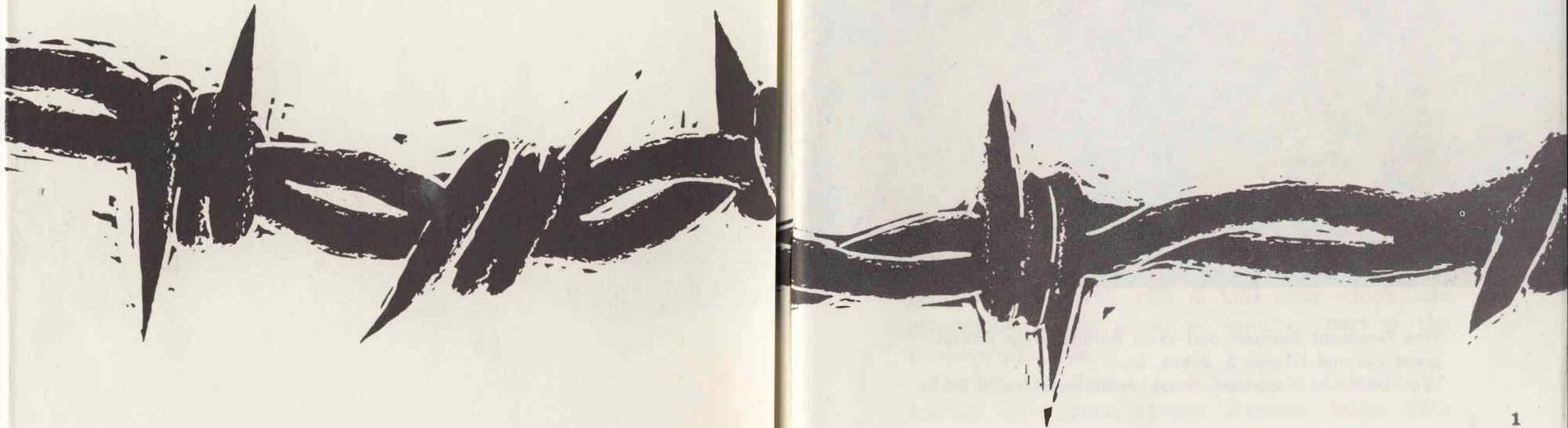


WE VOTE FOR FREEDOM

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IPS

FREEDOM



WE VOTE FOR





Vice President Johnson and West Berlin Mayor Brandt greet Colonel Glover S. Johns, Jr., commander of American troop reinforcements in Berlin.

WE VOTE FOR FREEDOM

THE FLIGHT OF more than four million East Germans in 16 years is an eloquent and violent protest against life under the tyranny of the « German Democratic Republic ».

The voting with their feet by these millions of East Germans demonstrates that this « Democratic Republic » is neither German nor Democratic nor a Republic.

The East German population movement began in 1945 as the Soviet armies broke into East Prussia and rolled forward to establish a Communist government. There was a « green border » in the early post-war years when about 1.5 million crossed over to West Germany. But in 1949 the green border became an Iron Curtain of rows of barbed wire, of scores of watch towers, of unrelenting armed police and their vicious dogs and a plowed death-strip of mines with the setting up of a Communist puppet government headed by Walter Ulbricht.

But the barriers and the political and economic controls oppressing the people did not stop more than 2.5 million additional East Germans from giving up their friends, their possessions, their families and risking their own lives and the lives of their children to find freedom.

The flow of refugees varied with political pressures of Soviet rule in this area which was presented to the world as another part of the workers paradise.

During the June 17, 1953, East German rebellion, when men fought Russian tanks with bricks and stones, and during the 1956 Budapest

uprisings, when the Soviet government reneged on its promises to Premier Nagy and millions of Hungarians, more than two thousand refugees every day made their way through the barriers.

From 1945 to 1959 an average of seven hundred people every 24 hours — two persons every single minute — made their way to freedom.

During the year 1959 the 700 figure per day dropped to 350.

But by the end of 1960 more and more began to vote with their feet and the daily refugee total rose to 600.

In the warm and beautiful August of 1961 German men, women and children fleeing from the Soviet Zone again reached the near-flood stages set during the earlier exodus of March 1953 when the greatest number of refugees of the post-World War II era made their way to West Berlin and the freedom they knew was there and beyond. These refugees said that one of the impelling forces which led to their flight was the threat of Premier Khrushchev and other communist leaders to sign a separate treaty with the East German regime, despite previous four-power agreements that only a four-power treaty with all Germany would be considered valid.

