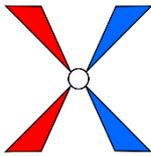


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<1563/c>	. Mr. Tony Banks Does the Secretary of State share many people's concern about the fate of some 100,000 Soviet or ex-Soviet nuclear scientists who seem to be voting with their feet, particularly those who appear to have the skills to dismantle the 27,000 or so warheads, and the possibility that those skills may be lost? What discussions has he had with Mr. Yeltsin about that serious matter, and what steps will Europe and the United States take to try to secure the services of those nuclear scientists in the Soviet Union? Mr. Hurd We discussed that point with President Yeltsin and it is very much on his mind. He takes the understandable view that it is for him to take the first steps in Russia, which he is doing to keep the scientists in Russia. The same is true of the other republics. However, he knows that several countries, including Britain, are willing to help in that process. Mr. Temple-Morris During my right hon. Friend's discussions, did he have a chance to discuss the appalling slaughter that is going on between Armenians and Azeris, not least over the Armenian conclave of Nagorny-Karabakh? What can the United Kingdom do to help, and in what context does President Yeltsin's pronouncement about some form of United Nations' supervision offer good news for the future? Mr. Hurd The Russians are certainly trying to bring the two sides together for talks and end the fighting, but, so far, they are finding it a hard row. My hon. and learned Friend the Minister of State who went to the conference on security and co-operation in Europe meeting in Prague last week was able to take an initiative and arrange for the CSCE to send a human rights team to the two republics to see whether it can help matters. The fighting is extremely worrying, and anyone who has listened to the comments of my noble Friend Lady Cox on the subject must be deeply worried by it. Mr. Cryer What is the Secretary of State doing about nuclear non-proliferation? <u>Instead of indulging in childish comments about the number of nuclear weapons, what does he say to the 140 non-nuclear nations who signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty? Does not he have some regard for them? Why does not he tell Russia and the other former Soviet Union countries that we want them to get rid of nuclear weapons? Would not it be a good idea if the United Kingdom, instead of embarking on the Trident programme, abandoned it and withdrew Polaris to demonstrate our solidarity and support for the vast majority of the world's nations which are signatories to the United Nations nuclear non-proliferation treaty?</u> Mr. Hurd I am sorry that <u>the hon. Gentleman</u> is so far behind
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	<p><u>the evolution of his party's policy</u></p> <p>. <u>It is now in favour of three Tridents, but Opposition Members do not seem to have got that point yet. The hon. Gentleman draws attention to the non-proliferation treaty. The right answer is that all those who have signed the treaty should abide by it, the safeguards in the treaty applied to signatories such as Iraq should be strengthened, and countries that have not signed it should be encouraged to do so.</u> Baltic Republics Mr. Cash To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how he intends to develop relations with the</p>

	<p>Baltic republics. Mr. Douglas Hogg We intend to develop relations actively. We are giving practical help in consolidating their independence, building up democratic systems of government and rebuilding their economies. The bulk of our assistance is being directed through the European Community technical and emergency assistance pro-grammes. We have also committed over £900,000 to projects through the know-how fund. We sponsored their UN membership applications. We pressed in the European Community for early trade and co-operation agreements: these are now being negotiated. We are supporting early IMF membership. Finally, we are resolving the Baltic gold question, in a prompt and effective manner, which will give an important boost to the Baltic economies. Mr. Cash Is my hon. and learned Friend aware of the importance that the Baltic states attach to financial autonomy? Does he agree that one of the most useful ways in which we can give them know-how is to tell them how we managed, in the light of the Maastricht agreement, to reject the principle of monetary union? Is he giving them advice, along the lines that he described, to ensure that they manage to implement the sensible planning that comes from being able to run their own affairs, as they obviously wish to do? Mr. Hogg My hon. Friend is right to draw attention to the connection between the maintenance of a democratic system and a change in economic structures. That link must underpin that country's forward policy. But the most important action that it can take is to enter into a programme with the IMF as soon as possible, on the back of which it will gain access to many western funds. Mr. Flynn Will the Minister extend the application of the know-how fund in the Baltic states to the environmental problems that they have inherited, in particular the devastation left by the oil shale industry in Estonia? Mr. Hogg As I made clear to the House when I answered the main question, the know-how fund has been heavily used in the Baltic republics, on which about £900,000 has been spent. I think that the sort of environmental problem to which the hon. Gentleman referred is so great that it is</p>
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