

So You See -
That's Berlin



The daily
life in
West Berlin
continues

A great deal is being said where you live about our city. Daily you read in the newspaper or hear on the radio:

"The Communists have started their political battle for Germany. In Berlin they want to extinguish the freedom of this island in the middle of the bolshevistic empire. They want to separate the Germans from each other forevermore."

The Communists began this attack on August 13, 1961. With brutality and cynicism.

The 2,2 million citizens in West-Berlin, in the free part of the city, have not let themselves be too upset by these new attacks on their independence. They put their trust—today as in the past—in the protection of the friendly powers that guarantee the security and inviolability of Berlin. This trust can not be taken away from them in the future.

The every-day life of Berlin goes on. Just as is the case where you live. Just as in Frankfurt or in Hamburg. Just as in London, Paris or New York. The people pursue their occupations. They are industrious and ambitious. They give form to their lives. And they give form to their city.

When the lights go on on the Kurfürstendamm at night, when the cafés fill themselves and the curtains rise in the theaters, when young people stroll along the boulevard during the evening and from the Gedächtniskirche (bombed remains of a church reminding of the Second World War) the tower clock chimes, then you could almost believe that time had stood still. That there had never been an August 13, 1961. As if the iron curtain had never been lowered in the city.

But do not let yourself be deceived. The Berliner whom you meet is bitter. He is sad.

Then greater than his concern for tomorrow is his burning sympathy for the sister, the brother on the other side of the wall whom he is not supposed to see any more. For the mother whose hair he can no longer stroke. For the father whose hand he may not squeeze. For the sweetheart whose embrace he must do without.

It is true: Berlin was already divided. A political boundary ran through the city. But across this boundary, which had not divided us, had grown loyalty to the family and love for one's fellow man. Like roots in the earth. They held Berlin, they held Germany together. For this city was the living bridge between the people in both parts of Germany.

Whether it was the East Berliner, who smuggled in 1948 a few potatoes or a pocket of coal out of his own pitiful ration to his relative into a West-Berlin then blockaded by the Russians. Whether it was the West Berliner, who granted refuge to his persecuted neighbor out of the Soviet Sector, out of the Soviet Zone. Whether it was the West German who met his friend out of Middle Germany for a confidential talk. Whether it was the Middle German who—because the trip in his own country across the Zone boundary was forbidden him—could only see the relative in Berlin.

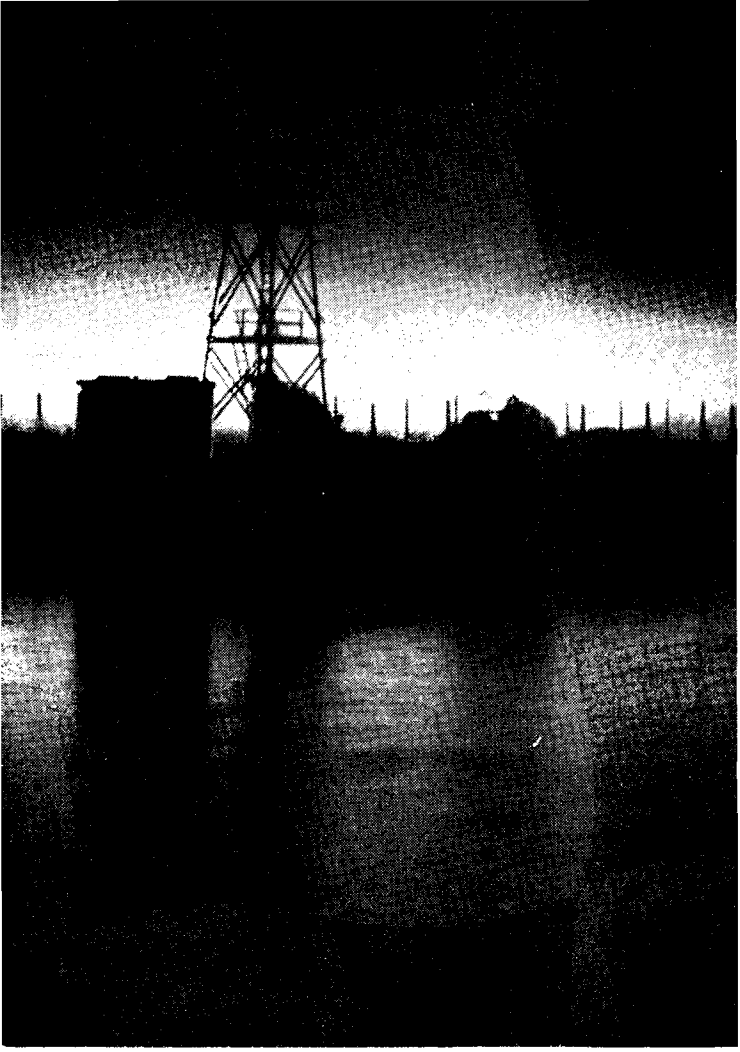
The citizens of Berlin considered themselves as neither East nor West Berliner. They felt like citizens of the German Capital. They lived in an open city.