On a single day — August 12 — more than 4,000 people made their way out of East Germany after dodging informers, gun-carrying police, detectives and scores of man-made obstacles.

Early on the Sunday morning of August 13, with dawn still to come, the Communist East German regime took steps to seal off the border between East and West Berlin with wooden barricades, long and wide concrete walls topped with barbed



A family from East Germany arriving at a refugee center in West Berlin. During July, 1961, 36,000 East Germans fled to the West.

wire and with thousands of « people's police » and military on sentry duty.

Nearly half of those striking out into a new world were not yet 25 years old — but they were disillusioned by Communist promises, of words and more words which would have them believe stories about the rest of the world which common sense branded as lies.

Seventy-four per cent of those fleeing were less than 45 years of age and they too were impelled by the same thoughts of mental, physical and emotional survival.

There were farmers, doctors, dentists, intellectuals, engineers, artists, small businessmen, skilled workers, teachers, researchers, circus performers, a herdsman and his flock — all gave a grim, oppressive and despairing picture of a life they could no longer bear.

« There was no other way to escape the threats of Communist party bosses, » a refugee farmer said. « They were trying to force us to join a collective farm. »

« I could no longer protect my students. » said Professor Erich Reitzenstein of Martin Luther University at Halle.

Refugees like Hanns Dietrich and his wife, a young farmer couple, simply had had enough of the Communist world of agitators, functionaries and police.

Once they had nearly 10 hectares of land. They were forced to see it collectivized. For a year they planned their flight and at vacation time they chose freedom.

« We could not stand it any more, » they said.

Farmer Hans Bauer, 41, fled with his wife



Rain falls as refugees enter a Berlin center.

and six children after destroying all his farm equipment. He took a picture of the wrecked equipment to show West Berlin refugee officials.

The head of an East German collective farm, only 27 years old, whose name is withheld, said :

« Farm conditions in East Germany have reached such a catastrophic state that we simply couldn't hold out any longer — no food, no workers, nothing worth staying for. »

Thirty-three-year-old Willi Meier loved his homeland and his 23-hectare farm that had been owned by his family for nearly two centuries. But the new system proved too much for him. He explained that there are two kinds of farmers in East Germany now: « old farmers, » meaning those who have farmed all their lives like their fathers before them; and « new farmers, » who have recently taken to farming as tools of the Communists and who applaud the collectivization of farms.

« The People's Government of East Germany has a way of taking care of the old farmers, who oppose collectivization, » Meier said. « They just raise the quotas until it's impossible to fill them — or, if a farmer does somehow manage to fill his quota, the Communists tax him until he is penniless and then take the farm away from him. »

8 A few farmers have managed to bring their



Studying a travel guide to a free world, an East German girl waits in West Berlin with her family for a plane to take them to another West German city — land of their choice.

livestock with them when they fled across the border.

Fearing the collectivization of his farm, a 55-year-old farmer came across with his wife and two children. He drove a herd of 14 cows through a gap he had cut in the barbed wire fence that marks the border.

Another farmer brought along seven cows. His herd was grazing on a pasture directly on the border. All he had to do was cut the fence.

West Berlin's refugee center granted asylum to a flock of 400 sheep a few years ago. The owner, a 33-year-old shepherd, had managed to cross the East-West city border in an outlying farmland area, bringing all his livestock, his wife and three small children.

« I was losing all my customers, » an East Berlin grocer said. « They wanted to trade with me but they were being driven to the state-run shops, because I could not get supplies. »

Shoemaker Wilhelm Liepel, 41 years old, his wife, Anna, 37, and their 10-year-old daughter, Gabriele, had left their home in a small town some sixty kilometers southeast of Berlin the night before and traveled to West Berlin by roundabout ways.

10 Mr. Liepel, who owned a small shop where he



Refugees - old and young - wait patiently in the Marienfelde Refugee Center. They will be flown to the Federal Republic of Germany.

made, sold and repaired shoes, feared possible arrest after he had refused to obey Communist orders to join a state-controlled «production cooperative.» Leaving everything behind except some clothing and a few hundred East German marks, the family set out for a new beginning in the West.

