CHAPTER XXXVI

Occupied Germany (1945-49)

No one who did not visit Germany in the period immediately after the defeat can really grasp the magnitude of the chaos and devastation. Having spent some days in Frankfurt, Berlin, Bremen, and the Rhineland as late as October 1945, the author found it impossible upon returning to England and then to the United States to give a convincing picture of what he saw. Some memories remain. The sight from the air of miles of gaunt chimneys in residential Berlin; the sight of old women dragging heavy wooden carts piled high with firewood from the Grünewald, and sometimes with little children sitting on top of the faggots; the sight of a young man in tattered Luftwaffe uniform staring dazedly at a wrecked plane in the woods near Frankfurt; the hysterical and corrupt gaiety of the only nightclub open in Berlin; the statue of William I hanging by one stirrup from an enormous bronze horse in Koblenz; trains so crowded that people were hanging on outside; the hundreds of notices pasted on bulletin boards asking for news of the whereabouts of a child, a parent, or a beloved; the sweet smell of putrefaction in Berlin: these tell the story better than statistics, though the statistics are sufficiently frightening. A ride along Unter den Linden or the Wilhelmstrasse was like a visit to the temple of Karnak or to the Mayan ruins in Yucatan. Here was a powerful society in dissolution.

So it seemed at the time. The world knows now that the destruction was not so complete as it appeared in 1945. Germany actually increased her productive capacity during the war. The air raids, though destructive of morale, communications, and military installations, were not nearly so destructive of basic industrial apparatus as had been thought. Under the debris many of the machines were still there. The problems of 1945 were immediate ones: food, shelter, clothing, purging, disarmament, refugees, and displaced persons. The occupation authorities have been criticized and often justly for their mismanagement of various issues.
The fact that any order came out of the chaos, given the varying aims of the four occupying powers, seems to border on the miraculous.

This is happily not the place to trace the complex history of postwar planning in the Allied capitals. Most of it was done in Washington and London, but it seems fair to say that except for some broad directives, the victory found the victors without any definitely agreed-upon philosophy. There were advocates of a "hard" peace and a "soft" peace. On the whole the Americans favored a hard peace, the British a softer one. The Russians were mainly interested in securing reparations. The French were completely absorbed in their own problems and interested only in their own security. In the summer of 1945 thousands of men—many of them barely trained for their positions, many ignorant of Germany or the German language, some brilliant, and some venal—were sent to Germany to carry out badly defined policies. The history of the occupation is one of improvisation, but through it runs the increasing realization that any intimate co-operation between the Western powers and the Soviet Union was impossible. The result of this realization was the policy of strengthening, rather than weakening, the new Germany.

At their meeting in Teheran in 1943 the Big Three (Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin) set up the European Advisory Commission (EAC) to sit in London and draw up postwar plans for Europe. This commission had no easy time in dealing with its respective governments, but by 1944 succeeded in drafting a division of Germany into zones of occupation. It was accepted by the three governments, although the British and Americans quarreled over which Western zone was to go to whom. At Yalta in February 1945 the zones were formally agreed upon, and Stalin grudgingly permitted the French to have a zone if it were taken out of the British and American zones. The Big Three also agreed upon several proclamations describing the structure of the military government to be made public by the powers after victory. It was further decided that in addition to the four zones the area of Greater Berlin, an island in the middle of the Soviet zone, would be divided into four sectors and governed by the four powers co-operatively.

As the various Allied armies pushed into Germany, they set up ad hoc military government units in each town as it was conquered without any particular reference to an over-all plan. The urgencies of the moment were so great that nothing else could have been done. The authorities tried to locate reputable anti-Nazis to put in official positions, but the main job was to distribute food, to get utilities into working condition, and to see that the security of the Allied armies was not endangered. The urgency of work was immense. By the time of surrender the positions of the Allied armies did not coincide with the proposed zones.
OccuPeD GERMANY

427

The Americans had advanced to the Elbe and occupied parts of Thuringia and Saxony, which were allocated to the Soviets. During May and June there was no change in these positions; the armies were busy setting up their own administrations in their zones, moving their headquarters, and preparing for the Big Three conference which was planned for July at Potsdam.

