

# Editorial

## Stalled talks draw West German ire

It is easy for Americans to chat about deployment of this missile or rejection of that arms negotiations option. But Sunday's West German elections demonstrate that their country is confused about being caught in the tangled web of U.S.-Soviet relations.

Luckily, they are not yet allowing that confusion to run rampant. The Green Party won only 27 of the 498 seats in the Bundestag, the lower house of the West German Parliament.

The world is fortunate that the Green Party did not win a larger number of seats, because the Green Party has nothing constructive to add to arms negotiations. Their aim is destructive; to make those negotiations more difficult, if not impossible, by breaking up the North Atlantic Treaty Organization of the United States and Western Europe.

In their "peace manifesto," the Green Party states that it will work against "the power-seeking and offensive strategies of the U.S.A. and ... use every means to leave NATO and represent her own interest against the U.S.A."

These destructive aims are the product of a feeling of futility aroused by the unwillingness of the United States and Soviet Union to reach an agreement. Both sides are unrealistically frightened of each other. The West Germans are justified in responding to that lack of agreement with anger.

But that anger should be used to pressure the United States and Soviet Union into an agreement, not to permanently tip the balance by presenting the Soviets with a Western Europe in disarray.

Other parties on the left side of the West German political spectrum are responding to the situation with views similar to those of the Green Party. They have also allowed their anger to obscure their logic and to direct them towards destructive rather than constructive aims.

Social Democratic Party member Egon Bahr hinted to American national security assistant William P. Clark at the recent Munich conference that West Germany may seek a "security partnership" with the Soviet Union.

Gone are the likes of Helmut Schmidt as this party also succumbs to the paranoia encouraged by Soviet propaganda and by Ronald Reagan's stubborn hold on pipe dreams like the "zero option." The Social Democratic Party lost support, however, and won 38.2 percent of the vote, down from the 42.9 percent it won in 1980.

That leaves Helmut Kohl and the re-elected governing coalition of his Christian Democratic Union, the Christian Social Union and the Free Democrats. Kohl is a consistent conservative, and his policies amount to little more than a promise to deploy U.S. missiles and the same kind of economic conservatism that is, depending on whom you talk to, responsible for both the recession and the recovery in the United States.

Kohl's coalition won't bring anything new, but that is a good thing when one sees what is waiting in the wings, namely the rise of the Green Party and the further swing of the Social Democrats away from logic.

Kohl's coalition did receive a plurality, but not a large one. The Green Party and the voices heard from the Social Democratic Party are a pervading presence.

The election's message should be clear to the United States, no matter what domestic economic woes the West German people had on their minds when they voted. West Germany is angry about the unproductivity of U.S.-Soviet negotiations. The West German people are angry enough to give groups like the Green Party a voice, but not yet angry enough to let go of the firm position of Kohl's government.

If the United States and Soviet Union stall any longer, the anger may grow. It is our nation's responsibility to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union soon that will ensure the safety of NATO. If the political cobweb is not unraveled, then unreason and paranoia may take free reign.

David Thompson



## There's no fun like no fun

One time, years ago, I asked a pretty girl, whom I thought I knew, "What do you look for from someone? What do you hope to gain from a relationship?"

The questions weren't original. She'd asked me the same thing a moment before. The questions were far more frank and candid than anything I could've mustered.

Flustered, I didn't answer too quickly. I suppose I'd had a dim idea from an aerial philosophic view, but I couldn't fish it out. The waters were such that I didn't want to



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dive right in and make any possible waves. I said something deep and murky and threw the questions back in her face.

She had an unfair advantage, having made bold the query in the first place. She answered instantly, shocking me a second time. She said what she wanted from a relationship was, in one word, three letters, fun.

I was flabbergast. I told her she had the wrong boy. I made it clear to her that I wasn't fun and promptly terminated the relationship.

I've encountered similar attitudes since. I once knew a guy who seemed intelligent, but was alarmingly casual about school. He had an expansive personality and an exuberant character, as is often the case.

He told me, one day, "I'm cavalier. Hang me. College just happens to come at a bad time for a young adult. When you've got both youth and the opportunities of an adult, you've got to let out the slack. Quite imaginably, you may never again in your life be so free and have as much fun as you get in your college days. When it's your last chance, you go for it. Good looks, health and vitality are downhill hereon out. College, really, should be a good time. We're all in this together."

If these were only the crackpot notions of scattered harebrains, I'd write them off and say, "Later, folks," as indeed I did. But they're hardly lone loonies howling at the moon. Nights crawl with deviants with such twisted value schemes. In plain daylight, students can be found who openly confess that their behavior and better judgment are, on occasion, warped by a childish fondness for that three-letter word "fun."

For this very column, I personally sampled the UNL student body, keeping a scientific eye open for average types. Incredibly, six of the seven passersby I polled told me, without a blush, that, yes, they liked to have fun. The other respondent called me fresh and winked.

I think it's disgusting, this shameless display of moral decrepitude. Today's campuses run rampant with slugs, slackers and slouches who think fun is some kind of agruable value. Had I known when I enrolled, I would've enlisted instead.

By now, I've learned to avoid classmates outside of class. How often have I watched the sad scenario played out?

They approach innocently, saying, "Let's get to know each other." I usually play deaf, but still, one

fine afternoon, there they come, stopping by the house and asking me to join them in a prodigal evening of wasting time, money and personal dignity.

"Oh, come on," they always say. "You'll have fun." "I don't have fun," I tell them over and over. Yet the coaxing and cajoling keeps up, as if having one more person along with them justifies their pack mentality.

"What's its use, fun?" I ask them.

"It's fun," they wantonly argue.

"That and a dime doesn't buy coffee," I prudently say. "Who needs fun when there's daylong responsibility and TV?"

"It'll be fun," they persist, becoming indecently tedious.

"Whoops. Time for schoolwork," I eventually say, opening an engrossing text.

Whenever I say, "I don't have fun," they somehow always manage to hear, "Gosh, I really don't know what fun is." But what I'm saying is, if they listened, "I don't have fun because what does it get me?"

Sure, I've had fun, one time. But the next day, I had a headache, a mysterious bruise, couldn't afford dinner and was hopelessly behind in my schoolwork. People said I'd done silly things. I vowed it'd never happen again.

Having fun is just a tacky masquerade for goofing off, and goof-offs have no business in a vigorous society. Fun unquestionably should be outlawed on campuses, as that's where tomorrow's responsible adults are supposed to be being shaped. Fun is a fake luxury allowed children because kids aren't grown up enough to have the true luxuries bought of dutiful toil. Fun is time wasted when you're busy pursuing the real happiness of material gain.

So leave me alone. I've got lots to do.

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