

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

Enter: 'Mr. Disengagement'

The confirmation of Richard Burt as the new U.S. ambassador to Bonn has provoked rage among German conservatives.

How could President Reagan send such a man to Bonn? was a frequent question posed to *EIR* during discussion of the new U.S. ambassador here, Richard Burt. There were those who even pointed to the appointment as a signal that the United States planned military disengagement from Germany.

The argument is well founded, given other crucial new appointments in America's European diplomatic corps. Take Rozanne Ridgway, to replace Burt at the European Affairs desk at the State Department. As U.S. ambassador in East Berlin (January 1983 to June 1985), she not only stayed silent, but hushed others up, on the endless chain of Soviet and East German provocations and attacks on Western-power status in and around Berlin. Ridgway received an obscenely cordial farewell from East German leader Erich Honecker, who praised her "realism"—even as East German propaganda hammered away at President Reagan's "Star Wars" policy and the "aggressiveness of U.S. foreign policy."

With Francis Meehan, a man will succeed Ridgway at the embassy who is said to be "trained in détente"—long after détente is dead. Coming with him will be a new secretary, Allen Thomas, whose main job is said to be working with the East Germans on their propaganda project for a "cultural policy offensive into the United States."

Richard Burt was the first high-ranking American official ever to visit

East Germany on an official mission, in March 1984. This visit was played by both sides as "the beginning of a new phase in relations between East Germany and the U.S.A." The question remains, what is this "new phase in relations"? Does it have to do with the future status of the Western powers in Berlin? The current escalation of Soviet and East German pressure there indicates that the answer is yes.

The top post at the U.S. mission in Berlin gains new political weight in this context. On July 18, that post was taken over by John Kornblum, formerly Burt's assistant for Central European Affairs at State. Kornblum has quite a reputation here: He turned away conservative German politicians seeking meetings in Washington—but opened wide the doors for the pro-Soviet, neo-Nazi Green Party representatives who visited the American capital in 1983 and 1984.

On the other hand, Kornblum is very popular among those Social Democrats and others who lean toward the Soviet Union, the "decouplers." Kornblum has been a welcome guest at their political meetings and seminars, which always touch upon the item of "Berlin's future."

This array of diplomatic figures would seem to be suitable for carrying out a scenario like that published by the Carnegie Endowment for Peace in *Foreign Policy* magazine's spring 1983 issue: "West Berlin's bleak future could be averted by rendering the special status of Berlin obsolete; that is, by reuniting the city as soon as a

freely elected East German government took power in East Berlin. The united city could appropriately fulfill the function of a capital in a democratically governed East German state. A unified Berlin serving as the capital of East Germany would also be in the Soviets' best interest, since West Berlin would no longer exist as a gap in an otherwise uncontested glacis of their allied states."

The author of that scenario, Klaus Blömer, is said to have merely "thrown into the public what is being discussed behind closed doors in Washington anyway." And Blömer, who works in the government's press department in Bonn, considers Kornblum and Burt to be co-thinkers.

That scenario, of course, would mean withdrawal of U.S. troops from West Berlin—indeed, "in the Soviets' best interest." That in turn would probably be the first step in full withdrawal of U.S. troops from Germany.

This is what the Social Democrats talk about with the East German ruling party, the SED—talks which have been endorsed by the U.S. State Department, and which produced a joint SPD-SED call for a "chemical-weapon-free zone in Central Europe" on June 19.

One of the Social Democrats involved is Karsten Voigt, and he is very happy about Richard Burt's arrival in Bonn.

Little wonder that German conservatives fear that Burt is coming to Bonn to oversee this whole decoupling process, and the fall of Germany into Soviet slavery. It seems that the most important questions were not asked by the 88 U.S. Senators who voted for Burt and the other aforementioned diplomats, nor by President Reagan, who permitted these State Department nominations. Some senators, and one President, had better pose those questions now.