

The Kissinger-Soviet roots of Richard R. Burt

by Mark Burdman

The informed gossip in Washington, D.C., is that it is only a matter of time, before Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Richard R. Burt, is nominated as U.S. ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, to succeed current ambassador Arthur Burns. But if the particulars of Burt's dossier as an espionage agent for powers hostile to the United States be known, what would better be discussed is what sentence best befits his crimes.

Richard Burt is one of those synthetic State Department creatures, manufactured during and after Henry Kissinger's years at State, beginning in the early 1970s. Like most in Kissinger's stable, Burt compulsively leaks security-sensitive information to the Soviet Union, and is an unprincipled and pragmatic wheeler-dealer, and power-hungry egomaniac.

Now barely 40 years of age, Burt was, while in his mid-20s, "selected" for special service by Kissinger, and Kissinger's British Foreign Office mentors. While attending the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in the early 1970s, Burt was spotted by Brigadier Kenneth Hunt, a top official of the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISD) in London, and by British-born strategist Geoffrey Kemp, later a Reagan administration adviser on the Middle East for the National Security Council. Starting as a research associate at IISS, Burt rose rapidly to become in 1975, the first American-born assistant director at IISS.

One key to Burt's meteoric rise in the policy-making "establishment" may lie with his family.

Wayne Harper Burt, Richard's father, has been a chief executive and/or president of several companies in the Newmont Mining nexus. The decades-long chairman and chief executive officer of Newmont, is Plato Malozemoff, a Russian emigré entrepreneur whose family had made its riches in mining operations for the British in Siberia. Newmont's importance in British-Soviet mining cartel arrangements became highlighted in the spring of 1982, when the American subsidiary of Consolidated Goldfields, a conglomerate notorious for mediating gold deals between South Africa and the U.S.S.R., bought 22% of Newmont's shares.

Coincidence or not, this stroke of luck for Burt's father's firm occurred almost simultaneously with the May 1982 decision by the Reagan administration to nominate Burt as Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs.

In 1977, Burt was reassigned from London IISS, to Cyrus Sulzberger's *New York Times*, as a special Washington, D.C. strategic-affairs correspondent. During the 1977-81 period of the Carter administration, Burt established a "special relationship" with Leslie Gelb, director of the Politico-Military Affairs division of the State Department. On the basis of the Gelb connection, and other leak-points, Burt was privy to highly classified national security information.

In 1979, Burt almost single-handedly ruptured U.S. intelligence-reconnaissance capabilities required for verifying Soviet compliance with strategic arms limitation treaties. In April 1979, he revealed the secrets of U.S. U-2 plane reconnaissance flights, to be flown from Turkey. The uproar resulting from his article, inside Turkey, jeopardized the integrity of those facilities, which had become all the more important because of the collapse of U.S. monitoring capabilities stationed in Iran.

With NATO's southern flank in crisis, U.S. capabilities in the northern front had become all the more vital. Richard Burt once again went into action: on June 29, 1979, he published an exposé in the *New York Times* on the U.S. CHALET satellite-reconnaissance facilities stationed over Norway. Again, the ensuing sensation severely jeopardized U.S. capabilities.

According to a July 14, 1979 article in the *Washington Post*, U.S. intelligence officials were "screaming, hopping mad," over Burt's CHALET leak. The *Post* reported that the CIA requested that the FBI initiate an investigation into Burt's leak.

In August-September 1982, when the U.S. Senate was presented with Burt's name as nominee to be assistant secretary of state for European affairs, an intense battle raged within the Senate intelligence and judiciary committees, which often met in closed-door session, to discover the full extent of Richard Burt's "leakage."

In publicized Senate floor debates, first on Dec. 8, 1982, and then, again, on Feb. 15-16, 1983, Senators Jesse Helms, Malcolm Wallop (speaking on behalf of himself and Sen. Barry Goldwater), Orin Hatch, and Steven Symms, accused Burt, in the most unambiguous words available in the English language, of having violated U.S. espionage laws, and of having seriously undermined U.S. intelligence and security capabilities. They also revealed many other "indiscretions" committed by Burt, including his privileged knowledge of the circumstances of Britain's Cheltenham Communications Center spy scandal, and his repeated leakages to his good friend, Judith Miller, of the *New York Times*. The senators also claimed that the State Department's own Bureau of Security had been investigating Burt, for a "record of indiscretions."

Maybe, for Henry Kissinger and George Shultz, an espionage agent like Burt is the perfect choice to oversee the collapse of American influence in Europe, but for the United States and for the American population, the choice would be an unmitigated disaster.