«Conditions in East Germany have become intolerable, so after much hesitation we finally decided to leave,» says 53-year-old Kurt H., a tailor from Magdeburg, an industrial city west of Berlin who boarded a westbound elevated train at Friedrichstrasse station, with his wife, Ilse, 48.

The story of Mr. H. is typical of many other tales of shortages and burdensome regulations heard at Marienfelde. «I could no longer get materials necessary to make a decent suit,» says the tailor. «On one occasion, I made a trip into West Berlin to buy some needed cloth. The authorities discovered this, and I was told if it happened again I would be jailed.» His only regret on fleeing East Germany is that he and his wife had to leave behind most of their possessions, relatives and friends. Mr. H. hopes to take up tailoring again at Essen, where he has a brother who fled East Germany several years ago.

A 25-year-old construction engineer left a promising career, his family, and his fiancee to make a new beginning in the West.

12 Starting as an apprentice bricklayer in East



In search of a new way of life, weary refugees wait at West Berlin's Marienfelde Refugee Camp. Before Communists sealed escape doors, the camp received nearly 1,000 refugees every day.

Germany, he had drawn the attention of party functionaries and been sent to a special construction engineering school in Berlin.

He passed with high marks and finally became deputy chief of a planning office for the East German construction industry.

Then he dropped it all and fled West. « I don't know the situation here, but I'm sure of the situation of workers in East Germany, » he told interviewers.

« I don't care if I never go to school again, » he added, « so long as I finally can work as an engineer and not spend my time traveling around to give speeches on production aims in which I don't believe myself. »

Four teen-age East German fishermen deserted their ship, the Neues Deutschland, in Cuxhaven, Germany, and asked West German authorities for political asylum. Wolfgang Sandhop, 16, Peter Witt, 16, Burghard Schiffke, 17, and Hans Gasterstaedt, 17, said they waited aboard the vessel until their political commissar went to sleep and then slipped ashore. The Neues Deutschland is a training ship for fishermen.

« It was the squeeze, » said Horst Mex when he arrived at Marienfelde. « Every month it got worse. They stepped up the quota and you couldn't get labor or material. Then they accused you of sabotage. »

14 Mr. Mex same to West Berlin with his wife



Rain falls as refugees enter a Berlin center.

and three daughters from New Brandenburg, 150 kilometers north of Berlin.

Mrs. Mex spoke scornfully of East Germany's Communist-controlled schools.

At 37, Mr. Mex was much better off than most others by East German standards. He was a construction engineer providing housing for work teams who build concrete silos for collective farms and was paid 1200 marks (\$300) a month. This is double the average worker's wage. He was assigned one of the few new and relatively spacious apartments in New Brandenburg. He had lived under Communist rule ever since 1945.

« We planned and worked on this one job for two years, » he explained. « The difficulties with materials and workers got worse and worse. Finally, we were ordered to complete the silos within two months. If not, they were going to accuse me of sabotage for failing to meet my quota. »

A Communist Party member who fails to meet his quota — and many of them do — is simply assigned to another job. « But, » said Mr. Mex, « I took no part in Communist activities. If you won't join the party, then a sabotage charge means prison. My wife would have to go to work and my children would be sent away to a Communist camp. »

The dramatic escape of Dr. Josef Haemel, Rector of the famous Friedrich Wilhelm University in Jena, is an excellent example of how intellectuals feel about life in Communist East Germany.

Dr. Haemel, 63, assumed the rectorship at Jena in 1951 in the hope that he could preserve



Still clinging to her doll, a baby sleeps peacefully on a bench in the crowded Marienfelde Refugee Center in West Berlin.

the university's tradition-rich academic reputation under Communist rule, said that Communist pressure had become «intolerable» and reached the point where he could no longer carry on his work. The Communists had first tried to gain his support and that of other intellectuals with special privileges. When this failed, they resorted to increasing restriction and intimidation.

Dr. Haemel reported that Communist harassment of the faculty at Jena had become such as to destroy any academic freedom. He said he decided to flee with his wife and children when the Communists demanded that he hold a special press conference in East Berlin to announce the university's conversion into a so-called Socialist institution completely foreign to academic life.

«I could not assume the guilt of being the person responsible for converting such a great university into a tool of Communism,» he said.