On June 5, 1945, General Eisenhower, Field Marshal Montgomery, and General de Lattre de Tassigny journeyed to Berlin; there, with Marshal Zhukov, the Soviet commander, they issued the proclamations drawn up at Yalta. By these the four Allied governments assumed supreme authority in Germany. They announced the formation of the four zones in Germany and that “Greater Berlin” would be occupied by forces of each of the four powers. An interallied governing authority (Kommandatura), consisting of four commanders appointed by their respective commanders in chief, was to direct the administration of Berlin. For Germany in general the four commanders in chief were to constitute the Control Council, which was to be in charge of working out the unconditional surrender and controlling Germany until the four powers set up a substitute. The Control Council was entitled to have various subordinate bodies attached to it and to maintain liaison with other members of the United Nations. Its decisions had to be unanimous. This last provision was to prove very important. Nowhere in these documents was there any detailed assurance of access to Berlin for the Americans, British, and French, although Berlin was to be the seat of the Control Council.

Part of June and July was spent in setting up headquarters in Berlin. This was not an easy job because the Soviets raised all kinds of small, detailed difficulties, which began to give the Western officials some idea of the literal-mindedness of their ally. By early July the headquarters were established, and American troops withdrew from the areas of the Soviet zone they had conquered. On July 30 the first meeting of the Control Council was convened.

In the meantime the Big Three also arrived in Berlin. The personnel had changed because in April President Truman had succeeded President Roosevelt. Furthermore, during the Potsdam Conference the victory of the Labor party in the British parliamentary elections was announced, and during the second part of the conference the new prime minister, Clement Attlee, replaced Winston Churchill. No election had unseated Joseph Stalin. The conference lasted from July 17 to August 2 and established the only fundamental agreed-upon directives which the Control Council ever received. It is important to note that France was not represented at the Potsdam Conference, though she was a member of
the Control Council. Thus France was not bound by the decisions at Potsdam and actually had a veto power over them in the council.

In addition to the general statements about the disarmament, denazification, demilitarization, and re-education of Germany that might have been expected, the protocol of the Potsdam Conference laid down certain specific new directives. Some of these were territorial. The Big Three awarded without qualification the northern part of East Prussia, including the port city of Königsberg, to the Soviet Union. In respect of the Polish claims they were not so generous. The main statement was that an adjudication of these claims would have to await a final peace treaty. In the meantime, however, Poland was permitted to administer all of Germany east of the Oder and western Neisse rivers. Thus Poland "administers" Silesia as well as large parts of East Prussia, Pomerania, and Brandenburg. Later the Soviets gave the Poles a valuable slice of land on the west bank of the Oder, including the important port of Stettin. Immediately the Polish government started to displace all German inhabitants of the area, and has acted ever since, with the support of the Soviet Union, as if this were a full cession. Thus Germany lost a large percentage of her best agricultural land.

Another important pronouncement concerned the forced removal of the remaining Germans from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary into Germany. The Big Three felt that the only way to solve the minority problem was to get rid of the minorities. The protocol called for an "equitable distribution" of the refugees among the four zones. In fact, this involved the movement of about ten million people with all the tragic dislocations that always accompany such an undertaking. The refugee problem remained an urgently serious one for a number of years. The refugees did not want to go where they were sent, and the population in the receiving areas did not want them. To say that the move was to be made equitably was of course a dream. Actually the British and American zones had to receive the bulk of the refugees. Thus within a few years Germany, with her much reduced agricultural and industrial capacity, had a larger population to support than before the war.

