Germany and Berlin

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Date: 2004

From: Cold War Reference Library(Vol. 1: *Almanac Volume 1*.)
Publisher: Gale

Document Type: Topic overview
Length: 4,767 words
Content Level: (Level 4)
Lexile Measure: 1140L

Full Text:

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On May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered to the Allies in Reims, France, bringing an end to World War II (1939–45) in Europe. The "Big Four" allies were the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. Allies are alliances of countries in military opposition to another group of nations. Immediately upon Germany's surrender, an Allied plan that divided Germany into four zones became effective. Each zone was occupied by troops from one of the Big Four countries; each country appointed a military governor to oversee its zone. Within a few years, the democratic U.S., British, and French zones were collectively referred to as West Germany. The communist Soviet zone became known as East Germany.

Although Germany's capital, Berlin, was located well within the Soviet zone, the four Allies divided the capital city into four sectors, in the same way as they had divided the whole of Germany. The same four Allied powers each occupied a sector of Berlin. The U.S., British, and French sectors soon became known as West Berlin. The Soviet-occupied sector was called East Berlin. Road, rail, water, and air routes running from West Germany through and over East Germany

to Berlin made trade possible. The three Western powers identified specific trade and supply routes from West Germany into Berlin and expected the Soviets to grant free access to Berlin through these corridors.

Different points of view

At the end of the war, the cities of Germany lay in ruin. The British Royal Air Force and the U.S. military had relentlessly

released bombs on German targets. Particularly in the last year of the war, bombs rained down on Germany day and night, and Berlin was not spared. Many of Berlin's stately buildings were reduced to shells and rubble. One-third of Berlin's population, approximately1.5 million people, had fled or had been killed. The urgent task of governing a shattered Germany fell to the four Allied powers. Yet each of the four powers had differing points of view on how to deal with postwar Germany. From the start, neither negotiations nor cooperative efforts among the four proceeded smoothly.

The Soviet Union had suffered greatly at the hands of the invading Germans. The Soviets strongly opposed rebuilding Germany's economic base. They did not want to fear another German invasion in the future, as they had experienced on several occasions in the past. Throughout 1946 and 1947, the Soviets demanded billions of dollars in reparations from Germany—repayment for the heavy damage German troops had inflicted on their country. Within the Soviet zone of Germany, they disassembled entire factories that had not been damaged by the war and shipped the equipment to Russia for reassembly.

The Soviet Union operated under a communist government. Communism is a system of government in which a single party controls almost all aspects of society. In theory, a communist economy eliminates private ownership of property so that goods produced and accumulated wealth are shared relatively equally by all. At the war's end, the Soviet Union immediately began expanding its influence into the Eastern European countries it occupied by establishing communist governments. Included was Poland, which lay between the Soviet Union's western boundary and Germany. The Soviets also established communist governments in their zone of Germany (East Germany) and in the Soviet sector of Berlin (East Berlin). In these regions of Germany, the entire economic base—factories, banks, and farms—was seized and organized under the communist system. The Soviets appointed German communists to leadership positions in local government offices.

A Soviet soldier raises his country's flag in Berlin on May 2, 1945, just days before the Germans surrendered to the Allies. *Photograph by* Yevgeny Khaldei. *Reproduced by permission of the* Corbis Corporation.

The United States believed that controlling Germany and deliberately keeping the German people in an impoverished state (as a result of reparations) would only breed defiance among the strong-willed Germans and lead to more struggles in the future. In conflict with Soviet wishes, the United States wanted to end reparations and rebuild a strong democratic Germany with a capitalist economy. A democratic system of government consists of several political parties whose members are elected to various government offices by a vote of the people. In a capitalist economy, property can be privately owned. Prices, production, and distribution of goods are determined by competition in a market relatively free of government intervention. The United States was becoming increasingly concerned about the Soviets' rapidly expanding communist influence in Europe. American leaders believed a strong democratic Germany could stop the westward spread of communism.

