



Lord Carrington:  
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## Carrington reflects on influence

By Our Foreign Staff

Britain has far more influence and opportunity to exercise influence around the world than the bare statistics of military and economic strength would suggest, Lord Carrington, the Foreign Secretary, said last night.

"It would be as foolish to neglect these opportunities, and to abandon to others the task of shaping the world in which our future lies, as it would be to pretend to a super-power status which we do not have and to face the inevitable penalties of trying to do too much", he told an audience at the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House.

Lord Carrington, whose speech was part of a series of lectures to commemorate the establishment of the office of Foreign Secretary 200 years ago, was reflecting on Britain's role in the 1980s and how he regarded his job. His words confirmed the general impression that he finds his work exhilarating.

"But our worldwide involvement remains," he said. "Britain exports about 30 per cent of her gross domestic product; it has enormous investments abroad, of which about two-thirds are outside Europe; and it has been estimated that over 3 million Britons may live abroad. It follows that every day foreign governments are taking decisions that intimately affect the jobs and the lives of ordinary British people.

"I cannot understand those who say that because we are not a super-power, foreign policy and the Foreign Office are no longer important."

He said that one of the priorities he had set himself was close contact with the British public to explain what was being done in their name and to listen to their views.