Until August 13, 1961 . . .

Now the Communists have destroyed these roots of loyalty to family and love for fellow man with hard

The
Exhibition
"Grüne
Woche"
was o
meeting-
place





A glance at
the concen-
tration
camp
East Berlin

blows of the axe. The 26.7 miles long sector boundary, which had been daily crossed by more than 500,000 people in both directions, has been made into a death-strip.

Barbed wire, concrete barriers and trenches have suddenly torn people apart from one another. When they furtively wave across the wall to one another they are immediately driven away with rubber clubs and tear-gas bombs.

And there, where the desperate dares his jump into freedom, buzz around him bullets from Soviet weapons which must be carried by Germans.

That is the way it has looked at the wall since August 13, 1961 . . . The Germany behind this wall has become the largest concentration camp of all time.

An example out of the abundance of human tragedies which the Berlin citizens have had to endure since that day. A tragedy . . . ? That is difficult to say. Perhaps it was also a grotesquerie. Possibly it is both . . .

On the other side of the wall, in an East Berlin borough, died Herr Müller. At the age of 71.

He was a widower and he was alone. His death in the crumbling tenement house would not have been detected until much later if the dog had not whined so.

A neighbor heard it. She arranged for the funeral. And she wrote to the son of the old man in West Berlin. Asked what should be done with the poor creature.

When after days, after the burial, the answer came—the son wanted the four-legged comrade of his father—the woman went to the “People’s Police.” She



No
comment

went from one office to another. Obtained the one certificate. Picked up the other certificate. And finally she even had to go to customs . . .

Then she wrote again to West Berlin: the son should be at such-and-such a time on such-and-such a day at the boundary crossing-point. She arrived punctually. The son also. From a distance she saw the man in the West.

The woman walked up to the heavily-armed "People's" policeman who was standing guard. Told him what it was all about. Pulled the certificates out of her pocket. Pressed them in the hand of the man in uniform.

He read laboriously, taking his time. Asked his superior. Who asked his superior. Who telephoned. The answer did not come immediately.

When it finally came, the "People's" policeman reached boredly for the dog's leash. Dragged the animal to the control point. Waved a West Berlin policeman over to him. Gave him the leash without saying a word. Trudged back.

And in the West a sobbing man held the dog a little later in his arms. An animal brought the last greeting of the father, whose grave the son was not allowed to see. Not yet . . .

It is almost unutterable: Brother and sister, children and parents may not see each other. Loved ones may not embrace each other. No one receives permission to cross the death-strip.

Only a poor animal has been able, since August 13, 1961, armed with permission from the People's Police, to cross the boundary . . .

An occurrence in our city . . .

An occurrence like many others which make the Berliners feel their impotence. They feel the necessity to help, but they also recognize that they can help very little.

They can not even help with modern technology. Because the telephone system of the city has been interrupted since 1952. Long-distance calls from Berlin to Berlin are no longer transmitted even circuitously over West Germany by the communist post office in the Soviet Sector.

The citizens of the German Capital are realists. It is clear to them that the wall will not suddenly disappear like a specter. That the suffering and persecution of the countrymen in the East will not end overnight.

But they know that the Germans in the Soviet Zone of Occupation still have hope. Hope for freedom, justice and the dignity of man as long as West Berlin, the free Berlin, exists. That the Germans in the Soviet Zone have new confidence when the power claims of Moscow and Pankow on Berlin are rejected.