Badly damaged during the war and still resentful of Germany's wartime aggression, Great Britain somewhat reluctantly

People of German descent who lived in eastern countries at war with Germany await transportation out of Germany, upon the end of the war in 1945. They had been forced out of their home countries to live in Berlin during the war. *Reproduced by permission of the* Corbis Corporation.

agreed that a democratic Germany with a revitalized economic base could be essential for a strong democratic and capitalist Western Europe. Britain held the key to Germany's revitalization because the Ruhr River region was part of the British-occupied zone. This region was home to large coal mining operations and the great iron and steel factories where cars and machinery were manufactured. Britain and the United States soon agreed on rebuilding Germany; both countries also favored dissolving the four zones to make one united Germany.

France did not want to rebuild Germany any more than the Soviets did. France had been invaded by the Germans three times in the twentieth century alone. The French people dreaded the prospect of a strong, reunited Germany. Nevertheless, given the choice of aligning with the communist Soviet Union or the Western democratic nations of the United States and Britain, France moved to the democratic side, reluctantly dropping its opposition to rebuilding Germany.

A map of Germany showing the 1939 and 1945 boundaries, the latter including the four power zones. *Map by* XNR Productions, Inc. *Reproduced by permission of the* Gale Group.

Focal point of the Cold War

The Cold War was usually not fought on battlefields with large armies; it was a conflict between the ideologies, or political orientations, of the communist Soviet Union and the democratic, capitalist Western nations. Because of its geographic position between Western Europe and the Soviet Union, Germany became a focal point of the Cold War.

By early 1948, the three Western powers were making plans to unite their occupied zones of Germany, both economically and politically. They also planned to unite their sections of Berlin. In February, leaders from the United States, Britain, and France, along with representatives of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, met in London to discuss a new West German state. Having well-placed spies, the Soviet Union knew of the meeting. The Soviets believed that the proposed West German state would pose a military and political threat to the Soviet zone of Germany and the Soviet Union itself. When the Allied Control Council, an organization of military

East Berliners buy Western sector newspapers. *Reproduced by permission of* Getty Images.

governors from each of the four zones, met in March, the Soviet delegation accused the Western-sector governors of conspiring against the Soviet Union and walked out of the meeting. This action brought an end to the Allied Control Council, the only organized body of all four occupying powers.

Harassment

Within weeks of the Allied Control Council meeting, the Soviets began harassing train, automobile, and water traffic coming from the West German zones into Berlin. Soviet officials began randomly searching passengers and inspecting cargo on trains destined for Berlin. Restrictions popped up on automobile routes and river traffic routes. Soviet fighter planes called Yak-3s harassed planes on scheduled flights from West German air bases to Berlin. On April 5 a Yak-3 collided with a British European Airways transport plane, killing eleven people. Tensions escalated rapidly.

Berlin blockade

On June 18, 1948, a quarrel over German currency increased tensions even further. Unable to reach agreement with the Soviets on ways to stop German inflation (a rapid increase in consumer prices), the Western powers issued new currency in the western zones of Germany. For the moment, the new currency, called the deutsche mark (D-mark), was not issued in Berlin. Replacing the worthless reichsmark, the new currency had been secretly printed in the United States by the U.S. Mint. Soviet officials immediately rejected the new currency and moved that day to close off all automobile, rail, and water traffic into Berlin from the western zones. On June 23, the Soviets introduced into the Soviet zone—and into

all of Berlin—the ostmark. Soviet authorities insisted that all of Berlin use the ostmark, because all sectors of Berlin were within the Soviet zone of Germany. However, the Western powers rejected the ostmark and introduced the deutsche mark in West Berlin. In response, at dawn on June 24, the Soviets halted all shipments of supplies and food through East Germany into West Berlin. They cut all coal-generated electricity supplied from East Germany to Berlin's western sectors, and land and water routes from West Germany into Berlin were closed. The 2.3 million Berliners living in the western sectors of the city, as well as the military personnel stationed there, were marooned within Soviet-controlled territory. A total blockade was in place.

