

Freedom Bell Tolls Message Of Hope and Faith

By **LOWELL BENNETT**

*Chief, Public Relations Branch,
HICOG-Berlin Element*

THE DEEP BRONZE TONES of the World Freedom Bell pealed out a message of hope and of faith from Berlin's City Hall tower at high noon on Oct. 24. Nearly half a million Berliners, massed in the vast square below, and millions of radio listeners throughout the world, heard the great bell toll and knew this was the symbolic call for a global crusade for freedom.

It was an inspiring tribute to this city's stalwart stand against the unceasing pressures of Communism. And it was an impressive climax to the growing determination of free men everywhere to destroy the evil roots of oppression and terror.

Gen. Lucius Dr. Clay, former US military governor of Germany and now national chairman of the Crusade for Freedom, returned to Berlin on that day to dedicate the bell. Flanking him at the City Hall ceremony were John J. McCloy, US high commissioner for Germany, Maj. Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, US commander of Berlin, and Prof. Ernst Reuter, mayor of Greater Berlin. With them was a galaxy of leading political and diplomatic representatives from 30 nations, gathered together for the ceremony on a free island 105 miles behind the Iron Curtain.

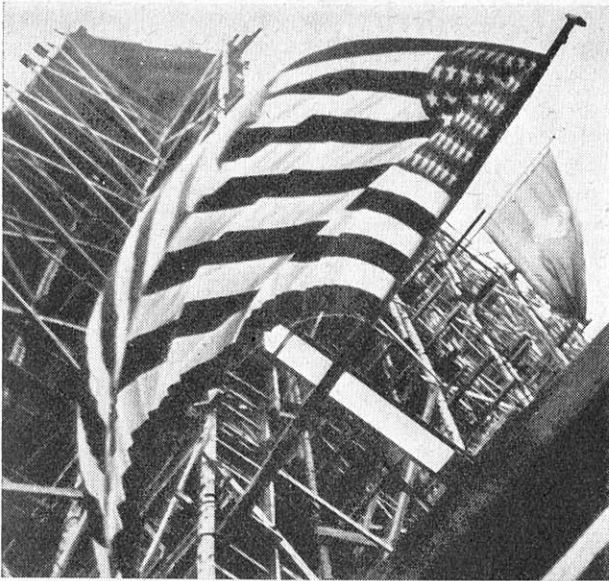
It had been shipped across the Atlantic to Bremerhaven on the naval transport "General Blatchford" — a freedom ship which had carried 13,833 refugees and displaced persons from Europe to sanctuary in the United States — and brought on a covered railroad flat-car to Berlin. With it came "freedom scrolls" which bore the signatures of millions of Americans from all walks of life, men and women who signed the declaration of freedom:

"I believe in the sacredness and dignity of the individual;



Berliners (above) register determination for freedom as crowd estimated at 500,000 (below) turns out for dedication ceremony.





US and United Nations flags wave over freedom ceremony.

"I believe that all men derive the right to freedom equally from God;

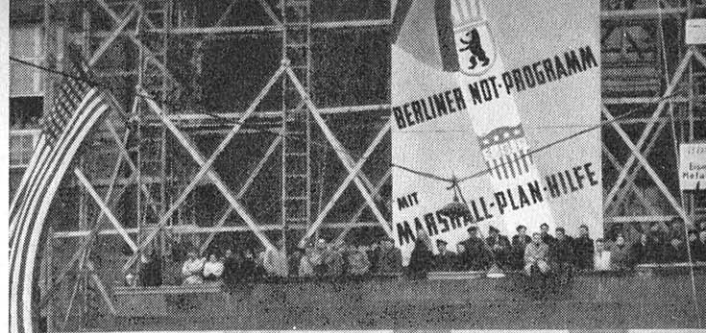
"I pledge to resist aggression and tyranny wherever they appear on earth."

THE GREAT BRONZE BELL, standing eight feet high and measuring 98 inches in diameter at the base, was designed by Walter Dorwin Teague, one of America's leading industrial designers. Around the body of the bell in bas-relief are five figures representing the major races of man. Each figure stands with arms outstretched and the joining hands hold torches symbolizing freedom. Around its rim is the inscription: "That this world, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom," a paraphrase of Lincoln's immortal words at Gettysburg in 1863.

The bell and its dedication ceremony in Berlin were sponsored by the National Committee for a Free Europe, and its Crusade for Freedom.

