

BERLIN, 1945



BERLIN, 1949



*Berlin's first post-war winter was cold, hungry. The tasks of Military Government were immense.*



Since our arrival in Berlin the impact of Western Military Government policies upon the Germans has been tremendous.

By unanimous vote we have succeeded in giving the City of Berlin a complete school reform which is the basis for the end of class distinction in the city. We have created a city constitution and held

city-wide elections under Four-Power supervision. Nazis were removed from all levels of public influence.

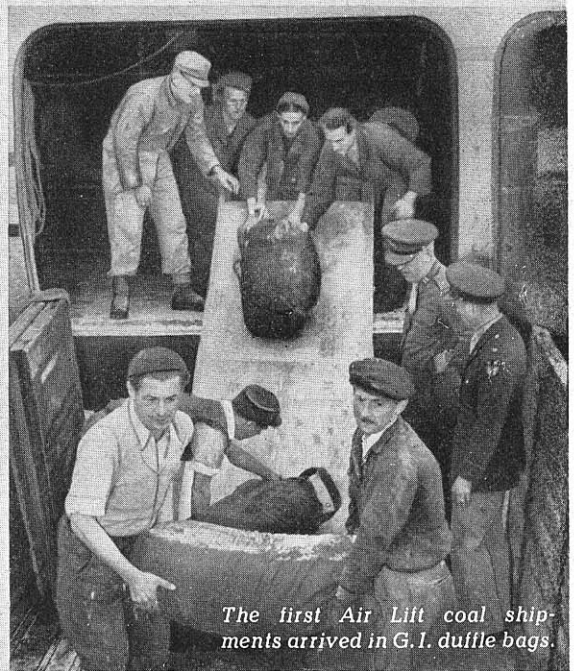
The list of accomplishments is long. Any comments which are made in this report are not comments of those who have failed completely in quadripartite matters, but of those who have come closer to succeeding than any other agency which has yet been tried.

The number of agreements at the Allied Kommandatura Berlin exceeds 1,200 and even includes agreed loans to Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish churches.

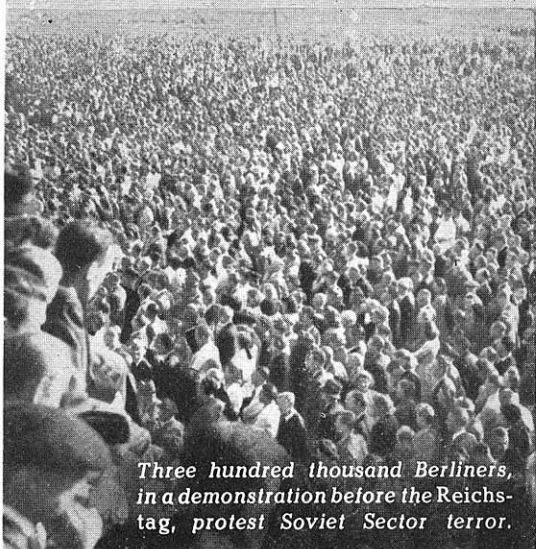
We have succeeded in reviving the social and political life of the city. We have guided Berlin Germans to a concept of democracy similar to our own. We have *not* succeeded in reaching agreements in those fundamental conflicts between Russian communism and western democracy.

In Berlin, as elsewhere in the world, the aims of the Communist Party, called the SED (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*), have been to get complete control of the economic and political life of the city. The German Communist Party in this struggle has been aided, advised, directed, and supported by the Russian occupying troops and by the Russian Military Administration. It is impractical to separate the missions of the Soviet Military Administration and the Communist Party.

Before our arrival, on the first of July, 1945, the control of the city was entirely in the hands of the Soviet Administration and the Communist Party. The government had been set up with certain "non-party" front men, but



*The first Air Lift coal shipments arrived in G.I. duffel bags.*



*Three hundred thousand Berliners, in a demonstration before the Reichstag, protest Soviet Sector terror.*

the real power was in the hands of such persons as Deputy *Oberbürgermeister* Maron, of Chwalek, Jendretzki, and Schlimme in control of trade unions, Markgraf for police, Mittag of the Magistrat as head judiciary. (His background was that of locksmith.) Education was under Wildangel. Control of labor for the government was under Schmidt.