Berlin airlift

The Soviets hoped the blockade would force the Western powers to leave Berlin. Above all else, the Soviets wanted to prevent West Berlin from becoming part of the newly proposed West German state, because they feared that the Western powers might place U.S. atomic weapons in West Berlin, right next door to Soviet-controlled territory. The Soviets also hoped that the blockade would weaken the spirit of West Berliners, so that they would agree to communist rule. These hopes were dashed by a massive airlift organized by the Western powers. Rather than abandoning the city, they sent the British Royal Air Force (RAF) and the U.S. Air Force in Europe (USAFE) to fly the necessities of life into West Berlin.

Although both organizations had experience flying air supply missions, the scale of the operation seemed overwhelming. Military authorities calculated that approximately 4,500 tons (4,082 metric tons) of food, coal, and other supplies would be needed daily to keep West Berliners alive if the blockade carried on into the winter. All but the most optimistic believed an undertaking so large was doomed. Nevertheless, Ernst Reuter (1889–1953), a German anticommunist who had been elected mayor of West Berlin in 1948, announced that West Berliners would "tighten their belts" and make do with whatever supplies they received. The airlift began on June 26, when American C-47s flew 80 (73 metric tons) tons of food into West Berlin. The tonnage was a tiny percentage of what would be needed daily, but the operation was under way. On June 28, the U.S. Air Force ordered larger and faster planes—C-54s—

West Berlin children cheer as U.S. aircraft deliver supplies during the Berlin airlift. *Reproduced by permission of the* Corbis Corporation.

from Alaska, Hawaii, and the Caribbean to aid in the airlift. The RAF flew Dakotas, similar to C-47s, for their part of the airlift. The RAF also pressed private commercial air carriers into service. Aircrews came from Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa to fly the supply missions.

The United States nicknamed the airlift Operation Vittles, and the British dubbed the effort Operation Plain Fare. At first, two airfields in Berlin were used, Tempelhof in the U.S. sector and Gatow in the British sector of the city. Volunteer German workers—men and women—labored to build a third airport, Fegel, in the French sector. (Fegel would receive its first supply missions on November 5.) By mid-July, the airlift was delivering nearly 2,000 tons (1,814 metric tons) of supplies a day, including the first shipments of coal.

Also in July, with much publicity, the United States sent three B-29 bomber squadrons (sixty aircraft) to England to stress how determined the Western allies were to resist Soviet pressure. The B-29s were capable of carrying atomic bombs and were

within easy reach of the Soviet Union. The bombers carried no atomic weapons, but the Soviet government was kept guessing.

In early September, three hundred thousand West Berliners gathered to demonstrate for continuance of the airlift. Seven thousand tons of cargo arrived on September 18. In mid-October, U.S. and British aircrews joined forces under a unified command, the Combined Airlift Task Force, headquartered in Wiesbaden in the U.S. zone of Germany. Flights landed every ninety seconds at Tempelhof and Gatow, often in bad weather

conditions. Pilots flew exacting patterns at specified speed and altitude. They were locked into patterns so tight that if an aircraft failed to land on the first attempt, it had to return to West Germany rather than make a second attempt.

By spring 1949, the Soviets had lost hope that the airlift would fail. West Berliners neither starved nor froze but instead adjusted to supplies arriving by airlift. The West Berlin economy actually began to grow. By spring, 8,000 tons (7,256 metric tons) per day was the average delivery. Stockpiles grew. April 16

was the record day for deliveries: Known as the "Easter Parade," 1,398 flights brought 12,940 short tons (11,700 metric tons) of cargo. (A short ton is 2,000 pounds; a long ton is 2,240 pounds.) The successful airlift was a huge propaganda victory for the Western powers. Propaganda is facts and ideas deliberately circulated to promote one's own cause or to damage the opposing side's cause.