Elizabeth Braun, aged 32, taught geography, natural science, and German in the Plauen District of Saxony. German and natural science presented no particular problem in the school room, but geography proved her downfall. She could not bring herself to follow the Party line and was denounced to the dean for presenting Western countries factually. He threatened her with dismissal unless she spied on members of the Junge Kirche, a Protestant youth organization, and produced «results.» He warned her that there were plenty of reasons for dismissing her. She asked for 24 hours to think the matter over and promptly left for West Berlin.



A human wall of East German infantrymen lines up to seal off the Brandenburg gate. For many, trapped in East Berlin, it was a wall of tears.



Elderly East German couple walks away from barbed wire barricade after being stopped at the West Berlin border by People's Police.

To 48-year-old-railroad employee Willy Preusker from Tangermuende the fate and future of his 16-year-old son was also the reason for his flight. The boy had finished school at Easter time and wanted to become a radio and TV technician.

« All my efforts to find him an apprenticeship were in vain, » Preusker reported. He finally addressed a complaint to the District Government and was informed that the vocation of a radio technician is not so very important. « The boy should work on a farm. That is where people are needed. »

So Preusker decided to quit. He took his leave, closed the door of his house and went with his family to West Berlin where there is freedom in choice of work. All they carried with them were two briefcases and one hand bag.

On July 25, 1961, it was reported that the director of the Institute for Mining and Metallurgy of East Germany's Freiberg Mining Academy had fled to West Germany. The director, Professor Herbert Gruenn, was a member of the East German Communist Party.

He blamed « narrow - minded sectarian behavior » in school and university teaching for the westward flight of many young East Germans.

Heinz Hampe, editor of the East German provincial newspaper, Brandenburgische Neueste Nachrichten, has sought political asylum in West Berlin. He said he fled because security police wanted to interrogate him on why he was sending his son to a West Berlin private school.



A resident of East Berlin seeking to return home is interrogated by People's Police at the Brandenburg gate which was closed August 14.

Some of East Germany's best-known writers have fled to freedom, too. Some of them had just been released from Communist prisons and others had fled just in time to escape arrest. East Germany lost to freedom such old guard Communist writers as Alfred Kantorowicz, Herbert A. W. Kasten, Heinz Zoeger and Gerhard Zwerenz.

A family of 10, grimly clinging to a 15-year-old tractor, crashed through a double barricade to freedom in April 1959. This dramatic escape at the Brunswick border, within range of machine guns on a nearby watchtower, was made by the family of 47-year-old Friedrich Graefe. The tractor was used to crash through a barricade of one-meter-high paving blocks and a barbed wire fence more than two meters high.

The Graefe family lived at Klettenberg, three kilometers from the border, where the father farmed and ran a transport business. He told West German refugee officials that he left for both political and economic reasons. But his immediate motive for escaping was fear of imprisonment. In November 1958 he had been arrested and charged with making insulting remarks about the Communist state. He had said « In the (East) German Democratic Republic, all is collapsed... » He had also refused to take part in political activities.

Graefe said he also had heard reports that Communist officials were planning to take away his license to practice a trade, which would have deprived him of his livelihood. He faced an almost certain prison term, and was also on a list of persons scheduled for arbitrary resettlement at points



East German soldiers lock an iron gate in the Potsdamerplatz subway station to halt the heavy flow of refugees to West Berlin.

deep in East Germany. All of these things convinced him that escape from East Germany was the only solution. Graefe carefully planned the escape for months. He left little to chance. The family took no possessions.

One of the refugees arriving in West Berlin was a private chauffeur who had been employed by Soviet Zone composer Hanns Eisler, the brother of top propagandist Gerhart Eisler.

