

Mobilization of patriots puts Burt sellout on hold

by Mark Burdman

At the one-minute-to-midnight hour before the U.S. Senate was to confirm a known traitor, Richard R. Burt, as the new U.S. ambassador in Bonn, an emergency mobilization by patriots across the United States and Europe in the week of June 24 succeeded in delaying the Senate's confirmation process until after the July 4 recess. For the moment, a U.S. State Department deal to hand the Federal Republic of Germany over to the Soviet Union has been headed off.

Led by the Ad Hoc Coalition to Stop Richard Burt, the mobilization, described by Capitol Hill veterans as one of the most powerful in recent political history, created a moment of rare high drama in the United States Senate, during the afternoon of June 27. Nine conservative Senators, led by Symms and McClure of Idaho and Helms of North Carolina, stood up to monumental pressure from the State Department, the White House, and the office of Majority leader Sen. Robert Dole, and held firm on a motion to keep the nomination of Burt and 20-plus ambassadorial and diplomatic nominees on hold. Earlier in the day, Dole and Senate Foreign Relations Committee head Richard Lugar had taken the most extraordinary measures, in violation of usual Senate procedure, to ram the Burt nomination through.

The temporary success of patriots in delaying the Burt confirmation, has created one of the most dramatic situations in the history of the postwar alliance: Breathing-space has been created, for those who want to reinforce the Western alliance, to defeat Burt, and to have an alternative U.S. ambassador installed who actually represents the best interests of both the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany.

The stakes in this battle were outlined in a June 26 declaration drafted on behalf of the Ad Hoc Coalition to Stop Richard Burt by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder of the Schiller Institute: "Apart from the established fact, that Richard Burt represents, on the basis of his record of behavior, a

national security risk to both the United States and West Germany, the key considerations must be both the psychological impact his nomination would have on the West German population, and the fact that his appointment would send all the wrong signals to the Soviets."

Stressing that the world is in a "prewar situation," and that Burt, as ambassador, would oversee the toppling of the Kohl government in the Federal Republic, which would help the Soviets take over Europe, she said:

"If the U.S. ambassador would not be someone who is regarded as arrogant and lacking any respect for Germany's problems and needs, but rather someone who would be a strong symbol of the German-American friendship and a true representative of the values of the Western alliance in the tradition of the American Revolution, then the German conservative forces would feel more courageous and backed-up, and take the necessary steps to fight for the freedom of the West.

"The Burt nomination signals to the Soviets that the U.S. doesn't care, and that they can get away with murder . . . while the nomination of someone who would represent President Reagan's and Secretary of Defense Weinberger's policy, would signal that the U.S. regards the border between the G.D.R. and the F.R.G. as its own line of defense."

Dossiers on Burt available on both sides of the Atlantic, including information published in the *Congressional Record* and in other public sources, document that Burt is a national-security risk, continually, obsessively leaking vital state secrets, making compromising deals with the Soviets and their assets, and so on. In the words of one highly informed Anglo-American source who has been involved in German affairs for years, "Richard Burt is a security leak."

From the objective criteria, an operative like Burt would best be put under top-down national security investigation, rather than considered for a vital post like ambassador to

West Germany. But because of the White House arrangement with the Shultz-Kissinger State Department, to put Burt in this post, only a further intensified transatlantic patriotic mobilization has a chance of heading off this potential strategic disaster.

Chronicles from the Senate

The situation looked almost hopeless for opponents of Burt's nomination, as the week of June 24 began.

Just before, or during, the weekend of June 21-23, a decision was made by officials of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Majority leader's office, likely in consultation with the White House, to change the date for Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on the Burt confirmation, from the originally scheduled date after July 4 recess, to 9:30 a.m., the morning of June 25.

That morning session lasted hardly more than an hour, with only one witness, former U.S. Ambassador to Romania David Funderburk, testifying against Burt. By late morning, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Business Meeting was scheduled, to discuss the process of "reporting out" the nomination of Burt to the full Senate.