At midnight on May 12, 1949, the Soviets stopped the blockade and reopened highway, train, and water routes into West Berlin. (The airlifts, however, would continue through September 30, 1949.) The city's residents began to celebrate; they—and many others around the world—hoped that the Cold War had come to an end.

Further separation of West and East Germany

The Western allies allowed West German officials to craft their own constitution, approved on September 21, 1949,

The first convoy of supplies arrives in Berlin after the Soviets ended the Berlin blockade. *Reproduced by permission of* Getty Images.

which combined the three West German zones into the Federal Republic of Germany. The new West German parliament selected Bonn as West Germany's capital. The West German people elected Konrad Adenauer (1876–1967), the chairman of the country's Christian Democratic party, as their first chancellor. Aided by the Marshall Plan, U.S. funding assistance for economic recovery and development, the West German economy was revitalized and began to thrive. In 1955, West Germany

became a completely independent nation. That year it also joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a Western military alliance for mutual protection.

In the Soviet-controlled zone of Germany, a communist-crafted constitution was approved on October 7, 1949. Under the new constitution, East Germany became the German Democratic Republic (GDR); its capital was East Berlin. Communist Walter Ulbricht (1893–1973) headed the East German government. Although it remained under strong Soviet influence, East Germany officially became independent of the Soviet Union in 1955. The Western powers consistently refused to recognize East Germany as an independent country.

Meanwhile, Berlin remained divided into the four sectors originally established after World War II. However, the three sectors occupied by the Western allies operated as one, both politically and economically. The Soviet sector remained under communist control.

Brain and labor drain

Although the East German economy began to recover, it lagged far behind West Germany's. Protests, even riots, broke out among workers and had to be quieted by the Soviet military. Through the 1950s, roughly three million East Germans left home for the freedom and better economic climate of West Germany.

The communists made travel between East and West Germany difficult. Ulbricht had closed the entire 900-mile border between East and West Germany. Barbed wire fences patrolled by armed guards made casual travel across the border impossible. West Germans had to have permission to enter East Germany. East Germans and East Berliners could rarely get permission to go into West Germany. However, East Germans could freely travel to East Berlin, and within Berlin, people could travel freely between all sectors of the city.

For example, using public transportation systems—the underground U-Bahn train or the elevated S-Bahn trains—thousands of East Berliners crossed into West Berlin daily for jobs and shopping and returned home at night. Berlin therefore became the place to escape permanently to

West Germany if a person wished to do so (making the person a refugee). First, an East German individual or family would come into East Berlin. Over a period of days, weeks, or months they could inconspicuously take a few belongings at a time into West Berlin. When ready, the fleeing East Germans simply registered at a refugee assembly camp in the western sector of the city. Most refugees resettled in West Germany, where jobs were plentiful in the rapidly growing economy. A smaller number stayed in West Berlin.

Three-quarters of the refugees were under forty-five years of age, and more than half were under twenty-five years of age. The refugees were farmers, skilled industrial craftspeople, scientists, and professionals such as engineers, doctors, lawyers, and teachers. These were precisely the people East Germany needed to build a strong economy. They had been educated in East Germany; then they left for the West. Their loss was devastating to East Germany.

Renewed Berlin crisis

On November 10, 1958, Soviet premier Nikita S. Khrushchev (1894–1971) announced that the Soviet Union intended to turn over its administrative control responsibilities in East Berlin to East Germany. This statement was a threat to the West since the United States and other Western countries did not formally recognize East Germany. They would be

forced to establish relations and further formalize a divided Germany. The situation turned even more threatening when, on November 27, Khrushchev sent a letter to the Western powers giving them a six-month ultimatum to withdraw their military forces from West Berlin. He demanded that they enter into serious negotiations for an overall German peace treaty acceptable to the Soviet Union. It angered Khrushchev that thirteen years after the end of World War II no formal German peace treaty had yet been signed. Khrushchev still feared that Germany might reunite, side with the Western powers, and provide an attack base against the Soviet Union.