« I had a nice life in Herr Eisler's services. A good salary, nice treatment, but does that suffice? Everybody needs some freedom, wants to visit his relatives in the West, does not want to be checked at the sector borders. »

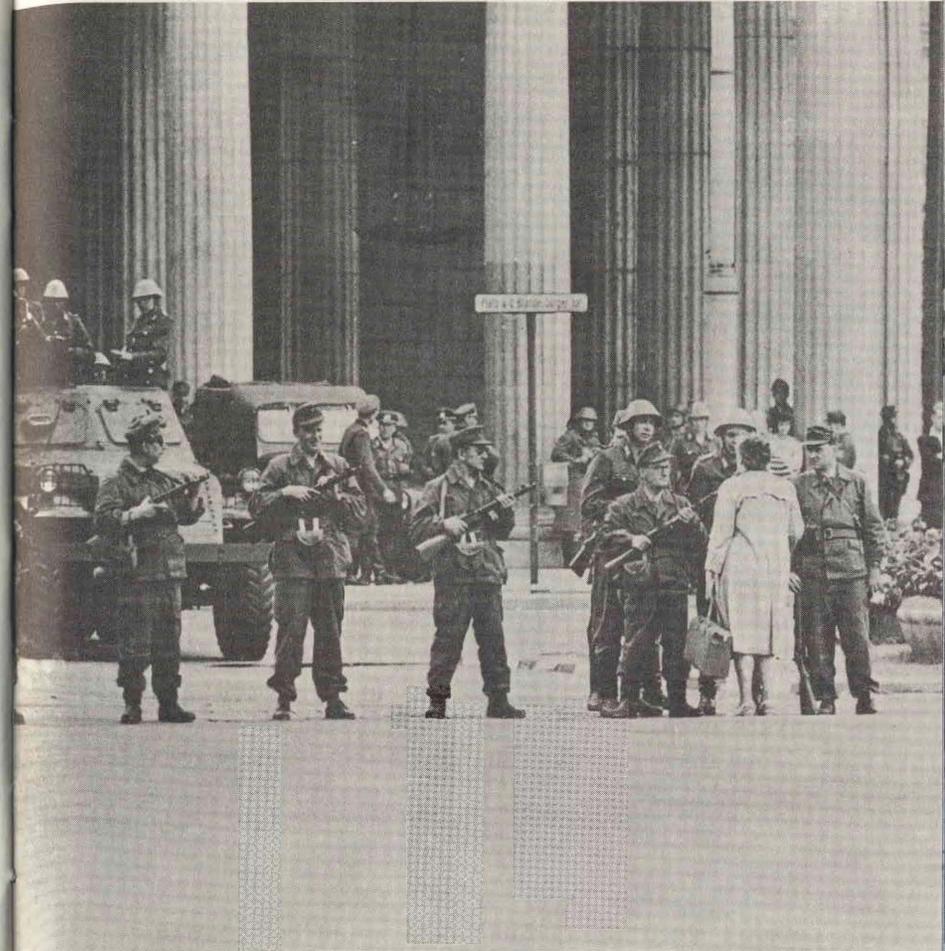
In short, he wanted freedom of movement.

The refugee had this to say about the special treatment which the upper class enjoys:

« I could not bear that any longer. It really caused me pain to compare the life of the big shots with that of the little man. And finally I simply became fed up. »

On February 28, 1952, Hans Schreiber reached West Berlin with his wife and applied for recognition as a political refugee. Director of the Biophysical Research Center at Hiddensee, near the Baltic, and head of the Institute of Radiology of the Humboldt University in East Berlin, Dr. Schreiber calls himself « the last biophysicist of the Soviet Zone of Germany. »

28 A former scientific assistant had denounced



An East Berlin woman, who had been visiting in West Berlin when the border was closed, is challenged by militia at the sector crossing.

Dr. Schreiber to the State Secretariat of the German Democratic Republic, where a simple denunciation from almost any source is enough. Immediately Dr. Schreiber was subjected to lengthy questioning by the State Secretariat, night visits from police officials, and requests from the Soviet-controlled East Zone News Service for political statements. His office telephone was tapped. He heard that he was suspected of helping persons to escape from the Soviet Zone. Evading the East Zone secret police who had been shadowing him, he fled with his wife to seek political asylum in free Berlin.

Ninety-five scientists escaped from East Germany to West Berlin during a seven-week period in 1959.

Most of the scientists said the Communist government had improved living conditions for professional men in an effort to halt the exodus. But the flight has gone on, they said, because the regime has continued to interfere in their work and private lives.

More than 375 scientists and 3,400 teachers fled East Germany in 1958.

An engineer from Henningsdorf said: « I couldn't sleep nights for fear I would be arrested as a saboteur. Every time anything went wrong because of bad material I was blamed for it. »



Not a grave, but in many ways a tomb, as members of the East German People's Army remove paving blocks to bolster the Communist barricade against escaping refugees.

