68.8	81.0	75.7
harmful	4.6	4.3	5.2	4.9	3.6	21.1	4.8	1.9	1.7	6.3	4.8	5.4
both	5.7		6.9	4.9	3.6	10.5	8.1		5.2	25.0	4.8	13.5
don't know	4.1	8.7	1.7	3.7	1.8	10.5	3.2	5.6	3.4		9.5	5.4
Effect European Parliament on European-U.S. Relations -----												
good	69.4	73.9	60.3	64.2	69.1	78.9	67.7	63.0	75.9	68.8	85.7	78.4
bad	16.4	21.7	24.1	23.5	16.4	10.5	14.5	13.0	15.5	18.8	9.5	13.5
not sure	14.2	4.3	15.5	12.3	14.5	10.5	17.7	24.1	8.6	12.5	4.8	8.1
Effect of West European Nations Currency Develop- ment on U.S. Position -----												
good	69.4	78.3	53.4	60.5	80.0	47.4	74.2	75.9	63.8	75.0	76.2	75.7

table II (continued)

	total	Admin- istra- tion	Con- gress	Govern- ment	Busi- ness	Labor	Media	Edu- cators	Reli- gious	Speci- al In- terest Groups	Speci- al for Policy Groups	Groups
bad	19.4	13.0	29.3	24.7	18.2	36.8	12.9	14.8	20.7	18.8	14.3	16.2
not sure	11.2	8.7	17.2	14.8	1.8	15.8	12.9	9.3	15.5	6.3	9.5	8.1
Ties with Western Europe Compared to 10 Years ago -----												
closer	35.5	56.5	48.3	50.6	23.6	31.6	40.3	22.2	32.8	31.3	42.9	37.8
no change	26.8	13.0	17.2	16.0	34.5	26.3	30.6	33.3	29.3	37.5	4.8	18.9
not as close	35.8	26.1	32.8	30.9	40.0	36.8	29.0	40.7	36.2	31.3	52.4	43.2
don't know	1.9	4.3	1.7	2.5	1.8	5.3		3.7	1.7			

(percentages rounded)