Khrushchev also demanded negotiations on the problem of West Berlin. He proposed a city with no further military occupation, which meant Western troops would

have to withdraw from Berlin. Khrushchev stated that if substantial progress was not made on these issues by May 27, 1959, he would sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany and turn over to East Germany control of the transportation routes into Berlin. Khrushchev reasoned that if the East Germans controlled the routes into Berlin, the Western powers would be forced to talk directly to East Germany, not the Soviets, about transportation concerns. This, in effect, would force the West to recognize East Germany as a nation. Forcing this recognition was Khrushchev's primary reason for renewing Berlin tensions. He knew that keeping Germany divided would prevent an alliance between Germany and the Western powers—and thereby protect the Soviet Union against potential united attacks from the west.

Khrushchev made political points in the Soviet Union by taking a tough stance on the issue of Germany. He believed the West would never risk a war over Berlin, because the Soviet Union possessed atomic weapons that could destroy West Germany, England, and France in a matter of minutes; it also had missiles that could hit the United States directly. This put U.S. president Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969; served 1953–61) in a difficult position.

Western allies hold firm

The United States and its Western allies rejected Khrushchev's demands. They had drawn the line in Berlin during the blockade. They vowed to maintain their presence in West Berlin while at the same time pushing for a united Germany. President Eisenhower opted not to use force to defend West Berlin. He favored diplomatic negotiations with the Soviets but did not rule out a nuclear conflict; he considered the latter a last resort and vowed that the United States would never fire the first shot. Khrushchev backed down from his six-month deadline, and May 27, 1959, passed quietly.

Negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union continued. John F. Kennedy (1917–1963; served 1961–63) was elected U.S. president in 1960 and met with Khrushchev in June 1961. In classic Cold War language, both stated they wanted peace, but they both refused to budge on their positions regarding Germany and Berlin. Khrushchev's

style was to yell, growl, and generally create an uproarious clamor. The young American president was taken aback but never wavered in his determination to hold the line in Berlin.

Berlin Wall

Even as negotiations went on, a flood of East Germans departed daily for the West through West Berlin. From January through July 1961, approximately two hundred thousand East Germans abandoned most of their belongings and headed to the western sectors of Berlin. The East German economy could not afford the population drain. Walter Ulbricht continually demanded economic assistance from the Soviet Union as East Germany's economic woes continued. By 1961, Soviet officials were grumbling about Ulbricht and the undue strain his demands put on the Soviet economy. It was clear something had to be done to end the exodus from East Germany to the West. Ulbricht had been requesting for years that the Soviet Union do something about West Berlin. Ulbricht favored a Soviet takeover of West Berlin, which could then be made part of East Germany; alternatively, he urged that a separate peace treaty be made between the Soviet Union and East Germany, one that would give the East Germans total control of access routes to West Berlin. Ulbricht believed this second option would allow him to eventually take over West Berlin. Khrushchev believed such action was too aggressive and likely to provoke war with the West. Not willing to risk a war, Khrushchev rejected Ulbricht's ideas. Nevertheless, he knew the tide of refugees must be stopped, so he decided to put another plan, an old plan developed years before, into place: Khrushchev ordered that a wall be constructed between East and West Berlin, to seal off the western sectors of the city from the eastern sector.

In the early-morning hours of Sunday, August 13, 1961, East German crews began to erect a fence of barbed wire connected to concrete posts—a barrier that ran through the heart of Berlin. Constructed street by street, it followed the boundary between the Soviet-controlled East Berlin sector and the sectors controlled by the Western allies. Soviet tanks sat poised a few blocks back. However, neither the Soviets nor the East Germans made any attempt to invade West Berlin. By

Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev (center of car, on right side) waves to onlookers in East Berlin on July 8, 1958. East German leader Walter Ulbricht is seated beside him. *Reproduced by permission of the* Corbis Corporation.

dawn, crowds of West Berliners came in amazement to view what was happening to their city. East Berliners set off for their jobs in West Berlin, but their trains did not proceed past the boundary. The border between East and West was closed. Families whose members lived in various sectors of the city suddenly found themselves permanently split apart.