*These leaders and other key individuals were all Moscow-trained German communists.*

From an economic point of view, the city had been stripped, particularly the western sectors. Everything movable of real value—from the equipment of the American-owned Singer Sewing Machine Company plant to the power equipment of the modern Berlin-West Power Plant had been removed.

There also was a tremendous amount of personal, as well as organized looting, by

way of the Soviet printed "Allied invasion currency".

Upon the arrival of the Western Military Governments all actions which had been taken by the Soviet Military Administration and its appointed city government were confirmed by us. In fact, by a sweeping order of the Allied Kommandatura Berlin, we approved all orders which had been issued by the Soviets and the Soviet-appointed city government.

We tried to understand and to sympathize with the type of economic and political set-up which we found here on the basis of its being reasonable in the light of the circumstances. We were determined to "get along" with our great war-time friend.

We did, however, insist upon early elections, so that the people would have a chance to choose for themselves the type of government they wanted. The elections held on October 20, 1946, resulted in an emphatic rejection of the Communist Party. It received less than 20% of the votes throughout the city. Both the economic and political control of the city began to slip from the hands of the Communist Party and the Soviet Military Administration.

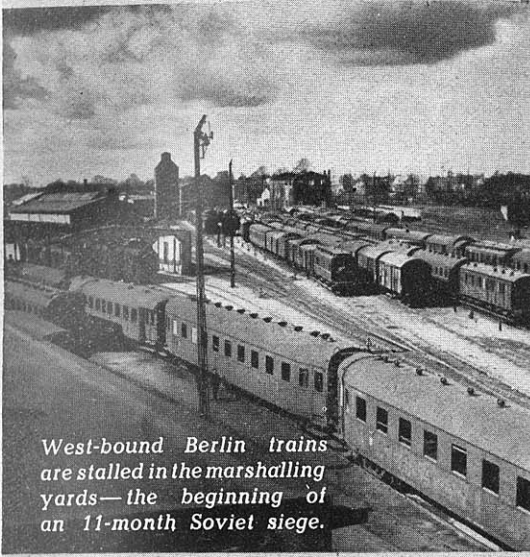
Their efforts to hold and increase those controls have been the basic cause of Allied friction in Berlin. The Western Commandants on their side have simply insisted that agreements be lived up to and that both the political and economic control of the City of Berlin be a mutual responsibility with all four occupying powers sharing in that responsibility.

The first step taken after the October, 1946 elections by the Soviets and the Communist Party was that of pressure upon the elected officials to force coalition action with the communist minority. The impeach-



*Communist mobsters, displaying Nazi-era gesture, invade City Hall to "elect" a new Magistrat.*





West-bound Berlin trains are stalled in the marshalling yards—the beginning of an 11-month Soviet siege.

ment of *Oberbürgermeister Ostrowski* resulted.

A greater leverage grew out of the fact that all legislation and all acts of the city government had to be approved unanimously in advance at the Allied Kommandatura Berlin. Therefore, the Soviet representative, by means of the veto, was able to give the German government communist minority reflected veto power over the actions of the majority.

When the elected city government refused to acquiesce to various indirect threats and pressures, direct action was taken against the elected government by the Soviets. Organized communist mobs hauled to the scene in Russian tanks and trucks used violence against the elected democratic city officials, while Soviet controlled police stood by refusing protection.

Even so, the city government refused to capitulate. It moved to the western sectors for protection. Outstanding proof of the people's support was given when more than 300,000 Berliners walked to the *Reichstag* area in the British Sector and in a mass demonstration publicly proclaimed their belief in the government which they had elected.

When the German government and the Berlin people refused to capitulate, it was natural that pressure should be directed against the Western Powers to drive them from the city. It was recognized by all that, if the Western Powers were not in the City of Berlin, the Germans would have no choice except to bow to a one-party communist system and to Soviet economic exploitation.

The squeeze to drive the Western Powers from Berlin began intensively the first week in March, 1948. First the Allied Kommandatura Berlin had its effectiveness ended by the Soviet Commandant, his deputy, and committeemen.

This was coupled with a violent newspaper and press campaign, blaming the Western Powers for what the Russians were themselves doing. The Soviet press campaign was also designed to make the Western Allies unpopular with the German population.

