

# **Berlin in the Cold War**

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**The Battle for the Divided City**

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berlin edition

# Contents

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- Showdown at Checkpoint Charlie** 5
- Berlin in the front line** 6
- Allies become enemies** 9
  - The four sector city 9
  - First conflicts 11
  - The founding of political parties 12
  - The last "united Berlin" elections 15
- Blockade and Airlift** 16
  - Competing currencies 16
  - "Raisin bombers" (Rosinenbomber) against the blockade 17
  - The "Senate reserves" (Senatsreserve) 24
- The Divided City** 25
  - The University as a political battlefield 26
  - Troops in Berlin 28
  - Cutting off the west sectors 29
- Uprising against the SED regime** 30
- The media** 33
- A playground for spies** 35
  - The espionage tunnel 36
  - The kidnapping of political opponents 36
  - The task force against inhumanity 40
  - Exchanging secret agents 41
  - Co-operation between the Allies 42
- The Battle for Cultural Supremacy** 45
  - Prestige projects from the drawing board 45
  - Subsidies and flourishing cultures 47
  - Inviting the world to Berlin 50
- The Khrushchev Ultimatum** 52
- The Berlin Wall** 55
  - The building of the Wall 55
  - A tense peace 60
  - Escape and escape aid 61
- Living with the Wall** 66
  - First visits from relatives 66
  - An agreement for Berlin 66
  - Normal state of emergency 69
  - "Mister Gorbachev ..." 73
- The end of the Cold War** 77
  - Chronology 77
  - Map 78
  - Notes 80

June 26 marks the 70th anniversary of the beginning of the Berlin Airlift, America's first major test of resolve during the Cold War and one of the largest humanitarian aid missions in history. Never heard of it? Well, you're in luck – we've summed the history up for you here. Post-World War II Division of Germany. After World War II ended, Germany was in ruins, and the situation in its capital, Berlin, was dire. About 2.5 million Berliners were still living in the war-ravaged city, but food was scarce and shelter was hard to find amid all the rubble. The economy was mostly black market goods. The Berlin Crisis of 1961 (German: Berlin-Krise) occurred between 4 June – 9 November 1961, and was the last major politic-military European incident of the Cold War about the occupational status of the German capital city, Berlin, and of post-World War II Germany. The Berlin Crisis started when the USSR launched an ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of all armed forces from Berlin, including the Western armed forces in West Berlin. The crisis culminated in the city's de facto partition with the East. The Cold War. Primary Menu. Skip to content. The Allied occupation forces were shocked by the devastation in Berlin. After more than five years of war, shortages, Allied bombing then Soviet bombardment, the former German capital had almost no means of sustaining itself. Greater Berlin produced only two per cent of its food requirements; the rest had to be shipped in from rural areas. Food supplies were exhausted and thousands of Berliners were starving. Months of heavy bombing had destroyed buildings, factories, homes and critical infrastructure.