

Chernenko sets code of conduct for West

by Rachael Douglas

While a stream of hints about openings for a Soviet-American summit meeting before the U.S. elections flowed from State Department outlets in the American press, Soviet party chief Konstantin Chernenko took the occasion of a so-called electoral speech on March 2 to lay out terms for superpower relations. The man whose newspapers have been calling Ronald Reagan a new Hitler declared himself ready for "a drastic change" in Soviet-U.S. relations. To judge from his speech and from the behavior of those politicians who want to do business on his terms, the change in the air is a revival of Henry Kissinger's brand of East-West deal, which will result in a free hand for the Soviets to do whatever they want in Western Europe, including invade it.

Chernenko enumerated what he called "certain norms" and Kissinger might call a "code of conduct" for relations among the nuclear powers. He listed six points: 1) make the prevention of nuclear war the main policy objective; 2) renounce "the propaganda of nuclear war"; 3) pledge not to use nuclear weapons first; 4) pledge not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries; 5) prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons; 6) adhere to the principle of "equal security" in nuclear arms reduction.

Since all of these vague détente-era principles are practically meaningless, given the actual military doctrine and present foreign policy of the U.S.S.R., Chernenko's proclamation of them was mainly meant to declare an open season for negotiations according to a Kissingerian "code of conduct."

In effect, Chernenko announced that the military-dominated Soviet leadership, whose mouthpiece he serves as, is shopping for modern-day Neville Chamberlains, to appease Moscow the way the ill-fated British prime minister did the Nazis in 1938. For even as Chernenko laid out terms of negotiation, Warsaw Pact forces were continuing with a series of military exercises in Eastern Europe, which rehearsed several options for military action against West European nations.

These included a huge (60,000 troops) undisclosed maneuver in East Germany in February that practiced crossing the Elbe River, which, for part of its course, divides the two German states (see *EIR*, March 20). Also in February, there were announced maneuvers of Soviet, Czechoslovak, and Hungarian troops in northern Czechoslovakia. This month there are large maneuvers in northern Poland and the Soyuz-

84 maneuvers in the Balkans by the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania.

On the northern flank of Europe, the Soviets launched yet another round of mini-submarine probes around Sweden's Karlskrona base, which they have repeatedly been harassing during the past year.

Appeasers scramble

In response to Chernenko's verbiage, politicians in the West are rushing to don Chamberlain suits.

The Pugwash movement, historically the arena for making East-West special arrangements on military strategy, has a packed agenda for the coming months. The 44th Pugwash Symposium, on "Conventional Forces in Europe," opens March 16 in Copenhagen, Denmark. A Pugwash meeting in June in Geneva will take up "Nuclear Weapons in Europe." These sessions are leading up to the 34th Pugwash Conference in Bjoerkliden, Sweden, July 9-15.

In the United States, the East coast press, especially, went abuzz with speculation about an early summit. The Soviet news agency TASS chimed in March 11, with an unusually lengthy release on a meeting between U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Arthur Hartman and Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko for "an exchange of opinions on questions of Soviet-American relations and topical international problems." Hartman had just returned to Moscow after consultations in Washington.

State Department regular William Beecher of the *Boston Globe* reported March 12 that a "search" is on, for better relations with the Soviets. According to him, analysts at State have concluded that Chernenko wants an early summit. *The Christian Science Monitor*, also of Boston, editorialized March 13, "Reagan and Chernenko should meet."

Old Moscow hand Armand Hammer of Occidental Petroleum, in Moscow the second week in March to lend some of the works of art he owns, proposed in a March 11 *New York Times* column that a high-level commission of prominent Americans, preferably comprised of "former secretaries of state" go to Moscow to prepare for a summit this spring.

Several prominent West German politicians have already been in Moscow, getting terms dictated to them. Social Democratic Party parliamentary leader Hans-Jochen Vogel—favorably inclined toward Soviet arms negotiation offers—emerged from a March 12 tête-à-tête with Chernenko looking green about the gills. After being warmed up by sessions with party Central Committee officials and Deputy Chief of Staff Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, Vogel was granted an unplanned private meeting with Chernenko, who gave him the special Soviet reward-and-punishment routine reserved for German guests—a review of events from Soviet sufferings in World War II, to the wonderful times of the Brezhnev-Brandt détente (1970s), to the "special responsibility" that Germans like Vogel have for "safeguarding peace," on Soviet terms. The Soviets insisted that the United States is completely responsible for the current war danger.