It is the mission of the city to cause this hope to penetrate the wall. That is why the Berliners do not want:

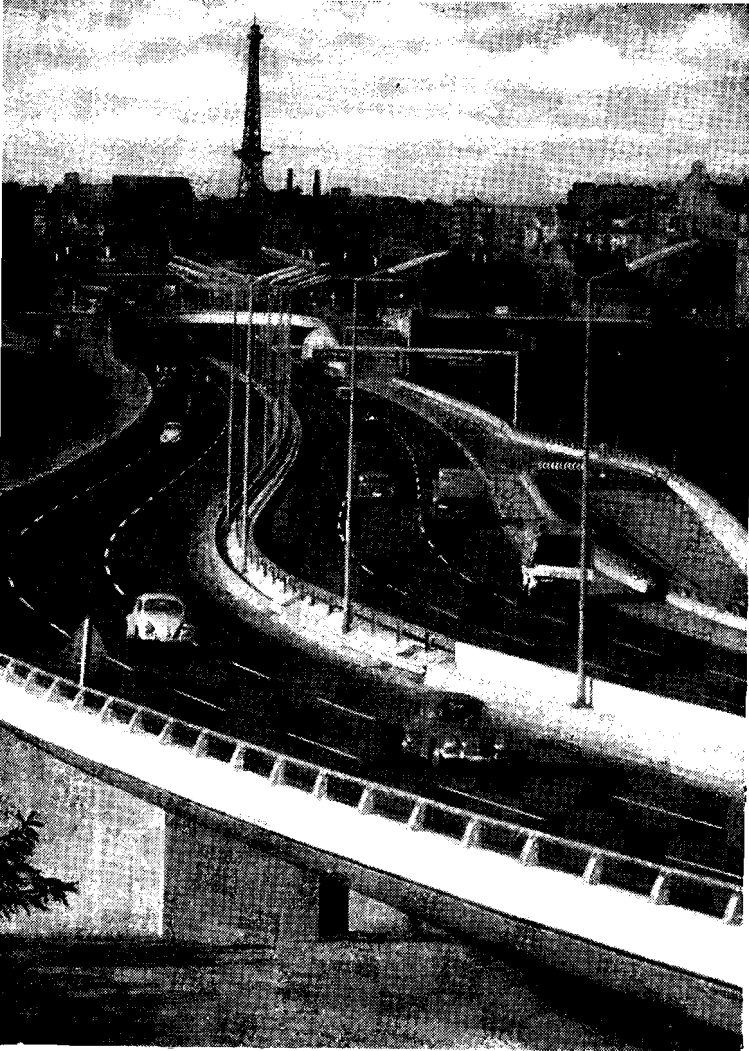
Germany to be divided for a third time, because it has already been divided once too often;

West Berlin to become a so-called demilitarized free city, because such a city would be free of freedom;

the troops of the Three Western Powers to withdraw, because West Berlin without this protection would become prey to the communist civil-war army;

The
wedding
day
of a Berlin
family





West Berlin
had planed
its city ex-
press high-
way for all
of Berlin

the basic democratic rights of man to be infringed upon, because without the freedom of the press and radio West Berlin's duty to appeal again and again to the conscience of the world would end.

That is why the Berliners want:

the legal and economic connections to the Federal Republic, to the larger part of free Germany, to be strengthened. Otherwise the life-impulses would be deadened in the city;

the traffic routes between the Federal Republic and West Berlin to remain free. Otherwise the city's contact with the outside world would be destroyed.

And why do the Berliners want that?

Because they want to live their own life. Because they want to have free air to breathe. Because they want the chance to work peacefully. Because they want the right to decide their own fate. Because they would like to see the right of self-determination realized in all of Germany. And because they would like a secure future for their families.

Like you where you live. Like you in Frankfurt or in Hamburg. Like you in London, in Paris or in New York.

Tomorrow you will surely again open the newspaper. The Berliners will also do so. And apprehensively you will put the newspaper down. The Berliners will also. Because the world seems to be going to "hell in a hand basket." Nevertheless we must still live together with worry. Here in Berlin are both quiet and disquiet.

If you could be here with us, and that you could any day, then you would see with your own eyes what the

reality of the situation is. How normal our life is inspite of everything. Just like where you live. And how very much we want the normal, everyday life of Berlin to continue.

Everything in West Berlin that is different from conditions where you live and which brings disquietude comes from the wall. It must disappear.

Everyone of you can help Berlin effect this. If you are as solidly with the Berliners as they are with you.

Then it is not only a question of Berlin. Or of Germany. Or of Europe. It concerns all of us. Whether in the North or in the South. Whether in the East or in the West.

Please, think about this when you again read in the newspaper, when you again hear on the radio:

“New harassments perpetrated by the Communists in Berlin...”

Omnibuses
travel daily
between
West Berlin
and West
Germany



Issued by the Press and Information Bureau of the State Berlin.
Translation: William L. Estes. Fotos: berlin-bild (3), Diederichs,
dpa, Heller, Siegman, UPI. © 1961 by Presse- und Informations-
amt des Landes Berlin. Publisher: Graph. Ges. Grunewald GmbH.
Printed in Germany.