The three western-sector military governors quickly huddled but could not act until they had orders from their respective governments. Construction of the wall had caught American intelligence completely off guard. President Kennedy was informed at mid-morning on Sunday as he set out with his family to picnic and sail off Hyannis Port, Massachusetts. Many years later, according to *Time* magazine's special Web site commemorating the ten years following the fall of the Berlin Wall, when Kennedy returned to the Oval Office, he told Brigadier General Chester Clifton, his military aide, that the wall would stay until the Soviets tired of it. Kennedy later stated, "We could have sent tanks over and knocked the

Guards stand at the Berlin Wall.
Photograph by C. Rimmer. *Reproduced by permission of the* Corbis Corporation.

Wall down. What then? They build another one back a hundred yards? We knock that down, then we go to war?"

Khrushchev had guessed right. As long as West Berlin was left unharmed and its access routes were open to West Germany, the United States would not risk war. However, the wall was actually a huge defeat for communism: It was an ugly physical reminder that the communist system would not work unless people were denied any other options. Nevertheless, Khrushchev had succeeded in stopping the refugee flood to the West. Many thought Khrushchev had yet another reason for the wall. In sealing off East Berlin from West Berlin, he had also effectively sealed off Ulbricht, thwarting any effort Ulbricht might make to take matters into his own hands and provoke a war with the West. Khrushchev told Ulbricht that the population drain had been halted and demanded that Ulbricht get on with building the East German economy.

It took the entire Sunday to wire off West Berlin's 103-mile (166-kilometer) perimeter. A few days later, at least within

the city, crews began construction of a steel-reinforced concrete wall topped with barbed wire. As the construction continued, a few East Germans made desperate, last-minute attempts to escape. Some tried to jump from windows of apartments that were right on the boundary. Those windows were quickly bricked over. Others tried to drive cars through the wire fence. Soon East German guards began to shoot would-be escapees. In 1962, eighteen-year-old Peter Fechter, a bricklayer from East Berlin, tried to climb over the wall; he was shot by machine-gun-carrying East German guards and bled to death in plain sight of Western police and reporters. The wall that actually ran

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through the city was 28.5 miles (45.9 kilometers) long. Within a few years, the wall was topped with round piping that made escape over the wall impossible. Over time, the area around the concrete wall became a deadly no-man's-land of guard towers, barbed wire, land mines, and a patrol track.

West Berliners were allowed very limited access into East Berlin. They could cross only at specific crossing points. Other Westerners, including U.S. citizens, could cross into East Berlin only at the Friedrichstrasse Crossing, known as Checkpoint Charlie. It was here, in a sixteen-hour standoff

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"Checkpoint Charlie," the only crossing point for non-West Berliners along the Berlin Wall. *Reproduced by permission of the* Corbis Corporation.

beginning October 27, 1961, that Soviet tanks faced directly at U.S. tanks. The standoff was a result of a dispute over passport procedures. Fortunately, diplomatic efforts resolved the problem before the tanks fired a shot. Some historians believe this confrontation came as close as any in the Cold War to igniting a hot war, an actual armed conflict.

Global significance

In West Berlin, the Berlin Wall was called the "Wall of Shame"; to the rest of the world, the barbed-wire-and-concrete structure was simply the Wall. It stood as a testimony to the divisions brought about during the Cold War. Many thought of Checkpoint Charlie as the place where the communist East came face-to-face with the democratic West. When President Kennedy went to West Berlin in June 1963, he stopped at Checkpoint Charlie. After climbing to a viewing stand and surveying the no-man's-land below, he spotted three women in a

window in an East Berlin apartment waving handkerchiefs toward him. He stood for a moment in tribute to them. Back at West Berlin's city hall, he addressed 250,000 Berliners. Having thrown out a speech prepared for him, he spoke from the heart. If anyone in the world does not understand the issues between a free world and a communist one, Kennedy thundered repeatedly, "Let them come to Berlin." He concluded by showing support for a united, democratic Berlin by saying, "Ich bin ein Berliner [I am a Berliner]." The crowd cheered wildly. Despite the significance of Kennedy's Berlin visit, the Berlin Wall stood for twenty-eight years. As President Kennedy once noted, no one wanted the wall, but perhaps a wall was better than war. (Amid fireworks and celebration, the border between East and West Berlin opened on November 9, 1989, and the wall was torn down; see Chapter 15, End of the Cold War.)