The statement of economic principles is of great interest, particularly in view of what was to occur in the future and also the change it marked from the earlier American policy of hands off the German economy short of danger to the American forces. The key statement read: "During the period of occupation Germany shall be treated as a single economic unit." The protocol went on to specify areas of economic activity in which common policies were to be established by the four powers acting through the Control Council. There was certainly no intent
to divide Germany into four airtight zones, each ruled by one of the powers independently of the others. Yet that was what developed.

In the matter of reparations, so vital to the Soviets, the Potsdam protocol did not mention any definite sum, although the Russians kept talking about ten billion dollars. The protocol provided that Russian and Polish reparations should come from the Soviet zone, with the addition that 15 per cent of the productive capacity of the Western zones unnecessary for the future German economy would be available to be sent to Russia in exchange for food and raw materials and another 10 per cent could be made available outright. There were two obvious omissions in this plan. The first was that there was no statement of how much the German economy was to produce; the second was that no reference was made to the possibility of taking reparations from current production. Details of this sort were to be decided by the Control Council. In fact the Russians had started to dismantle German factories as soon as they established themselves, and even before the Potsdam Conference large quantities of equipment had been sent eastward, reportedly in so haphazard a way that it was almost impossible to reassemble upon arrival.

The Control Council met regularly and apparently amicably during 1945 and into 1946. In bulk the number of laws it issued is impressive. However, as one analyzes the topics they dealt with, it is remarkable that they are almost all negative, carrying out in detail the abolition of Nazi institutions, decartelization, etc. The positive enactments were mostly unimportant, e.g., a law ordering the reopening of certain museums. The council busied itself with a policy on the level of industry to be permitted to the future Germany, essential before reparations deliveries could begin. The four powers differed greatly on this issue, with Britain willing to grant the highest level of steel production to the Germans. On the American side there was confusion owing to lack of co-ordination in the state department. By the spring of 1946 a figure was agreed upon, but the issue had become almost academic because the Russians were simply requisitioning current production from their zone to such an extent that they sent little or nothing to provision the West. The result was that the United States and Britain, which were sending needed supplies to their zones, were simply subsidizing Russian confiscations. This constituted a clear refusal on the part of the Russians to treat Germany as an economic unit. Accordingly on May 3, 1946, General Clay, deputy for military government to General McNaurney, the American military governor, suspended all reparations deliveries from the American zone to the Russians. This of course opened a breach
between the United States and Russia, which became wider as time progressed.

The Russians were not the only ones who impeded any real progress in the Control Council. The French proved themselves difficult colleagues. They refused to be bound by the decisions at Potsdam and in particular were adamant against any move to treat Germany as a unit. Their main interests were to remove the Ruhr from German control and to integrate the Saar into France. Thus they made life easier for the Russians, who could always count on a French veto in the Control Council if the question were one of carrying out the order from Potsdam to treat Germany as an economic unit.

Events outside Germany during 1946 and 1947—in the Balkans, in Greece, in the Far East, and at the stalemated meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers—widen the gap between the two sides of the iron curtain and forced the United States in particular to do some serious rethinking about its German policy. The results of this thought appeared gradually over the months. Within Germany the four zones went their separate ways, and the inhabitants were far more affected by the philosophy dominating the zone they lived in than by anything the Control Council might do. The new Germany was forming itself on a zonal, not a national basis.

The American occupation reflected some of the typical characteristics of Americans: a blend of puritanism, naïveté, generosity, and warm-heartedness. The authorities were limited by the terms of their directive, J.C.S. 1067, which prescribed the general philosophy of American military government. This document stemmed from the hard peace doctrine associated with the name of Henry Morgenthau, Jr., though it was somewhat watered down. It forbade any fraternization between Americans and Germans, the distribution of food other than to prevent epidemic or unrest, and any general control of the German economy. It was somewhat diluted by the Potsdam agreements, but remained technically in effect until well into 1947. The Americans took most seriously their responsibility for denazification. They tried more than four times as many suspect Germans as the other three occupying powers together. They distributed twelve million Fragebogen ("questionnaires"), in which Germans were required to answer one hundred thirty-one questions about their early lives. They carried over the historical American antitrust attitude into the decartelization program and forced some of the large firms to divide. They were stern in general about all forms of disarmament.

