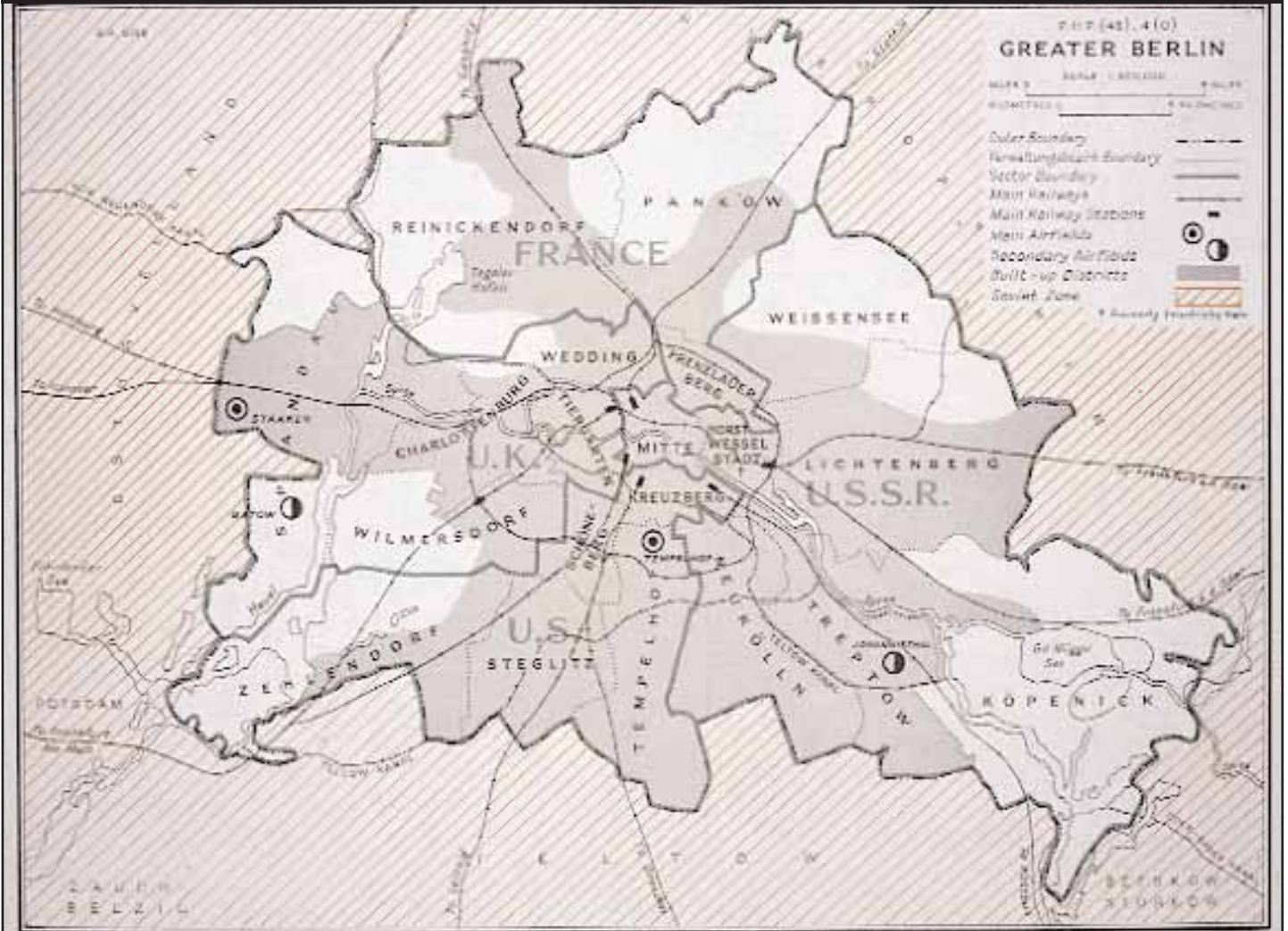


COLD WAR - The Berlin Blockade 1948-9

Source 1



An official Foreign Office map showing the situation in Berlin in 1948.

COLD WAR - The Berlin Blockade 1948-9

Source 2

Germany. Situation in Berlin.

