

Western ambassadors end boycott of celebrations

MOSCOW — Western ambassadors on Sunday ended a boycott of May Day ceremonies prompted by the 1979 Soviet military drive into Afghanistan and saw a Red Square parade strikingly free of anti-American rhetoric.

In other parts of the world, thousands of people attended rallies and parades on the day honoring the workers of the world.

In the Soviet capital, Mikhail S. Gorbachev led 11 other Politburo members onto the mausoleum containing the body of Vladimir I. Lenin to view the May Day festivities.

Among those in attendance was party ideologue Yegor K. Ligachev, who appeared to try to debunk rumors that he had been demoted by clasping his hands together and shaking them vigorously as he acknowledged the

crowd.

For two hours, hundreds of thousands of Muscovites toting banners extolling "perestroika" (economic reconstruction), "glasnost" (openness) and other Communist Party programs marched past the Kremlin leadership and across sun-dappled Red Square.

One sign called for good super-power relations and depicted a hand-

shake, the U.S. and Soviet flags, and the inscription "Da!" (Yes). In past years, some May Day floats denounced the United States.

On a granite platform reserved for diplomats and other VIPs, Jack Matlock made the first May Day appearance by a U.S. ambassador since the Soviets intervened in Afghanistan to aid a pro-Moscow government.

"I'm here today first of all because

it is not a military-oriented holiday, and because agreements have been signed for the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan," Matlock said. "Also, our president is due in less than a month" for his fourth summit meeting with Gorbachev.

Gorbachev's wife, Raisa, told reporters that she looks forward to playing host to the Reagans.

Three British soldiers killed in IRA attacks

NIEUWBERGEN, Netherlands — Three British soldiers were killed Sunday and three were injured when Irish Republican Army terrorists sprayed one car with machine-gun fire and blew up another in separate attacks.

The IRA claimed responsibility for both attacks in a statement delivered to media in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

"We have a simple message for (Prime Minister Margaret) Thatcher — disengage from Ireland and there will be peace. If not, there will be no haven for your military personnel and you will regularly be at airports awaiting your dead," it said.

The 1:30 a.m. car bomb tore apart a vehicle as it left the parking lot of a discotheque frequented by British troops in Nieuwbergen, a country

town on the West German-Dutch border. Two of the three Royal Air Force men inside were killed immediately. The first was admitted to the intensive care ward of a local hospital. His condition was not immediately known.

"It was like a plane going through the sound barrier," said Piet Hubbers, who heard the blast from his home five miles away.

"The car was already on fire. Twenty yards away, a boy (soldier) was lying all covered in blood," said another witness, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"The bodies were in such condition that they could not immediately be identified," police spokesman Louis Steens said.

An hour earlier, in the border community of Roermond about 30

miles away, gunmen opened fire on three British air force men who had just gotten into their car after leaving a cafe, district prosecutor Rolph Gonsalves told reporters.

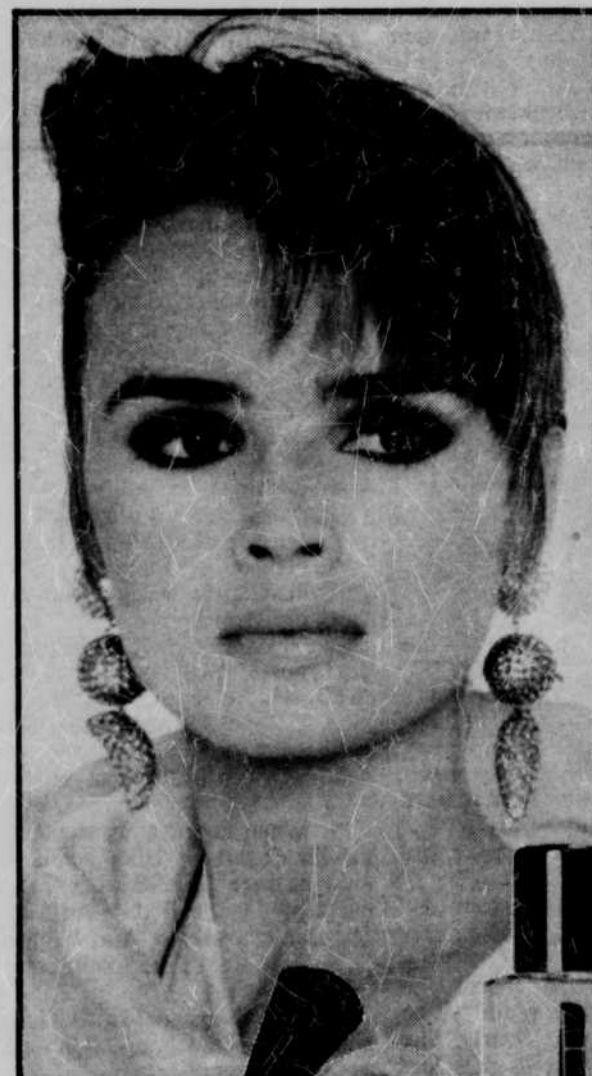
Senior Aircraftman Ian Shinner, 20, died at the scene. Another was in serious condition at a local hospital and a third was treated for minor shoulder injuries.

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