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Words to Know People to Know Berlin Airlift Statistics Coal and the Humble Duffel Bag Twenty-Three Tons of Candy Wall of Shame

Allied Control Council: An organization of military governors from each of the four zones of Germany.

Berlin airlift: Massive shipments of food and goods, airlifted into the Western sector of Berlin, organized by the Western powers, after the Soviets halted all shipments of supplies and food from the eastern zone into West Berlin. The Americans nicknamed the airlift Operation Vittles, while the British dubbed the effort Operation Plain Fare.

Berlin blockade: A ten-and-a-half-month stoppage by the Soviets of shipments of supplies and food through East Germany into West Berlin. The Soviets also cut all coal-generated electricity supplied from East Germany to Berlin's western sectors, and land and water routes from West Germany into Berlin were closed.

Berlin Wall: A wall dividing the Soviet-controlled sector of Berlin from the three Western-controlled zones, built in an attempt to stem the tide of refugees seeking asylum in the West.

Capitalism: An economic system in which property and businesses are privately owned. Prices, production, and distribution of goods are determined by competition in a market relatively free of government intervention.

Cold War: A prolonged conflict for world dominance from 1945 to 1991 between the two superpowers, the democratic, capitalist United States and the communist Soviet Union. The weapons of conflict were commonly words of propaganda and threats.

Communism: A system of government in which the nation's leaders are selected by a single political party that controls all aspects of society. Private ownership of property is eliminated and government directs all economic production. The goods produced and accumulated wealth are, in theory, shared relatively equally by all. All religious practices are banned.

Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969): Thirty-fourth U.S. president, 1953–61.

John F. Kennedy (1917–1963): Thirty-fifth U.S. president, 1961–63.

Nikita S. Khrushchev (1894–1971): Soviet premier, 1958–64.

Walter Ulbricht (1893–1973): Head of the East German government, 1949–71.

Between June 26, 1948, and September 30, 1949, approximately 586,901 flying hours were required to keep West Berlin supplied with the necessities of life. U.S. aircraft consisted of C-47s (which could carry a payload of 3 short tons), C-54s (carrying a pay-load of

10 tons), five C-82s (capable of carrying large machinery), one C-74, and one C-97. British aircraft consisted of Dakotas (similar to C-47s), Yorks, and Hastings. Thirty-one Americans died as a result of the airlifts, thirty-nine Brits, and nine or twelve Germans (un-clear records). The following statistics are provided by the U.S. Air Force in Europe.

	Cargo (short tons)[a]					Passangers	
	Flights	Food	Coal	Other[b]	Total	In	Out
USA	189,963	296,319	1,421,119	66,135	1,78,573	25,263	37,486
UK	87,841	240,386	164,911	136,640	541,937	34,815	130,091
France	424	unknown	unknown	unknown	896	10,000 (in and out)	
Total				278,228	2,326,406		

a: Short tons equal 2,000 lbs; long tons equal 2,240 lbs.

b: Included diverse items such as toothpaste, medical supplies, newspapers, steamrollers (for construction), and equipment for generating electrical power.

Source: "Berlin Airlift Quick Facts." U.S. Forces in Europe Berlin Airlift Web Site. *http://www.usafe.af.mil/berlin/quickfax.htm (accessed on July 15, 2003).*

Coal was a critical necessity for marooned West Berliners; it was used for heat. Coal, which is very heavy, made up most of the tonnage airlifted into Berlin in 1948 and 1949. Coal is also very dirty, and coal dust crept everywhere in the airplanes, corroding the

planes and irritating the crews' noses. Finally, the humble army surplus duffel bag proved to be the solution. Stuffed into the bags, the coal was contained. Half a million bags from World War II were located and pressed back into ser-

Germans stand near coal, a critical necessity used for heat. *Reproduced by permission of the* Corbis Corporation.

