

Supply—External Affairs

attend the annual NATO parliamentary conferences. Delegates from all parties in this house have attended those conferences, and have found that parliamentary delegates from other countries on many occasions expressed great concern about the necessity for transforming NATO into an organization for economic co-operation and advancement, or least expanding the participation of NATO in the economic field. I think it is perhaps 15 years—this year is the fifteenth anniversary of the formation of NATO—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): The anniversary will be on the fourth of this month.

Mr. Howard: The minister informs me, and I thank him, that the fifteenth anniversary of NATO will be on the fourth of this month, a few days hence. Well, even though this was the great thought, the great anticipation that Canada had when it entered NATO, namely that NATO could be used to promote economic activity among various members of that organization, so far we have not made any step in that direction except as far as the parliamentary conferences are concerned, and their recommendations have not been heeded. To me, this is unfortunate. I am one of those who believe that the major threat which the communist nations present to the western world is a threat which arises from economic strength, not from military power. A few years ago, about 1957, the price of aluminum on the world market dropped tremendously. There was a curtailment in the expansion program in Kitimat in my own constituency, and a decline in aluminum production in North America and in other countries of the western world generally. After it was all over it took a year and a half or two years to realize what had happened. What had happened was this: the Soviet union had, in effect, dumped a volume of aluminum on world markets, undercutting the world price as it existed at that time, and the United Kingdom, an importer of aluminum, bought Soviet aluminum. This brought the world price down and resulted in an economic recession in that industry in the western world. The Soviet union took the action it did for a special reason, not because it had a surplus of aluminum but because it wanted to drive the world price down so that it could buy up the surplus aluminum in other nations in the western world at a price lower than existed then on the world market. This illustrates the type of damage which can be done to the economy of the western world by communist nations depending on economic measures rather than on military strength.

I see the Secretary of State for External Affairs nodding his head. I hope because of

[Mr. Howard.]

his years in the house, his prestige and his experience, it is a nod of agreement with what I am saying. It makes me feel even more confident that I am on the right track than I would normally be.

It seems to me in these circumstances that what we must do is make sure that NATO is an organization which works to the mutual advantage of the nations participating in it. And I believe this advantage must come directly through economic activity and co-operation. It is true we have a free trade community, the sixes and the sevens, the organization for economic co-operation and development, and the like. But all of these have been superimposed upon the various nations of NATO and it seems to me that if article II is really to mean anything we must make far greater progress in its implementation.

Canada is in a special position to urge that this be done because, regardless of the fact that we now have nuclear warheads on our soil, we are still a non-nuclear nation. We do not produce nuclear weapons and I hope no one has given any thought to our producing them. In any event, we are not large enough to do so; we have not the finances at our disposal—perhaps that is the only thing which prevents us. In any event we are not a nuclear nation now, and because of the prestige we enjoy we could bring some pressure to bear on other countries in NATO to transform it into an organization for the economic development of all the participating nations. I should like to see this take place. I know the minister would like to see it. I know the Prime Minister would, too, because he was one of those responsible for article II being placed in the NATO charter. I am sure there is no one in the house who would disagree with the concept that NATO should be used for the economic advantage of the various nations which compose it, as well as of others, but up to the present time nothing has been done about it and it is for this reason I am reluctant to endorse the concept of NATO, not because of the potential which exists but because it rests exclusively on the so-called massive retaliatory nuclear force of the United States. To me this is detrimental, and a handicap to what we are trying to do in the councils of the world.

I do not think I should go much further now into this aspect of NATO. I wish merely to make known these views which are purely personal, and which may or may not represent the views of anyone else in the committee. But I would very much like to see the government take all possible steps open to it in the various ministerial meetings, in the