If the Americans were stern about the negative aspects of the occupa-
tion, they were almost overenthusiastic about the process of rebuilding German democracy. They rapidly started to set up a new political life for the Germans. An immediate problem was the division of the various zones into sensible units, for the zone boundaries often did not follow the old historical frontiers and there was a determination not to resurrect Prussia as an entity. The U.S. zone was divided into three Länder: Bavaria, with almost its historical area; Württemberg-Baden, made up of the northern halves of these old states; and Hesse, a conglomeration composed mainly of old Hesse-Darmstadt and some of the areas annexed by Prussia in 1866. A special case was the Bremen enclave, which was first ruled under general British direction with American officials but later included into the U.S. zone proper.

As early as August 1945 the Americans authorized the rebirth of political parties, and within a few months permitted them to operate at the Land level. They assumed a similar pattern in all four zones. The two largest were the Social Democratic party (SPD), the heir of the Weimar party of the same name, and the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), a sort of descendant of the old Center party but with a much higher proportion of Protestant membership. These two were respectively a bit left and a bit right of center. On the left the Communist party (KPD) was authorized, and by 1946 a number of smaller groups combined into the Free Democratic party (FDP), favoring free enterprise and cautious political liberalism.

The Americans wanted to hold elections as soon as possible, but to start the process at the "grass roots" level. Accordingly the first village elections were held as early as January 1946. To the delight of the authorities, a very large percentage of the electorate voted and registered a return to democracy with enthusiasm. During the year elections were held in larger units. In the summer the appointed minister-presidents of the three Länder designated committees to draft constitutions. These were ratified by large majorities, and by the beginning of 1947 the three states had parliamentary governments run by coalitions of the major parties except for the Communists, who won very few votes.

The stern policy of the American occupation persisted until 1947, although it was always tempered by the soft hearts of individual GI's. It took the increasing intransigence of the Russians, the realization that Europe in general could not recover if Germany did not, and the frightful suffering of the winter of 1946–47 to persuade Washington that the United States would have to take an active lead in the policy of recovery.

The British attitude was consistently far less doctrinaire than the American. Although Great Britain had suffered from the Germans much more than the United States, President Roosevelt always had trouble to
get the British to agree to his policy of a hard peace. During the early days of the occupation Britain followed a line of getting essential services into operation without paying very much concern to the personnel employed. Thus by the autumn of 1945 observers commented that Hamburg was functioning better than any other German city. In the summer of 1945 the Labor party assumed control in Britain. It was elected on a program of nationalization at home; it was to be expected that it would favor a similar policy in Germany and thus run counter to some American ideas of decreasing the size of German firms and encouraging free enterprise. The victory of free enterprise in Germany is probably the result of American economic dominance there after 1947 and also of German tradition. An overriding consideration for the British had to be the terribly serious economic condition in which Britain found herself after the war. She could not afford to pour vast sums into Germany and consequently had to take some decisions that she did not like. She had to encourage German recovery even at the expense of future competition in order to lessen the current burden on the British taxpayer.

The British zone consisted of large former Prussian areas, several smaller Länder, and the free city of Hamburg. By 1947 the British organized their zone into four Länder. One is Hamburg, another the Prussian province of Schleswig-Holstein. The former Prussian provinces, Rhineland and Westphalia, were united into a new Land, Rhineland-Westphalia, including the whole Ruhr industrial empire. A fourth Land, Lower Saxony, was constituted out of old Hanover and some of the small units nearby. The British moved more slowly than the Americans in granting self-government to the Länder, which at first adopted only provisional constitutions. Some of them did not adopt their final constitutions until after the formation of the German Federal Republic. The British instituted some of the forms of English local government and tried to avoid proportional representation but had varying success in different areas.

