

College dedicated to study of European integration

BRUSSELS, May 5.

Known for its lingering romantic past, the town of Bruges houses a most unique and innovative institution — the College of Europe — a breeding ground of talent for the European Commission institutions.

The College of Europe is involved in research relating to European integration.

The college was founded in the wake of the second World War. Its first academic year started in October 12, 1949. Since the very beginning, courses essentially oriented towards European integration and problems of the community, have been offered.

These courses include the transition process taking place in Central and Eastern Europe, the region's history, and relations between the European Union and the Eastern

Europe. Work is also being pursued on the Union's relations with developing countries.

Many consider the integration desirable, the prevailing level of unemployment which is almost as high as that which existed during the Great Depression in the 1930's in certain countries of the Union as well as the mounting inflation rate as daunting, and the rising wave of new Nazism as unfortunate. They see the plan of enlargement of the Union to include countries of Central and Eastern Europe as a great challenge.

"European integration is one of the most innovative and creative ideas of the 20th century," research co-ordinator of the college Jean-Francoise Goulet told a team of visiting Indian journalists on a trip to the college and Belgium, sponsored by the European Commis-

sion.

The integration has enormous moral, philosophical, political and intellectual implications, Dr Goulet said. He expressed satisfaction that the college was an important institution promoting European unity.

Dr Goulet pointed out to the college's many unique characteristics which include its independence, its bilingualism (French and English), the diversity of its teaching staff and its proximity to European institutions. These underpin another strength of the college, which is the way its students can experience and involve themselves in a truly multi-cultural environment.

About "independent" research, Dr Goulet clarified that that many of his colleagues produced research papers which opposed the concept of integration.

The college has figured time and again in European newspapers due to important political declarations made by prominent political public figures on its premises.

Prime minister Margaret Thatcher of Britain, late French president Francoise Mitterand and former president of the Spanish government Felipe Gornalvarez made important policy pronouncements from this forum.

The idea of locating the college at Bruges was that of Salvador de Madriaga — Spanish poet, novelist, historian, philosopher, diplomat and statesman living in exile since the civil war that tore his country apart.

The alumni of the college are known as 'Anciens' and form an association numbering 4,500 world wide. The association's goals are mutual aid and support of the col-

lege.

It also represents a useful network of social and professional contacts for students and Anciens who wish to explore career opportunities.

The college's library has a rich documentation on European affairs. The main fields covered include modern and contemporary history, sociology, law, political science, administration, economics, human resources and, of course, every formal aspect of European integration in its strictest sense.

The college's programme is built around the four principal departments of law, economics, political and administrative sciences and human resource development. Students enrol in a department according to their previous studies.

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