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stubbornness". It is typical of this country to regard stubbornness as a virtue, but so it is in dealing with Russia.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

12. The fact that we are seen as strongly supportive of EU enlargement has made for very good relations this year, helped by the appointment of the Ambassador in London, Riivo Sinijärvi, as Foreign Minister in April, though he was not a success in this role. Kallas too is an anglophile. Our high-profile military training help, ranging from the advice given by General Johnson's IDAB to ELT for Baltbat officers, is much appreciated, and we had a successful RN visit in December, to match that of the VCDS in February. The Lord Mayor of London paid a well-publicised visit in March, and we helped to field three trade missions, totalling 45 firms - an indication of why our trade grew by 90%. There are significant new investments too: Shell opened two garages, and an Ulster firm turned round a moribund textiles company. Our 56 KHF projects and our AUSPB and Gift Scheme help gained us a lot of credit, and we are getting our Partnership Scheme under way.

13. Three other things deserve a mention. First, we managed to mount a suitable commemorative event in May in a country where 1945 hardly symbolises victory. Meri is fond of saying that for Estonia W.W.II only ended when Russian troops left in 1994. He chose to go to London and Paris, not Moscow, for the anniversary events. Second, we and the Irish combined to support a lively Irish Cultural Week, which brought Irish singers, poets and academics here from both sides of the border. The Estonians have a certain affinity for Ireland as another marginal but literate European state awfully near a big neighbour, and with a minority problem. Third, the British Council and we laid on an ELT course for Vähi in September: not only is my access even better, but he is much more confident in international dealings.

OBJECTIVES AND RESOURCES

14. We have done a lot to meet our ambitious objectives, notably by nudging Estonia in the right direction in her relations with Russia, by helping secure the OSCE mission, by boosting our trade relationship, and by maximising the impact of our aid. But with more resources we could do so much more, and cope better with our ever-expanding consular, commercial and KHF load. I know the constraints, but I seriously question whether a 2-man mini-mission is adequate for our relations with a future EU member-state. I have set out the case more fully in my TMR bid.

PROSPECTS FOR 1996

15. Provided that the strained new coalition holds together, and that there is no really serious worsening of relations with Russia, Estonia's impressive economic transformation should advance further, with rising prosperity, more foreign investment, and some agricultural recovery. Here at least we need not worry about ex-Communists in power reversing the transition. The Estonians