The French zone, carved out of the British and U.S. zones, consisted of two triangles composed of miscellaneous parts of western Germany. The southern one, which consisted of the southern halves of Baden and Württemberg, was organized into two separate Länder, although now they are integrated with the larger Land, Baden-Württemberg. The northern one included the Saar and an area composed of various prewar territories which the French called Rhine-Palatinate. During the years of the occupation France was so involved with her own domestic problems that she was able to give only scant attention to her responsibilities in Germany. The important part of her zone from her point of view was the Saar, which she integrated unilaterally into the French economy in 1946,
a situation which persisted for over ten years. As for the rest, she viewed her position as an occupying power as a recognition of her great power status and a lever to prevent German reunification. Perhaps her most interesting contribution was in the cultural sphere. She established a university at Mainz and arranged exchanges of exhibitions, music, lectures, etc., in an effort to make good Europeans out of these Germans on the fringe of French culture.

As usual, it is more difficult to analyze what the Russians had in mind as an occupation policy. Certainly they expected to strip Germany of huge amounts of reparations and anticipated carrying out a land reform, but the degree to which they thought they could communize their zone remains in question. When they established themselves in Germany, they plastered Berlin and other cities with large placards quoting anything nice about Germany which they could find in the Communist canon, e.g., Stalin's remark, “Hitlers come and go, but the German people and the German state remain.” The other powers criticized the Russians for being lax about denazification and for hiring former Nazis after a perfunctory recantation. Any German good will that the Russians hoped to earn this way was more than counteracted by the brutal behavior of the Red army, which looted, raped, and pillaged to its heart's content.

The Soviet Military Administration, at first under Marshal Zhukov, established itself at Karlshorst in eastern Berlin with five subsidiary headquarters, each under a general, for Mecklenburg-Pomerania, Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt, Saxony, and Thuringia. The Russian occupation continued to have a more military character than that of the Americans, British, and French, who gradually replaced their military officials with civilians.

The Soviets permitted the re-establishment of political parties as rapidly as the Americans. Here again there appeared the four usual parties, with the Communists as the smallest group. In their early appointments the Soviets were not able to find enough Communists to fill posts, so that they were in a minority. In early 1946 the Russians devised a plan to increase Communist strength. They proposed a fusion between the Communists and the Social Democrats to form a new party, the Socialist Unity party (SED). Otto Grotewohl, a former SPD leader, headed the fusion group from his party. Most of the SPD members in the Soviet zone joined the new group; in fact they had little choice, but the SED made little or no headway in Berlin or the Western zones. In the elections of October 1946 the SED polled a little less than half of the total votes cast in the Soviet zone. On the same day in Berlin, however, the SED received less than half the vote of the old SPD and also ran behind the CDU. Where there was real freedom of choice, the SED was a
failure; however, in the Soviet zone it has remained the favored and dominant party.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Soviet occupation has been the land reform, which the Russians seem to have planned in some detail before the end of the war. The Soviet zone and the territory handed to Poland comprised the traditional area of the landholding aristocracy of Prussia. More than 20 per cent of the land of the Soviet zone belonged to holdings of more than twenty-five hundred acres. The general rule applied by the Russians was to redistribute holdings of over two hundred fifty acres to landless peasants and refugees. It is significant that the Soviets did not collectivize the land; it was given to individuals who had the responsibility of making it produce at the peril of losing it. Eastern Germany is no longer a land of great holdings, but neither did it become one of collective farms; it became a land of smallholders.

Signs of disenchantment with the control machinery can be noted in 1946, signs that were precursors of events to occur during the next two years. One of the first was the offer of James Byrnes, American secretary of state, on July 11, 1946, to merge the American zone in economic matters with the zone of any other power interested. This was a pretty clear admission that the U.S. despaired of fulfilling the order of the Potsdam Conference to treat Germany as an economic unit. A few days later the British government accepted the American offer, and the two powers spent the rest of the summer implementing the plan. On September 5 the agreement was announced. The idea was to set up a number of boards manned by Germans to supervise economic policy for the new Bizonia. Much stress was laid on the fact that this was not a political arrangement but only an economic one. The boards were made responsible to a committee of the minister-presidents of the eight Länder involved. The breakdown of the zonal wall was intended to develop an exchange of food and industrial goods where they were most needed. It was hoped that the new plan would also lead to an increase of German export trade, essential if Germany were ever to support herself.