As the hearings ended, the Ad Hoc Coalition to Stop Richard Burt held a well-attended press conference outside the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing room. The Coalition presented full details of Burt's history of leaking U.S. national security secrets, particularly the articles he wrote while a *New York Times* correspondent in the late 1970s exposing sensitive information about U.S. reconnaissance-satellite capabilities over Turkey and Norway, and his more recent role in undermining U.S.-German relations.

One Coalition spokesman, Warren Hamerman, personally confronted a stunned Burt as he emerged from the hearing room, denouncing him as a traitor.

The Coalition's action received coverage on June 27, in at least three major West German dailies, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, and the *Hamburger Abendblatt*. The *Rundschau* reported Coalition charges that "Burt is guilty of high treason and as ambassador he would represent a danger to the Western alliance," while the Hamburg paper added the Coalition's charges that Burt was a political ally of West German arch-appeaser Egon Bahr. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* also carried Funderburk's assertion in testimony: "The Federal Republic of Germany is the key to the defense of our freedom in Europe and the strongest ally we have in Europe. In view of the enormous pressure of Finlandization and neutralization on Western Europe, we need in Bonn the strongest possible, uncompromising defender of Western capitalism and democracy. We need someone who is fully aware of the dangers of communism to Western Europe and someone whose political tendencies do not include compromise, concessions and retreat."

In the American capital, the fight through June 25 intensified. Senator Helms was working to push back further consideration of Burt until after recess. Burt's office, according

to the most reliable information available, was in through-the-night contact with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff, CIA officials, and administration officials, to provide answers to Helms's questions on Burt's alleged national security violations.

During the late afternoon of June 26, Indiana Sen. Richard Lugar, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, convened an unusual meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to ensure that all impediments would be removed to considering the Burt, and other nominations, immediately.

On the morning of June 27, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted, 14-0, with Helms absent, to authorize the nomination. Lugar announced that he was moving toward full-Senate confirmation *that afternoon*, in violation of normal Senate procedure to wait 24 hours after a Committee report-out, for a nomination to be okayed. Lugar said he had received commitments from Dole and Senate Majority Whip Alan Simpson, to waive that procedure.

By early afternoon, the Ad Hoc Coalition to Stop Burt had gone into motion. At peak point, according to Capitol Hill monitors, the office of Jesse Helms was receiving well over 400 calls, including from Western Europe, and other offices in the Senate were also being flooded with calls. "I've never seen anything like it, nobody's seen anything like it," a military source said. "In this case, it was unquestionably an outside force that changed the situation." By 3 p.m., Senators Symms, McClure, and Helms were moving to put "hold" motions on the nomination of Burt and others.

An assistant to Burt at State said she was "flabbergasted" to hear the news. "We had no idea this was happening. Mr. Burt just left for Europe, to meet up with Vice-President Bush. He was supposed to have left last Sunday, but he waited until he was sure his nomination was approved."

Burt himself, still unaware of the fight in Congress, ran into supporters of the Ad Hoc Coalition at the airport, on his way to Europe. He was denounced as a "KGB mole."

Within an hour, the State Department and its allies were on intensive counter-mobilization, including putting out disinformation, through the office of the Secretary of the Senate and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that there was *no* fight by anybody against the Burt confirmation. A Senate Foreign Relations Committee staffer said, "The situation is in flux. Higher-ups have intervened, Dole is trying to get Helms and Company to back down. Negotiations are going on."

By 4:30, Dole was accusing the opponents of Burt of "holding hostage" the State Department's list of desired nominees to "political differences."

The pressure mounted. But Helms, McClure, and Symms—joined by Hawkins (Fla.), McConnell (Ky.), Hecht (Nev.), Gramm (Tex.), Thurmond (S.C.), and Hatch (Utah)—stayed firm, and, at 6:36, the Senate recessed, with all consideration of the appointment of Burt and other nominees postponed until after the July 4 recess.