2. The Cabinet were informed that no progress had been made in the quadripartite discussion on the possibility of introducing a single currency for the whole of Berlin, and that early on the previous day it had been announced that the new currency for the Soviet Zone would be introduced into the whole of Berlin. The Military Governors of the Western Zone had countered this by announcing that the new currency for the Western Zones would be introduced into the western sectors of Berlin. Early that morning the Soviet authorities had stopped all rail traffic between Berlin and the Western Zones and all electricity supplied from the eastern to the western sectors of Berlin. It was not yet clear whether these restrictions were designed as a tactical reply to the action taken by the Western powers on the currency question or whether they were the first move in a major offensive to force the Western Powers to withdraw from Berlin. Our Military Governor had been asked for a full report on the situation and this was expected by noon.

The Cabinet recognised that a very serious situation might develop in Berlin; and it was important that the Western Powers should take their stand on a position which they were confident of being able to sustain. *The Minister of State* undertook to arrange that the Foreign Secretary should be fully informed of the situation without delay. As soon as the promised report on the situation was received, he would also consider, in consultation with the Foreign Secretary and the Prime Minister, whether the British Military Governor in Berlin should be recalled to London for consultation with Ministers. (Previous Reference: CM (48) 27th Conclusions, Minute 3.)

Extracts from the minutes of meetings of the British Cabinet in 1948, covering discussions of the early stages of the Berlin Blockade.

COLD WAR - The Berlin Blockade 1948-9

Source 2 page 2

Germany. Situation in Berlin.

3. *The British Deputy Military Governor in Germany* informed the Cabinet of the latest developments in the situation in Berlin. The British garrison could be supplied by air, and arrangements for this purpose would be brought into operation in the following week. Food stocks were sufficient to supply the civil population in the British sector for twenty-seven days. The electricity generating stations controlled by the Western Powers could meet about 50 per cent. of the electricity requirements in the Western sectors of the city. The German people in those sectors were calm, and the majority of them were ready to resist Russian orders if they were confident that they would continue to receive the support of the Western Powers. It would be useful if the British Military Governors could be authorised to make it clear that the Russian authorities were to blame for any inconvenience or suffering arising from the suspension of land communications between the Western Zones of Germany and the Western sectors of Berlin. (Previous Reference: CM (48) 42nd Conclusions, Minute 2.)

Extracts from the minutes of meetings of the British Cabinet in 1948, covering discussions of the early stages of the Berlin Blockade.

COLD WAR - The Berlin Blockade 1948-9

Source 2 page 3

Germany. Situation in Berlin. 4. *The Foreign Secretary* informed the Cabinet of the latest developments in the situation in Germany. In view of the suggestions published in the Soviet-controlled press in Berlin, the Foreign Office had issued a statement over the week-end confirming the Government's intention to maintain their position in Berlin and the United States Government were being asked to make a similar statement. There could be no question of yielding to the Soviet pressure; if the Western Allies were forced out of Berlin, the project of Western Union would be fatally weakened. Every effort must be made to increase the existing food stocks for the civil population in the British sector of the city. This could now be done by air alone, and steps had been taken to expand the air services into the city. It seemed possible that the Soviet Government might try to secure an agreement on Four-Power control of the Ruhr in return for permitting the resumption of rail and water traffic into the Western Zones. There was no foundation for their allegation that we were failing to carry out the terms of an agreement on this issue: the United Kingdom delegation had declined to discuss that matter at the Potsdam Conference on the ground that the French Government was not represented. The implications of the statement issued by the Soviet Government at the conclusion of the Warsaw Conference were being studied, and he would circulate a paper on this subject to the Cabinet.

Extracts from the minutes of meetings of the British Cabinet in 1948, covering discussions of the early stages of the Berlin Blockade.