Though carried out by military aircraft, the massive Berlin airlift was a humanitarian effort. Serving as a symbol of this effort were thousands of tiny parachutes that were dropped from the planes to deliver candy to delighted Berlin children. The effort came into being from one man's bright idea: Impressed by the friend-liness of the Berlin children gathered to watch the planes land at the Tempelhof airport, U.S. Air Force pilot Lieutenant Gail S. Halvorsen of Garland, Utah, began dropping candy to the children. As word spread, donations of candy, handkerchiefs, and cloth reached Halvorsen. After crafting the material into parachutes, Halvorsen would attach the candy; then, as he approached Tempelhof, he would wiggle his C-54's wings—and out came the treats.

Soon, other pilots picked up on Halvorsen's idea and began dropping the special cargo all over Berlin where they saw children playing. Halvorsen had several nicknames, including the Candy Bomber, Uncle Wiggly Wings, and the Chocolate Flier. Lieutenant Halvorsen received the Cheney Award in 1948 for his "sweet" idea and humanitarian action. He became one of the Berlin airlift's most

famous figures.

Construction of the Berlin Wall began August 13, 1961. It was originally a fence made of barbed wire, twisting through the heart of Berlin, but the fence was immediately replaced by a concrete block wall. Because a few daring individuals still managed to escape over the wall, the barrier grew more complex, and the area around the concrete structure became a sinister no-man's-land. The wall was meant to keep East Berliners in East Berlin and East Germans out of West Berlin. This objective was accomplished. Another wall was constructed around the outskirts of West Berlin restricting travel to East Germany. Known as the "country wall," it was not as elaborate as the wall that ran through the middle of the city dividing East and West Berlin. However, it was equally effective in isolating West Berlin.

The completed wall complex consisted of the following elements, which except for the memorials, are all on the east side:• **Two steel-reinforced concrete walls:** These walls were 12 to 15 feet (3.7 to4.6 meters) high, topped with large round concrete piping that could not be gripped in an effort to hoist oneself over.

- **Tank traps:** Large objects resembling in appearance giant jacks from a child's game of ball and jacks were lined up in a row on the East Berlin side of the concrete wall. They could disable any vehicle attempting to drive through them.
- **"Death strip":** The strip was a noman's-land between the tank traps and the barbed wire fence. Within the strip were ditches, land mines, and a concrete pathway for East German soldiers on patrol, both on foot and in vehicles. Vicious dogs also patrolled. A strip of sand and gravel ran by the concrete pathway. Routinely raked smooth, it exposed footprints of would-be escapees.

Two guards face each other on opposite sides of the Berlin Wall. *Reproduced by permission of* Getty Images.

- **Barbed wire:** A barbed wire barrier ran the entire length of the "death strip" (no-man's-land).
- **Watchtowers and pillboxes:** Several hundred watchtowers were placed along and high above the wall. Guards with orders to shoot to kill were always present. Pillboxes were concrete-reinforced boxlike guardhouses with slit openings from which guards could fire.
- **Automatic guns:** These unmanned guns were activated by wires an escapee could stumble into. The guns not only fired bullets but triggered shrapnel explosions within the "death strip."
- **Lights:** Floodlights covered most areas.
- **Memorials:** Standing in tribute to those who died trying to escape to the West, over two hundred memorials lined the walls on their west sides. The west sides of the walls gradually were filled by graffiti artists. In contrast, the east sides were painted white to expose anyone trying to flee East Germany.

When the Berlin Wall was built, no one imagined how long it would remain. The wall did not come down until November 1989.

Source Citation (MLA 9th Edition)