East Berlin's Mayor, fled to West Berlin in 1956 and asked for political asylum. Ebert had been in an East German jail serving a 25-year sentence for alleged espionage. He said he had been released four weeks previously under an amnesty decree.

An eighteen-man East German jazz orchestra, ordered disbanded by Communist authorities for playing United States music, fled into West Berlin with its instruments and girl vocalist.

The band made its way to freedom from Chemnitz, 175 kilometers southwest of Berlin. Its members told Western officials they decided to flee when Communist city authorities ordered the combination broken up for playing « provocative » American tunes.

Karl Walter, the leader, said he was banned from his trade for life. The other musicians were told they could play in other bands but not as a unit.

To avoid suspicion, the group split up for the escape to the West. They left most of their possessions behind, bringing hardly more than their instruments and music.

Siegfried H., a building engineer in a people's-owned enterprise in Leipzig, fled to West Berlin with his wife and 17-year-old daughter.

« Like all the others who are coming now, we in my family had also worked out a real escape plan, » he explained. « During all the past years we held out. Each time at the end of the year we assur-



A member of the East German People's Police grabs a young man near the Oderberger Strasse and forces him away from the border.

ed each other that conditions would improve the following year. But they became even worse. Such a flight is not a decision taken over night, since everything acquired by means of hard work must be left behind.

« But one day of bad news followed the other. In the enterprise I was censured for my activity in the Protestant Church. The Party Secretary called me an « underling of the Bonn military church. » Shortly after that, a former schoolmate paid me a visit. He is a member of the S.E.D. and worked with me in the same section of the enterprise. « Be careful », he warned, « because they are watching you. More I cannot tell. »

« Probably I would have endured even that. But when attempts were made to force my daughter to carry out espionage, I become completely fed up. The girl has been active in the Junge Gemeinde (Youth Center of the Protestant Church). Although one of the best in her class, she was not admitted to college. She had to take up training as a mechanic. Now she was to spy on her comrades in the Junge Gemeinde to find out if any intended to flee to the West or ridiculed the S.E.D. »

During a twenty four hour period in July, 1961, nearly 1,000 East Germans reached West Berlin. Among the refugees were Dr. P.D. Herwig Plachetsky, chief physician at the hospital in Eberswaljj; Walter Harte, an editor of the pro-Communist East Berlin newspaper National Zeitung, and Helmut Sack, production manager of a Dresden margarine factory.

34 Horst Metzler, 26, said he and his 20-year-



Police examine papers of two residents of East Berlin shortly after the virtual sealing of the escape route to West Berlin.

old bride, Barbara, decided to flee «after party officials told us things will change in East Germany once a peace treaty is signed.» Everyone in his township in northern Germany was aware, he added, «that this means they will cut us off from the west altogether.»

The young newlyweds said they had come to the west because they were «fed up» with conditions in East Germany. «I could not find work as a car mechanic, the job I was trained for,» Metzler said. «Instead I was ordered to work on a collective farm where I would have earned less.»

«I got my nose full of the collectivization,» is a standard answer to the question of why refugees seek freedom in West Germany. A farmer who owned 40 hectares near Rostock until he fled was bitter.

«The Communist party functionaries took our last penny,» he said. «After they took over the land, they blocked my bank account.

«I not only had to put my land into the collective but also to contribute 7,500 East German marks in capital. For that I was supposed to get paid six marks a day and have the privilege of keeping one cow and six chickens to improve my living standard.»

