

Northern Flank by Göran Haglund

The condominium's little errand boy

Swedish Foreign Minister Sten Andersson has drawn fire for proving himself so useful to Moscow.

In the present period of revolutionary change sweeping Central and Eastern Europe, where peoples long subjugated to Soviet totalitarian rule are fighting to liberate themselves from their hated oppressors, Swedish Foreign Minister Sten Andersson, an illustrious representative of Sweden's much-touted "model of democracy," has chosen the side of the tyrants.

During his Nov. 8-12 trip to Moscow and the three Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, Andersson categorically denied that those republics were Soviet-occupied territory.

Andersson shamelessly referred to Sweden's rapid de facto recognition of Soviet sovereignty over the Baltic states in 1940 after they were occupied by the Red Army, and intoned that Sweden's policy remains that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are "republics" within the Soviet Union which now have good chances of gaining local autonomy within the Soviet federation. But any demands beyond local autonomy, he said, are "extremist minority" demands which threaten the success of Gorbachov, and are therefore, *ipso facto*, impermissible!

Contrary to Andersson, however, the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania resolutely maintain that their nations are occupied by the Soviets, and that the freedom they're fighting for is freedom from Soviet occupation, and not merely local autonomy. Freedom for a Baltic state means no less than what it means for any other state; the very idea of "freedom" as something some nations can enjoy *within* the Soviet Union is an absurdi-

ty. Indeed, Andersson's functional incapability of understanding this simple fact, is sobering testimony to how cheaply the Swedish government would sell the sovereignty of its own people.

Andersson's statements provoked an uproar, both among the Baltic leaders who are now challenging Moscow's authority, and among the Baltic communities exiled in nearby Sweden. It even caused the leaders of the Swedish opposition parties, usually permeated with consensus politics, to strongly rebuke Andersson. Andersson only added fuel to the fire with his threadbare "defense," that if he had accepted the notion of the Baltic states being under Soviet occupation, this would have amounted to his accusing those Baltic leaders of being "Quislings"—i.e., like Vidkun Quisling, the Norwegian Nazi and traitor who collaborated with the Nazi-German occupation power in Norway 1940-45.

Quite apart from any alleged concern not to offend the Baltic leaders as Quislings, the actual reason why Andersson insisted that the Baltic states are not occupied by the Soviets, was his concern to please his Moscow hosts. In keeping with Andersson's cynical trampling on the aspirations of the Baltic peoples, he also expressed his concern that the ousting of the old regime in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) would create a problem of German chauvinism in Europe—a fear which is quite popular in British circles nowadays.

The Kremlin did not hesitate to applaud Andersson's statements. At

the Nov. 14 Foreign Ministry press conference, a Soviet spokesman said that Moscow "appreciates Sweden's recognition of the Baltic states' legal entry into the Soviet Union."

The question of whether or not the Baltic States, in Andersson's view, can be considered under Soviet occupation, was asked by Swedish journalists in the context of discussing Swedish policy and mediation efforts vis-à-vis the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip—one of the leading items on Andersson's agenda in Moscow.

Based on Swedish support for the cause of Palestinian statehood, the Swedish government has increasingly played a key role in mediating superpower policy in the Mideast. Andersson's personal role was strongly enhanced by his "love-at-first-sight" encounter with George Shultz, who as U.S. Secretary of State recognized the usefulness of dispatching someone like Andersson as an errand boy in the Mideast. Andersson shares with both Washington and Moscow an uncontrollable desire to promote the role of Syria, at the expense of both Lebanon and the real interests of the Palestinian people.

This was demonstrated at the ongoing trial in Stockholm of four terrorists from the Mideast: The tracks pointing to the Syrian authorship of the terrorist bombings carried out by the four were covered up, so as not to disrupt Andersson's sensitive mediation efforts in the Mideast.

It seems that the traditional profile of a neutral Sweden loudly offering its criticism of the "big bad" superpowers—if predominantly against the Western superpower—is now being replaced by a Sweden running errands for the superpower condominium trying to control the nations which are struggling to free themselves from supernatural oppression.