COLD WAR - The Berlin Blockade 1948-9

Source 2 page 4

The Minister of Defence said that the Chiefs of Staff were consulting the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington about the situation. The British Military Governor had confirmed that nothing would be gained by attempting to force through convoys by rail, road or water, since the Soviet authorities could interpose effective technical obstacles. Attention must therefore be concentrated on expanding the use of freight aircraft. At the present time, the Royal Air Force could bring into the city a daily load of 75 tons, but this could be increased very shortly to 400 tons and by 3rd July, to 750 tons. This was the maximum daily load which could be transported by these means, and it would not be possible to maintain this rate for longer than a month. The Principal Administrative Officers Committee were considering to what extent dehydrated foods could be substituted for other supplies. The Military Governor had reported that the Soviet authorities might attempt to interfere with air traffic either by fighter aircraft or by barrage balloons; instructions had been given that the risk of interference by fighters must be accepted but barrage balloons should be shot down. (Previous Reference: CM (48) 43rd Conclusions, Minute 3.)

Extracts from the minutes of meetings of the British Cabinet in 1948, covering discussions of the early stages of the Berlin Blockade.

COLD WAR - The Berlin Blockade 1948-9

Source 3

EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE BLOCKADE.

1. The blockade of Berlin was the result of a situation which developed mainly as a consequence of decisions made during the war. It was the climax of one phase of a planned and deliberate attempt by the Russians to force the Western Allies out of Berlin.
4. The Potsdam Agreement consisted of a comparatively short statement of principle and was not a statute book for the government of Germany. Consequently, co-operation and good faith on the part of all the Allies was required if co-ordinated and effective government of Berlin was to be obtained.
5. Owing to this lack of collaboration, the four-power control of Berlin was bound to fail and gradually the administration of the Eastern and Western Sectors of the city grew farther apart until the sectors became virtually two separate cities with separate city governments and separate police forces. The split between the two Sectors was made complete by the Allied currency reform which was introduced in June 1948. This was caused by the Soviets' refusal to co-operate and resulted in each Sector having a different currency.

Extracts from the final report of the British Air Ministry on the Berlin Blockade, published in 1950.

COLD WAR - The Berlin Blockade 1948-9

Source 4

HARRY S. TRUMAN LIBRARY

Official File

7/9/51
Los Angeles Times

copying

2335 Norwalk Avenue
Los Angeles 41, Calif.
September 12, 1948

195
Berlin Blockade
minut

President Harry S. Truman,
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue,
Washington, D.C.

X144-A-J

Dear Sir:

The so-called "Berlin Crisis" is entirely an outgrowth of your own incredible stupidity. When you attended the Potsdam Conference to arrange final details for the occupation of Germany, it was your duty to look out for American interests and insist upon the establishment of a corridor to the American Zone for ingress and egress to the city. This you failed to do. Possibly this was because you believed Joe Stalin to be a "good old chap," as you expressed it some time ago. But I am inclined to think that you were just too dumb to know that such a corridor was necessary.

In the meantime, you seem to be willing and even eager to force this country into a war with Russia merely for the purpose of "saving face." If you do this, the blame for such a war will rest upon your own shoulders, and the blood of American boys butchered in this war will be on your head.

Read the inclosed article from the Los Angeles Times of September 12, and then perhaps even your feeble mind will grasp the fact that the Berlin Crisis can be solved without dragging the United States into war.

Yours truly,

Philip Johnston
PHILIP JOHNSTON
K

Letter from an American citizen to President Truman.

COLD WAR - The Berlin Blockade 1948-9

Source 4 page 2

From the Los Angeles Times
September 12, 1948

West Can Pull Out of Berlin Proudly

BY POLYZOIDES

With the current rapid sequence of events in Berlin bordering on the fantastic, there are still a few optimists clinging to the hope that a mutually satisfactory arrangement will eventually be reached between Washington and Moscow. How this will happen and on what terms, nobody so far seems to be able to divulge.

The struggle for supremacy in the ruined German capital continues unabated with the anti-Communist elements in the majority, but with the Communists enjoying the fullest support of the Red army and its Berlin leaders.

AIR LIFT PERILED

After the recent repeated meetings between the three western representatives and Stalin the hope was expressed that the Berlin blockade was about to be lifted. Yet not only the blockade continues but even our air communications between the western zones and the capital are now placed in jeopardy, with the Russians intent upon severing that last link between the American, British and French zones of Western Germany and their Berlin sectors.

At the same time the seizure of the Berlin City Hall by the Communists appears to be only a matter of time, all our protests notwithstanding.