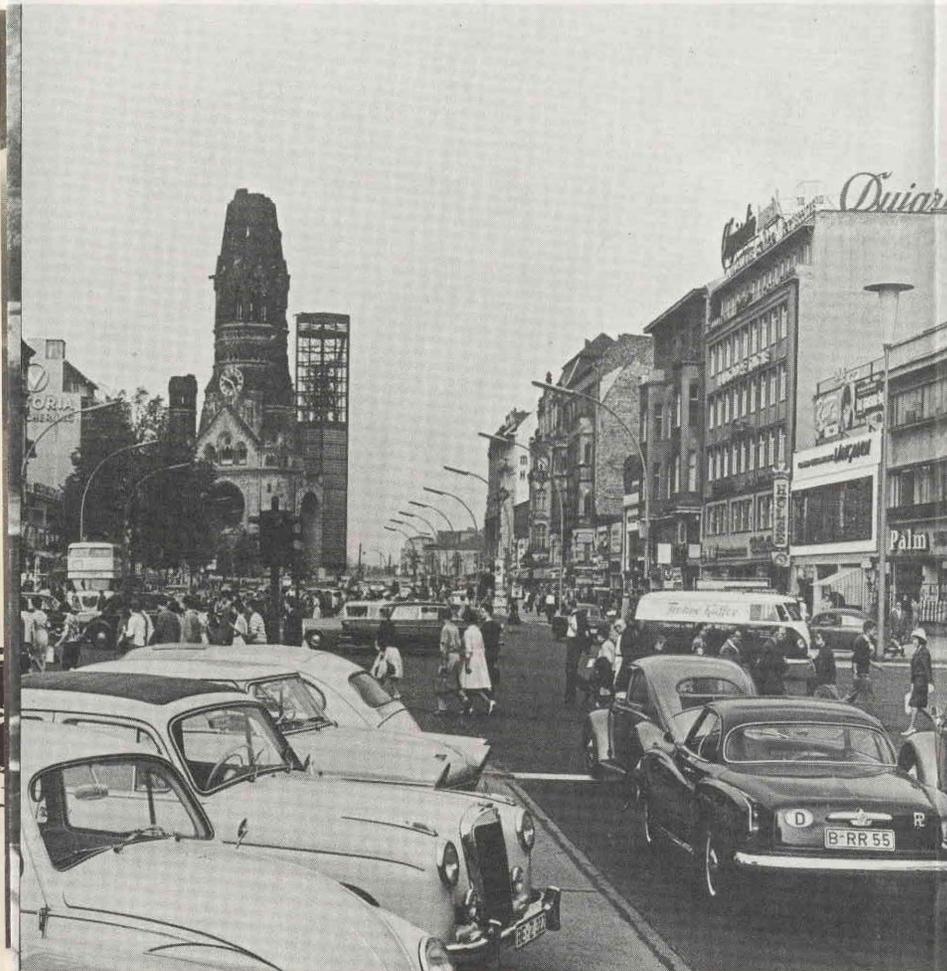


**A handful of stones against a mountain of steel!
Over 600 East Germans died in a 1953 anti-Communist revolt
against Communist oppression and forced labor.**

PICTURES TELL A STORY



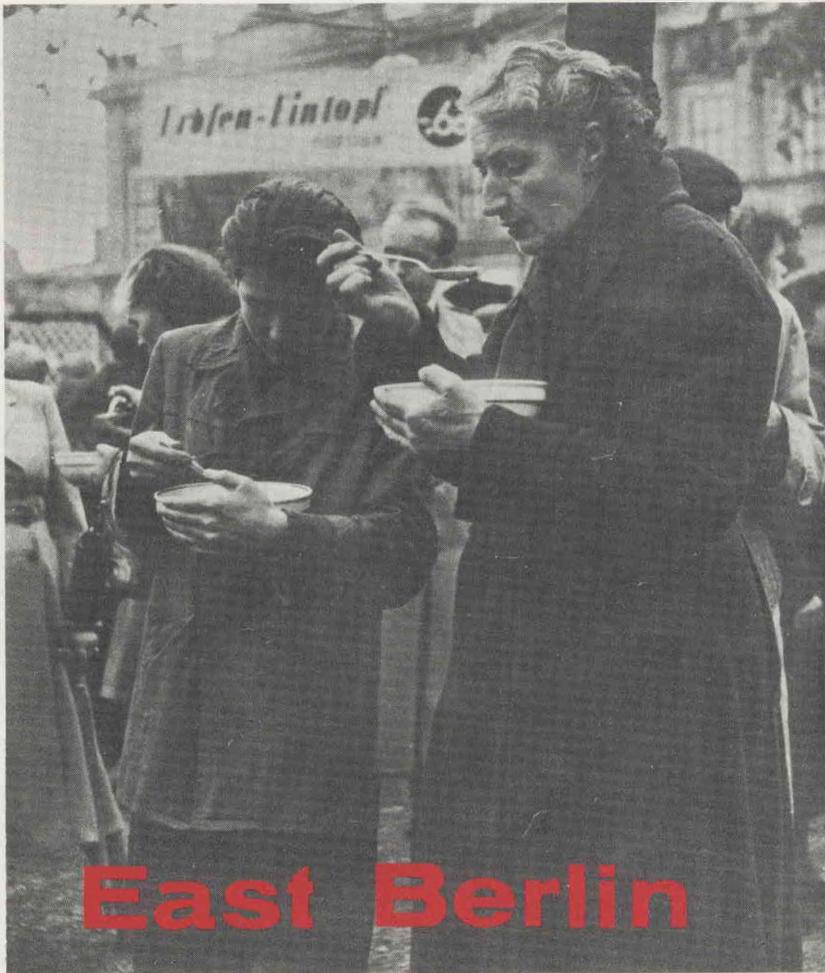
Apartment buildings and new highways have grown from the once-desolate ruins of war.



