

Berlin Airlift: Children Hope for Chocolates (July 1948)

Abstract

At the end of the war, Germany was divided into four occupation zones. The city of Berlin, located squarely within the Soviet occupation zone, was itself divided into four separate zones. Three were controlled by the Western powers (the United States, Great Britain, and France); the fourth was controlled by the Soviets and served as the capital of the zone. On June 24, 1948, in response to the introduction of the DM in the western sectors of Berlin, the Soviet Union initiated a blockade of Berlin, cutting off all access to the city's western sectors (via roads, railroads and waterways). Two days later, the Berlin Airlift was launched under orders from General Lucius D. Clay. From June 26, 1948 – May 12, 1949, when the Soviet blockade was lifted, the airlift delivered food and other necessities to over two million people in West Berlin. (Flights continued through September 1949 in order to stockpile supplies in case of another blockade.) The operation required the transport of 5,000 tons of goods a day, with British and American planes taking off and landing every three minutes. The airplanes were particularly beloved by children, since some rained chocolates and other sweets on the youngsters below as they approached for landing.

Source



Source: Berlin children cheer the arrival of a transport plane with relief supplies approaching Tempelhof Airport. Date: July 1948. Unknown photographer.

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