When that happens, as it is most likely, not to say certain, to happen, the position of the western powers will be far more difficult than it is now.

RUSS HOLD TRUMPS

Russia is holding the trump cards in Berlin and will only give in at a price that may prove too high for the westerners to pay. Besides, any bargain that one may strike with Moscow today by grants of credits, shipment of free goods, acceptance of Communist control of Berlin; elimination of all currency except the Russian-sponsored mark from Berlin, can at best be only temporary.

No one expects Stalin to live up to his commitments a month, a week or a day after he has given them. In which case one may well ask, why make the concessions to the Russians in the first place?

This question is more than a diplomatic and political conundrum; it is one of peace and tranquility in Germany and in Europe.

may well prove to be one between war and peace.

Even a most superficial study of the recent activities and attitudes of Russia in Berlin will convince any sensible person that Moscow is staging an intensive effort to drive the western Allies to despair and hence to a declaration of war, in which the Americans, the British and French will be branded the aggressors. This is the sort of trap that Stalin has set for the west and the west should be very careful not to play into Stalin's hands.

This is the eleventh hour of the crisis between the east and west, but it is not too late to take a supreme decision that may not entirely save the faces of Washington, London and Paris, but will save the peace of Europe which is by far the most important. The longer the division of Berlin into four sectors continues and the longer the western Allies remain there as targets of constant humiliations by the Soviet power, the greater the danger of an explosion that will plunge Europe and the world into another conflict.

CAN PULL OUT

The western Allies can pull out of Berlin proudly and with every evidence of dignity and get back to their own zones on the excellent ground that co-operation with Russia is no longer possible. They can then establish their military, economic and political front along their Russian border and meet the Soviets on better than even terms.

When the westerners have made that decision, they should supplement it with the withdrawal of their Ambassadors from Moscow, leaving their Embassies in charge of minor officials for the transaction of routine business alone. At the same time the Soviet Ambassadors shall be told that their presence in Washington, London and Paris is no longer desired.

One might object that such a move will be tantamount to the breaking of diplomatic relations, in which case it is well to be reminded that for all practical purposes such relations between the western powers and Russia have long been nonexistent.

Thus the fiction of a four-power division of Berlin or Germany is at an end, sparing the world of further conflict. Stalin has inflicted at his own expense.

Letter from an American citizen to President Truman.

COLD WAR - The Berlin Blockade 1948-9

Source 5

UNCLASSIFIED

Subject: Operation PLAINPARK BARO 52 JIB

BARO EX REPORT No 150 PERIOD ENDING 12.00hrs 24 Jan 49

1. TONNAGE MOVED DURING 24 Hrs

a. <u>Service Account</u>	<u>Civil Account</u>				
	<u>Food</u>	<u>Ord Coal</u>	<u>Spec</u>	<u>Tonn in cartons of A/C</u>	
--	--	234	59	290	84 TONNAGE

b. Split of Commodities Tonnage received during previous 24 hrs

	<u>Food</u>	<u>Coal</u>	<u>Misc</u>	<u>Total</u>
	NIL	337	64	401
	<u>Reserve</u>			
	NIL	1616	227	1843
<u>Special Includes</u>	<u>Expected</u>			
18.7 Tons				
Newspaper	NIL	315	25	340

2. TOTAL TONNAGE RUNNING TOTAL EXACT TONNAGE & FOOTAGE

	<u>Services</u>	<u>Civil</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Tonn</u>	<u>Lbs</u>	<u>A/C</u>
B/y yesterday	33	3453	3486			
To-day	--	290	290	290	396	TONNAGE
Total	33	3753	3786			

3. BACKLOADING:- German Merchandise: 2 Tons

4. COAL SACKS BY UK:- NIL

5. REMARKS:- NIL

J. S. H.
(J.S.H.)

LAUNDRY
BARO 21
Tele BARO 24781
Ext 50

One day's work during the Berlin Airlift.

COLD WAR - The Berlin Blockade 1948-9

Source 6



"YUP SONNY, AN THEM THAR LAST TWO I GOT FOR THE AIRLIFT BACK IN 1948-!!"

A cartoon produced an American pilot serving in the Berlin Airlift.