

Moscow signals a new diplomatic mode

by Rachel Douglas, Soviet Sector Editor

If Alexander Haig, or Caspar Weinberger, or President Reagan believes that British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington is a master of diplomacy capable of forcing strategic concessions from the Soviet Union, he is making a dreadful mistake. The United States may be the only great power so led astray by Carrington, as to propose that the right combination of geopolitical concessions with the surface threat of a certain amount of military hardware will soften Moscow's strategic posture and eliminate its obstacles to deindustrialization of the Third World and even Eastern Europe. The Soviets, by contrast, have called Carrington's bluff.

An article in the July issue of the authoritative, internationally circulated Moscow periodical *International Affairs*, under the headline "British Ambitions and Reality" with the byline of S. Volodin, made the case that Lord Carrington belongs to the "British Empire faction" and is trying to manipulate relations between the superpowers in order to revitalize the Empire. Those attempts, concluded Volodin, will fail.

According to *International Affairs*, Britain wants to tighten its links to the United States, not for the sake of friendship, but to utilize U.S. power for regaining lost British colonial positions. Volodin points out that the arsenal of Carrington and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher contain the classic tools of British diplomacy, developed for empire-building.

In contrast to much of Soviet propaganda, which often portrays Britain as a weaker power dragged along by the bellicose Americans, the article clearly portrays the British as running the show. To illustrate Carrington's duplicity, Volodin chose London's notorious "Afghanistan initiative," which was adopted by the European Community and backed by the United States: a most cogent example, because Carrington is reliably reported to have claimed that the icy reception he and his Afghan plan received in Moscow this summer was but an opening maneuver, preceding eventual Soviet acceptance of the proposal for an international conference on Afghanistan (without Afghans present in the first phase) and of Carrington's brand of global crisis management in general.

Volodin pointed out that, while Carrington told the

Russians he favored continuing East-West dialogue, it was Britain that encouraged a harsh American reaction to the Soviet dispatch of troops into Afghanistan.

In Poland as well, asserted *International Affairs*, the British wanted to "have their cake and eat it too." As Britain encouraged the destabilization of Poland through its networks there, wrote Volodin, Carrington toured East European capitals—he was in Warsaw and Budapest in late 1980—to push them toward policies divergent from those of the U.S.S.R.

Finally, *International Affairs* debunked the notion that Britain under the stewardship of Lord Carrington would have a positive role to play in Europe. Volodin explained Britain's participation in the European Community as an application of the principle, "if you can't beat them, join them," and observed that distrust of "perfidious Albion" was growing on the continent.

This analysis was not only a refutation of Carrington, but a rebuke to the anglophile tendency within the Soviet foreign policy establishment. After the defeat of French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in May of this year, some people in Moscow leapt at the chance to propose reorientation of Soviet European policy toward London. A June 9 article in *Izvestia* even held up Lord Carrington as a man who recognized the benefits of East-West détente.

The Kremlin has now undertaken diplomacy corresponding to the Volodin article. Even though Giscard is gone, the Soviets extended new trade offers to West Germany.

On a visit to the Baltic seaport of Lübeck, First Deputy Minister of the Soviet Maritime Fleet V.I. Tikhonov proposed to build a new sea-rail link from Kiel, in northern West Germany, to the Soviet Union. Crossing East Germany and Poland, the route could be used to transport material for the huge Siberian natural gas pipeline project still under negotiation by the Soviets and West Germans and for other trade.

As for trade with Britain, Soviet Deputy Foreign Trade Minister Vladimir Sushkov said pointedly Aug. 22 that it would depend on the state of political relations.

A mission to Pakistan

Soviet diplomacy reached into South Asia, too, with no regard for Carrington's Afghanistan scheme whatsoever. Deputy Foreign Minister N. P. Firiyubin arrived in Islamabad this week for three days of talks, during which he was expected to offer expansion of the Soviet-built Karachi steel mill and construction of a nuclear plant. But Firiyubin was planning "to smash a mailed fist on the table," as the London *Guardian* put it. The development investments would be contingent on cessation of Pakistan's assistance to Afghan bands fighting Kabul; the threat of Soviet military action on Pakistani territory is still active.