The final act was the blockade of Berlin, carried out by the Russian Army and supported by the Communist Party.

First, the Western Powers were refused the use of the only main road into Berlin from the West—the *Autobahn*. The reason given was that the bridge (which incidentally had been built by American engineers) was in need of repairs. Vehicles were subjected to driving miles down a poor road to cross over the Elbe by a hand ferry. The



Giant Air Lift cargo-carriers supply West Berlin and nullify the Soviet blockade.

reason for cutting off the canal traffic from the West was given as "need of lock repairs", and finally, when on June 22, 1948, the railroad was completely shut off, Marshal Sokolovski's excuse was "technical difficulties".

The plan was very obvious. Nearly two and a quarter million persons, along with the Allied families and troops in Berlin, were to be starved out of the city. It was believed that the people would rise up in their suffering and ask us to leave so that they might live.

That a Berlin "horror story" did not take place was not due to any Soviet change of heart. It didn't happen, because we Westerners prevented its happening. As early as March, the Western Commandants began to stock food, coal, and medical supplies in the western sectors in anticipation of just such an emergency.

We refused to believe that our "Ally" would do this, but as military men we were compelled to think of the possibility in view of the growing Soviet hostility and in view of the unguarded remarks which were reaching us by way of German political, social, and religious leaders.



*The job of reconstruction, both physical and moral, has been a tremendous one.*

When the Russian-imposed blockade struck, the Western Powers had thirty-six days' supply of food, thirty days' supply of coal and other items of vital importance. These stocks gave us time to think and to plan.

In Berlin, the three Western Commandants met with their experts and calculated the minimum tonnage which would be necessary to keep the western sectors alive. It was no small task to condense the requirements of over two million persons from 20,000 tons of imports a day to a maximum average of 8,000 tons a day. Meantime, at higher levels calculations and plans were being made.

On June 26, 1948, the American Headquarters for Germany informed me that the small Air Lift which had been bringing in supplies for the military garrison would be increased immediately to bring in essential stocks for the German population.

There were those in the Berlin tripartite discussions who felt that the population of Berlin could not be maintained by air. They felt that the population would desert their newly-acquired democratic ideas and would, for the sake of avoiding personal privations, swing their loyalties to the East.

Even some of the leading German officials were uncertain of the population. We in OMGBS never questioned that the vast majority of Berliners would stand by their newly-acquired independence.

Within two weeks the calculations were agreed to by the three Western



Commandants in Berlin. The first big cut in tonnage came in food—all food became dehydrated, starting with potatoes.

When the planning was made in the summer of 1948, in the back of everyone's mind was the fear of a cold winter. We had had such a cold winter in 1946/47 when, even with road and railroad facilities available to bring in coal, hundreds of persons froze to death in this city, which is as far north as Labrador.

It is a great tribute to the courage of the Western Powers and to the technical knowledge of the experts that successful plans were prepared to cover the period of July, 1948, to the first of March, 1949.

*The West Berliner has visibly profited from the experience of seeing democracy at work.*



All of these calculations were worked out on a tripartite basis at Berlin level and coordinated into schemes at higher levels, including the meshing in with the British and American Air Forces.

One year of Air Lift has been completed, facilities for handling goods by air have reached up to 12,000 tons per day. The Russian blockade completely failed to drive the Western Powers from Berlin and failed to drive the German people into the arms of communism. The counter-blockade measures of the Allies were strongly felt by the Soviet-controlled areas.

Furthermore, the propaganda value in Europe of the Air Lift to counter the continuous din in the communist press of the economic and moral collapse of the western democracies was tremendous.

Today, the US and its Allies, Great Britain and France, enjoy a prestige in Berlin greater than at any time since the war. Berlin looks forward to an opportunity to continue its progress along the path of democracy.

In the Office of Military Government, Berlin Sector we have followed a business-like policy of realism in dealing with our Allies, with the Russians and the German people. This report tells how each of the branches of U.S. Military Government in Berlin played its part. Since July 1, 1945, the individuals have changed. (The turnover of personnel on this back-breaking job has been approximately 300%). We have never faltered in our determination to make no compromise of American principles.

*Frank H. Rowley*