Dignitaries from throughout the free world attended the dedication ceremony. They included the three Allied high commissioners and leading members of their staffs; several Allied ambassadors accredited to European capitals and to the Allied High Commission; and Dr. Konrad

Mr. McCloy: "Berlin has become a city symbolic of freedom."



Participants stand as General Clay presses switch to start Freedom Bell tolling punctually at high noon on Oct. 24.

Adenauer, chancellor of the German Federal Republic, and top members of his government.

With General Clay came a 17-man group from the United States including Gov. Luther W. Youngdahl of Minnesota, Maj. Gen. Ray G. Barker, US Army (retired) and other prominent leaders of the Crusade for Freedom.

FREE BERLIN WAS ENTRUSTED with custody of the bell because, in the words of Mr. McCloy, "This city has known tyranny and was destroyed through

General Clay gives his autograph as Mayor Reuter assists.



tyranny. But this is also a city from whose ruins a new spirit has arisen, with a new courage to resist oppression and all its shackling consequences. Because Berlin resisted the Communist blockade and defeated the infamous effort to starve millions of human beings into political submission, it has become a city symbolic of freedom."

The widest broadcast hookup ever attempted by radio carried the speeches and the booming peals of the bell to all parts of the world and deep behind the Iron Curtain. Thousands of radio stations were linked together to provide millions of listeners with an ear-witness participation in the ceremony. The *Voice of America*, *RIAS* and *Radio Free Europe* beamed powerful transmitters to blanket eastern Europe.

But by far the most eloquent and most moving demonstration of faith was the massive participation of nearly 500,000 Berliners — the largest crowd to collect in one place in Berlin since the war's end — who jammed the great square of the City Hall in the borough of Schoeneberg, in the American sector, and filled the eight streets leading into it.

The swelling emotion of the great crowd was everywhere visible when Mayor Reuter solemnly pledged, "More than ever we must not slacken in our courage so that we may stand up to the great struggle that has not yet come to an end. The ebb-tide is passed, and now the flood-tide has set in... We promise we will never rest nor relax until freedom, the torch of which has been lighted here in Berlin, will shine over all nations."

And there was the dignity of conscious pride as the multitude heard General Taylor say, "Through the bitter years from 1945 to the present time the Berliners have known the scourge of the Red Army, the privations of blockade and the steady malignity of the Communist purpose. But these hard years have brought Berlin recognition as the symbol of democratic resistance and have won it the respect and admiration of the free world."

GENERAL CLAY, himself visibly moved, stepped to the microphone and spoke clearly with measured tones:

"It was here that I learned a lesson that will always mean very much to me, and that lesson was this: Free-

dom exists and comes about only as it is in the hearts of every citizen. And when the people of a place or of a country are determined to live as individuals, to participate in the choice of their officials, they cannot be kept from freedom. You who are here today have demonstrated your will to be free, and in the face of many difficulties you have maintained your freedom behind the Iron Curtain in an area where there is no other spot of freedom...

"Because you have shown the will to be free, you are given custody of this bell in the firm belief that in your hands it will henceforth and forever ring for freedom, and in doing so it will carry the message that you have learned: Where men have the will to be free, they will be free. You have done your part in maintaining freedom. There remains the part that the rest of the world must continue to play until there is, everywhere, freedom."

At the close of his dedication address, General Clay declared "In a moment I will throw the switch that will ring the Freedom Bell. As it sends forth its message of freedom and faith, let all of us — wherever we may be — rededicate ourselves, and join together in a silent prayer 'That this world, under God, shall be free.'"

It was one second before noon. The heavy autumn sky which until then had been solidly obscured by grey clouds suddenly cleared and bright sunshine flooded the vast square. General Clay pressed the switch and then, exactly at noon, the majestic, full-throated peals of the World Freedom Bell rang out across the square and, by radio, to the far corners of the earth.

BERLINERS WILL LONG REMEMBER the words of their friend, General Clay, as they hear the tolling bell each day at high noon:

"May its voice lift the hearts of freedom-loving people everywhere. From this day forward, as it rings, may it strike a note of warning to all oppressors; a sound of confidence and courage to those called upon to defend their freedom; a message of hope and sympathy to those who are enslaved."

+END

Packages containing scrolls bearing signatures of millions of Americans on display at ceremony. Right, vault under the City Hall tower in which the scrolls are to be placed. Legend over the door reads: "Here lie the scrolls of millions of American citizens who have signed the Manifesto for Freedom." (Photos by Jacoby, PRD HICOG and PRB BE-HICOG)