The following day Secretary Byrnes gave a momentous address at Stuttgart to an audience composed mostly of Americans but with some Germans present. It was a measured and cautious speech, but its significance lies in the fact that for the first time since the war an Allied official was speaking to the Germans as if they were human beings with a democratic political future before them. Byrnes accepted the French future of the Saar, but very carefully did not speak of the Polish border as permanent. He pointed out that America looked forward to a democratic central government for Germany to be devised by Germans and run by them. "The American people want to return the government of
Germany to the German people. The American people want to help the
German people to win their way back to an honorable place among the
free and peace-loving nations of the world.” This speech is often con-
sidered the turning point of the occupation.

The winter of 1946–47 was one of the coldest in the history of Eu-
rope. From December to March there was no relief. The suffering of the
Germans from cold and malnutrition was intense. People slept in rail-
way stations or in old air-raid shelters, where there was a little warmth.
Mines and factories had to shut down because the workers were not
strong enough to work.

President Truman had asked Herbert Hoover the year before to study
the food situation in Europe in general. Now he asked him to go to
Europe again and report on Germany in particular. Hoover’s report
makes dismal reading; he found the situation in Germany far worse than
anywhere else in Europe. He recommended emergency shipments of
foodstuffs. Army stocks of food were now allocated for the population.

By early 1947 the administration in Washington was fully aware of
the Communist menace and ready to believe that the German menace
was a thing of the past, that in fact Germany should be encouraged and
helped to recover. In March President Truman formulated the Truman
Doctrine when he asked Congress for a large loan to help Greece and
Turkey fend off Communism. In June General George Marshall, Byrnes’s
successor at the state department, announced the Marshall Plan, a
promise to extend vast grants and credits to promote European recovery.
The original Marshall Plan included all of Europe except Germany, but
by December Germany was included after the Soviet Union and its
satellites had refused any American aid. In the summer of 1947 a new
directive from the joint chiefs of staffs replaced the old severe J.C.S.
1067 and repeated American plans to help German recovery. The old
attitudes were completely reversed.

An essential condition precedent to economic recovery in Germany
was a reform of the currency. During the Nazi period and the war years
Germany underwent a considerable inflation, although the controls im-
posed by the Nazis veiled the fact. With the collapse in 1945 the cur-
rency system collapsed also. The Allies printed occupation marks at a
ratio of ten to a dollar, but unfortunately a set of plates to print this
money was given to the Russians, who kept their presses constantly busy.
Thus the United States was underwriting the Russian financial system in
Germany. In fact currency became so valueless that it virtually passed
out of circulation and was replaced by the cigarette as the standard of
value. The author can recall blackboards on which the current prices
of different brands of American cigarettes for that day were chalked up,
The situation was chaotic in the extreme and realized as such by all concerned, including the Russians.

Negotiations went on between East and West to reform the currency, but as usual the Russians were recalcitrant. Finally fearing that the Russians would unilaterally issue a revalued currency, the Western powers decided to get ahead of them. The French agreed to this, and for all practical purposes after the summer of 1948 Bizonia became Trizonia. The details of the currency reform are complex and need not detain us here; they are reminiscent of the year 1923. The reichsmark was withdrawn and replaced by the new Deutsche mark at a ratio of 6.5 to 100. This, of course, again hurt the saver and the fixed income groups, but it gave an enormous impulse to production. The Germans went on a shopping spree. They discovered that there were things to buy which had been withheld from the market while the currency was so unstable. Production increased by leaps and bounds as the currency remained dependable and as Marshall Plan money started to pour in. These events were the watershed between collapse and recovery in Germany. The Soviets retaliated by issuing a new ostmark for their zone and their sector in Berlin, thus further complicating the topsy-turvy state of Berlin, where at this same time the most dramatic events of the occupation were occurring.

