

Northern Flank by Tore Fredin

Sweden toes the Anglo-American line

A military critic charges a "Munich betrayal," as the government pursues a suicidal policy toward Russia.

Sweden's Social Democrats lost the national elections in autumn 1991, and a non-socialist government coalition was formed. But one would be hard pressed to detect any difference in policy between conservative Foreign Minister Margaretha af Ugglas and her Social Democratic predecessors, like Pierre Schori and Sten Andersson. The government in Stockholm is continuing to act as a henchman for the Anglo-American financial elites, particularly in respect to Russian policy.

Prime Minister Carl Bildt attended the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland at the end of January, and was given the role of countering the speech of Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. Chernomyrdin declared, simply, "No shock therapy." Bildt retorted that the reason for the deep problems of the Russian economy was that it had been dominated by "too much therapy" and had experienced "too little shock."

Bildt's role as a mouthpiece for the International Monetary Fund's warfare against Russia has serious implications for the national security of Sweden, as some influentials have recently charged. A Russia plunged into poverty and chaos is a dangerous neighbor indeed.

Bildt ought to have seen this with his own eyes when he was in Murmansk last fall, acting on behalf of the election campaign of Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev. Did he and Kozyrev reach a common understanding of the Russian imperial concept of "the near abroad"? This concept, which refers to countries that were once members

of the U.S.S.R., sends a chill down the spines of Sweden's Baltic neighbors. "Reformer" Kozyrev has demanded that the Russian military be allowed to station troops on the territories of the independent countries, in order to "protect the ethnic Russians" there. Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev charged that this policy is equivalent to Hitler's policy toward the Sudeten Germans in 1938.

Bildt is giving his support to the free market reformers, led by former Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar. Gaidar's "shock therapy" created the breeding ground for the rise of Third Rome ideologue Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. Now, Bildt is trying to curb the influence of Zhirinovskiy by supporting a Great Russian expansionist policy as the "democrats" Yeltsin and Kozyrev conceive it, toward the countries of the Transcaucasus, the Baltic, Central Asia, and Ukraine, and support for the Serbs in the Balkans.

The government's policy, however, has come under fire, particularly in the context of NATO's new "Partnership for Peace" offer to the countries of eastern and central Europe. The NATO policy reminds many people of the Munich betrayal of 1938; its main aim is to create a new Iron Curtain through Europe, in order not to provoke the Russians.

Military historian Col. Bo Hugemark, who actually is close to Bildt and the Conservative Party leadership, wrote in the leading daily *Svenska Dagbladet* on Jan. 31, that the West might already have repeated the policy of Munich.

The countries in eastern Europe,

according to Hugemark, "are politely stating their appreciation" for the "Partnership for Peace" arrangement, but in reality they are "deeply disappointed. The image of Munich in 1938 is easily called forth by a Czech. The image of the far too late guarantee by England and France is seen by a Pole. The image of a new Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact is seen by a person from the Baltic countries."

The colonel continued: "On top of this treason, one must add the inability to push through the mandate that the U.N. troops have in Bosnia. Reason: pure sabotage on different levels. Evil will, not only incompetence and bureaucracy." Hugemark underlined the historical parallel: "Even Sir Samuel Hoare and M. Pierre Laval, the men with the plan to finish the war in Ethiopia by giving Mussolini a large chunk of land belonging to the victim, have had their worthy followers in Mr. Vance and Mr. Owen."

"The British," Hugemark charged, "are carrying a heavy responsibility for the deconstruction of the authority of the U.N., as was the case with the League of Nations. . . . Against this background, the unwillingness of NATO to accept more members is worrying, a signal that revanchism has a green light. The West might de facto have repeated Munich. We have in any case revived the world of Yalta; the Russian sphere of interest has been established."

The same policy is now being promoted for the Baltic countries by Foreign Minister Margaretha af Ugglas. The Foreign Ministry is suggesting that a Baltic U.N. brigade should be created. This proposal is supported fully by the Social Democratic Party. Colonel Hugemark, however, points out that the Baltic countries are already in the same situation as Bosnia. They are not allowed to defend themselves and cannot buy weapons.