

## Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

### The greening of U.S.-German relations

*The United States has shown interest in a "red-green" coalition government in 1991.*

**T**he designated new U.S. ambassador to Bonn, Vernon Walters, is getting a fiery welcome from the West German Green Party. In a 14-point motion presented to the government, the Greens demand that Walters be denied official recognition because of his record as a diplomat who has destabilized numerous Third World governments, and his methods, which the Greens say include "sexual blackmail" of select politicians.

This affair does not reflect the more fundamental political reality, however. The Greens are just now engaged in beginning a "new era" in relations with the United States. The interest is a mutual one: The U.S. Department of State signaled interest in better relations with the Greens, when Social Democrat Egon Bahr visited Washington in late February. Under the fresh impact of the majority of Greens and Social Democrats in the Berlin municipal elections Jan. 29, U.S. officials showed "deep interest in a red-green coalition in Bonn after the next national elections in 1990," Bahr reported.

His U.S. discussion partners showed concern, however, over whether the Greens would prove "willing" to bury their outright hostility to NATO, so the United States could "work with them" if they were seated in the new West German government. Bahr told the Americans they would find the Greens cooperative.

Shortly after Bahr's visit, two prominent members of the Green Party arrived in Washington for "talks on environmental affairs." They announced they would visit the United States again in April. The two were

Petra Kelly and Gerd Bastian, known for their good U.S. connections since at least the summer of 1983, when the State Department sponsored a visit by the two.

During the second Reagan administration, contacts between the Greens and the U.S. government were frozen, while Green contacts with the Soviet Union were intensified. But now, the Bush administration is about to revive latent "assets" in the Green Party, in preparation for the expected "red-green" coalition.

One question remains for Bush and Secretary of State James Baker, namely, how to deal with the Greens' rabid anti-Americanism. The Greens themselves solved part of the problem a few days after Kelly and Bastian returned. First, the Green-Alternatives in the Berlin Senate declared that they are looking forward to "good cooperation" with the Allied Powers' representatives, including the Americans. U.S. Mission spokesman John Sariti returned a message stating that the United States, too, is "looking forward to good cooperation with the new coalition government in Berlin."

Next, the Greens in Frankfurt declared through their leading member, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, that once seated in the new municipal government there, they would practice a new policy toward the international bankers. "The banks should settle down in Frankfurt," Cohn-Bendit said, "because Frankfurt will become the banking metropolis of Europe." Coming from a supposed left-wing radical, an instigator of numerous riots against "U.S. imperialism," and a publisher of the anarchist pornographic under-

ground gazette, *Pflasterstrand*, this was a remarkable statement.

Then, the Green parliamentary group in Bonn leaked that two of their foreign policy experts are working on a new party platform on defense policy, NATO, and relations to the United States. What has been learned so far about this paper is sensational—and makes sense in the context of the "new era in U.S.-Green relations."

The document extends support to West German membership in NATO, and even to the first postwar chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, whose pro-Western policy "opened German society up to the political culture of the West, to pluralism, parliamentary democracy." This is a complete about-face. The Green Party platform of May 1986, for example, declared, "We must quit NATO, because there can be no peace with NATO." The Green Party campaign platform for the national elections of 1980 called for decoupling from the United States, for the "immediate dissolution of the military blocs," especially NATO as the alleged main obstacle to peace.

Quite a contrast to the new Green platform, which endorses "intensified political-cultural contact with the U.S.A." Can it be that the Greens have changed their philosophy?

The Greens have not changed. Along with these new, unusual passages, their policy platform endorses "desired reform of NATO," and speaks of a "new type of relations between Germans and Americans in an interdependent world." With this diplomatic newsspeak, the Greens are in line with James Baker and the rest of the Bush administration, who also speak of "a reformed structure of NATO."

The "greening" of U.S.-German relations apparently serves the purpose of U.S. disengagement from Germany.