By late 1947 there was no further attempt by either Russia or the Western powers to conceal their mutual antipathy. The earlier efforts to wash dirty linen in private was a thing of the past. The Russians were openly critical, even vituperative, about such actions as the Marshall Plan, the establishment of Bizonia, which they called an effort to keep Germany permanently divided, and the forthcoming currency reform. When the U.S. and Britain met at London with France to concert plans to establish a west German government, the Russians struck. The Control Council met for the last time on March 20, 1948. At this meeting Marshal Sokolovsky, who had succeeded Marshal Zhukov, demanded to know the results of the conference in London. The American military governor, General Lucius Clay, replied that he could not provide the information without reference to the three Western governments. Sokolovsky then read a long prepared statement of grievances against the West, declared the meeting adjourned, and walked out of the room. This was the end of quadripartite government in Germany.

Within a few days the blockade of Berlin began. It developed gradually, as the Soviets little by little cut off all surface access to the city. Their position was that Berlin was really in the Soviet zone; that the Western powers had been allowed there only to take part in the Control Council; and that since joint government of Germany had ended, the
Westerners must leave. General Clay and his British and French colleagues insisted that they were there by right of conquest and of the Yalta and Potsdam conferences. Unfortunately, they could not produce any document guaranteeing access to Berlin. That had been taken for granted in the optimistic days of 1945. By the summer of 1948 all approaches to Berlin by rail, road, and water were closed. Only the air remained open, and even here the Russians made difficulties. While it would not be very difficult to supply Allied personnel by air, the prospect of providing the German population of over two million in the three Western sectors with food and fuel by air looked impossible. More than anyone else, General Clay deserves the credit for attempting it. He received constant support from the Truman administration, the Air Force, and his British and French allies. Little by little the airlift (or airbridge as the Germans called it) became effective with a goal of supplying eight thousand tons of supplies a day in spite of the severe north German winter which lay just ahead.

The blockade of Berlin became involved with the currency reform. In fact, the Soviets acted as if the blockade were caused by the reform, a patently untrue position, since the blockade was well under way before the reform was announced. Numerous conferences ensued, mostly at the diplomatic level and usually in Moscow, with Stalin himself taking part in one of them. The details were very complicated, hinging around the introduction of a new currency in Berlin and around the new organization of Western Germany. On several occasions it looked as if the questions were settled, but then the Russians would raise new difficulties. They were playing for time in the hope that the airlift would fail. They tried to woo the inhabitants of West Berlin with all kinds of blandishments, including food and fuel, hoping that they could lure the Germans away from the West; but they failed. The Berliners exhibited a stoical stubborn loyalty to the West which was amazing; they preferred to suffer privations rather than to accept handouts from the East.

In early 1949 the Soviets realized that the airlift had been successful and the winter was over. In March the Western powers introduced the Deutsche mark into their sectors of Berlin, and thus made Berlin a city divided economically as it already was politically. At about the same time the North Atlantic Treaty Organization came into existence. The Soviet government now decided to retreat as gracefully as possible. As a result of negotiations held at a United Nations meeting, surface traffic started to move between Berlin and the West on May 12, 1949. Three days later General Clay left Germany because now the state department was to exercise control rather than military government. The Berliners have erected a monument to the airlift in front of Tempelhof airport.
They have named a principal street Clayallee. One wonders how many vanquished cities have perpetuated the memory of the head of a military occupation.

The end of the blockade ushered in a new period in German history. In May 1949 the German Federal Republic was proclaimed at Bonn. A few months later the Soviets proclaimed the German Democratic Republic in the east. Now there were two Germanies.