West Berlin's busy streets reflect the vitality of freedom upon which Free Germany has been built.



The search for knowledge is unhampered. Free libraries with uncensored books are open to all.



East Berlin

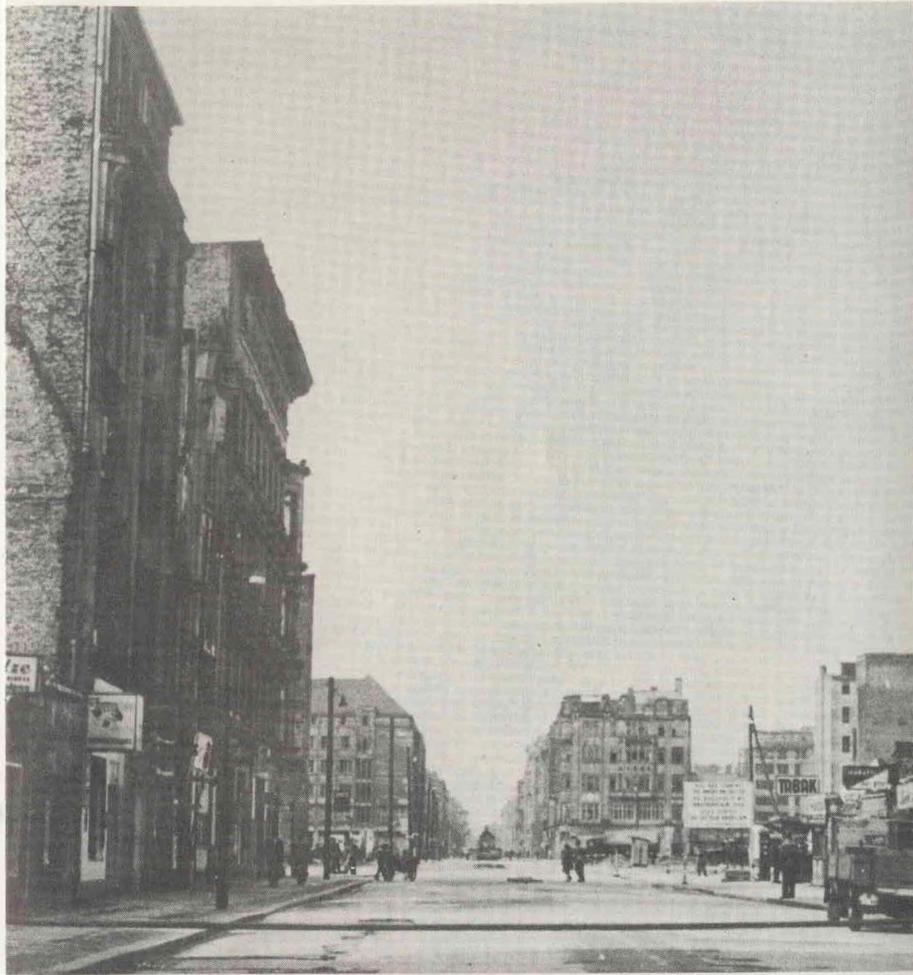
A stand-up luncheon of soup is a treat for shoppers facing continuous food scarcities.



Shabby store front attracts housewives' momentary glance, but stocks are thin and quality poor.



Not books, but guns, as regimented youngsters are trained in the arts of war.



East Berlin, drab by day, grim by night,
still shows desolation it bore at end of World War II.



Shoppers wait dispiritedly for
a small food shop to open and sell its meager rations.



United States Information Service