

The Berlin Wall

The Berlin Wall (German: Berliner Mauer) was once called the "Anti-Fascist Protection Wall" by the Government of the German Democratic Republic (German: Antifaschistischer Schutzwall) and by the people of the Federal Republic of Germany "The wall" . The "Wall of Shame" is part of Germany's internal border and separates the West German part of West Berlin from the eastern part of the city and the territory of the German Democratic Republic that has surrounded West Berlin since 1999. Date August 13, 1961 to November This wall is one of the most famous symbols of the Cold War and the division of Germany. About 5,000 people tried to cross the wall into West Berlin. The number of people killed while climbing the wall ranges from 86 to 200 people.

History

After World War II ended, Germany was divided into four occupation zones according to the Yalta Conference, controlled and managed by the Allied countries (USA, Soviet Union, Great Britain and France). Berlin was once the capital of Nazi Germany, and was also divided into four regions similar to Germany. At the same time, the Cold War between East and West also began in many different aspects. Berlin became the center of a war between intelligence agencies on both sides. In 1948 the Soviet Union's Berlin Blockade was one of the first major crises of the Cold War.

In 1949, when the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was established within the three occupied zones in the west, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany)

was established within the occupied zones of the West. Soviet state, the border began to be reinforced and guarded by both sides. The creation of two states laid the foundation for the political division of Germany. At first, only border police and border troops were assigned to guard between East Germany and West Germany, then East Germany began building many barriers. Formally, Berlin has the structure of a city consisting of four regions and is a demilitarized city for the German army, and is also an independent city from both German states - things This is actually no longer valid in practice. In many ways, West Berlin has almost the status of a state, such as having representation (but no voting rights) in the German Federal Parliament (Bundestag). Going against the signed agreement, East Berlin became the capital of East Germany.

When the Cold War escalated, leading to many things such as the high-tech embargo of COCOM for the Eastern European bloc, continuous diplomatic warfare and military threats, the East increased its border closure. Therefore, this border is not simply a border between two parts of Germany but has become a border between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Community, between NATO and Warsaw, that is, between the Capitalist bloc. and the Socialist bloc.

Build the wall

The wall was built under the instructions of the leadership of the Socialist United Party of Germany (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands - SED), under the protection and guard of the People's Police and the National People's Army - left with the assurances of the Chairman of the State Council of East Germany, Walter Ulbricht, who at an international press

conference in East Berlin on June 15, 1961 answered a question from West German journalist Annamarie Doherr :

"My understanding of your question is that there are people in West Germany who want us to mobilize construction workers from the capital of East Germany to build a wall. I don't know that there is such an intention because of the workers." The capital's construction industry has devoted all their efforts to building mainly residential houses. No one has any intention of erecting a wall!"

That's why Ulbricht was the first to use the concept of the wall in this regard - two months before the wall was erected.

Although the Western Allied troops had information about the plan for "hard measures" to blockade West Berlin through trusted people, they were still surprised at the specific timing and scale of the barrier. Because access to West Berlin was not compromised, the West did not intervene militarily. The German Federal Intelligence Agency (Bundesnachrichtendienst - BND) also received much similar information as early as mid-July. After Ulbricht visited Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchyov during the high-level meeting of Warsaw Pact countries in Moscow. From August 3 to August 5, the BND's weekly report on August 9 recorded:

"Information shows that the Pankow regime is trying to gain Moscow's consent to carry out more effective preventive measures – among them in particular the tightening of the borders of the occupied areas in Berlin and disrupting metro and rapid train traffic in Berlin. [...] it remains to be seen whether Ulbricht [...] in Moscow [...] will be able to meet the

requirements for whether or not and to what extent it can be achieved."

The country is divided

From June 1, 1952 residents of West Berlin were no longer allowed to freely enter East Germany. After lengthy negotiations the Passierscheinabkommen Agreement was signed in 1963, enabling hundreds of thousands of West Berliners to visit relatives in the eastern part of the city at the end of the year.

Starting in the early 1970s with the policy of access between East Germany and West Germany initiated by Willy Brandt and Erich Honecker, the borders of the two countries were slightly expanded. East Germany began to allow easier travel, especially for "non-productive" groups such as retirees, and allowed West German citizens to visit more simply from near the borders. gender. A broad freedom of travel was linked by East Germany to its institutional recognition as an independent state and to the request for the return of East German citizens who traveled but did not wish to return. West Germany did not want to satisfy these demands because the constitution did not allow it.

In propaganda, East Germany called this wall as well as all border protection the "anti-fascist wall", protecting East Germany against "immigration, infiltration, and espionage". espionage, sabotage, smuggling, extortion and aggression from the West". In fact, these defense systems were mainly directed against East Germany's own citizens.

The wall collapsed

The wall collapsed on the night of Thursday, November 9, after more than 28 years. Leading to the opening of the wall were, on the one hand, massive demonstrations and demands for freedom of movement within the former East Germany, and on the other hand, the continuous "republican escape" (Republikflucht) of a large number of people from East Germany to West Germany went through foreign countries such as Hungary, which opened its border with Austria on September 11, or directly from Czechoslovakia from early November or through German embassies in other countries. capitals of countries in Eastern Europe (including embassies in Prague and Warsaw).

Migrate

A total of half a million West Germans went to East Germany, most before the Berlin Wall was built, a number that also included the number of East Germans who returned to their homeland. Meanwhile, 3.8 million East Germans left to live in West Germany. People from West to East often believe that East Germany is an ideologically anti-Fascist country, especially when the Communist Party was banned from operating in West Germany in 1956. In 1954 alone, 75,000 people went to East Germany, despite Even so Of course, more than half were returnees, people who had previously come from East Germany. 35% said it was due to family reasons, 25% said it was due to being unemployed for a long time. During this time, East Germany lured them with promises

such as priority residency, guaranteed employment, and easy access to loans. There are people who specialize in advertising this to import the labor shortage in East Germany. However, when the wall was built, almost no one wanted to go to East Germany, because they know that if they leave, they will not be allowed to return. According to 1968 statistics, 1,500 people went to East Germany, 2/3 were returnees - because no one who went to West Germany was satisfied with their new life, some were homesick, had difficulty integrating and were disappointed because they expected too much. High. As for those who came in the 1970s and 80s, most of them were sent by the German Communist Party (West Germany) (DKP), founded in 1968, to study the advantages of socialism. member of "Rote-Armee-Fraktion" (RAF), was given shelter by East German security agencies to avoid West German arrest.

However, East German security agencies were always suspicious and followed them. As for the people, they don't understand why the West Germans came to this side. They are often considered to have problems in society or to be close to the Communist regime in power. So there is political and social isolation that leads to return migration. Before the wall was built, the number of returns was more than 50%. It demonstrated the political frustration of East Germany's new citizens.