# INFRASTRUCTURAL CHANGES IN BERLIN*

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ABSTRACT. Political decisions divided postwar Berlin and isolated West Berlin politically from its immediate environment of East Germany and spatially from West Germany. These political circumstances have had a permanent impact upon the city's locational infrastructure. The growing peripherality of West Berlin to West German life has reduced the scope of activity in the city's public and private sectors. In Berlin itself the separation of east from west required the construction of new municipal facilities in both. The split, together with wartime damage and postwar dismantling, sharply reduced the functions of its old core area, located in what is now East Berlin near the West Berlin border. In its place have emerged separate core areas in West and East Berlin, as revealed by patterns of construction, land use, traffic, and population movement. Planners in the two Berlins are no longer able to coordinate their activities to work toward a reunified city. KEY WORDS: *Berlin, City planning, Core area, Infrastructural change, Integration, Political division.*

POLITICAL decisions have multifarious effects upon the spatial organization of a community. The decision to locate a town upon the banks of a river or the side of a hill carries with it certain implications for the way in which its citizens lay out their streets, locate their central business district, organize their sanitation facilities, or plan for the town's growth. The infrastructural consequences are well known from historical studies of urban life. Similarly, we have some notion of what happens after a decision to relocate a large manufacturing company from the center of a city into the suburbs, construct a major highway through some portion of the city, or plan for the redevelopment of its "inner city."

An analogous situation occurs when political decisions split a community into separate parts with severely limited possibilities for interaction. The city of Berlin is such a case. World War II and its aftermath produced three disruptive waves—wartime destruction, postwar dismantling, and growing cold war hostility leading up to the Berlin blockade of mid-1948—that culminated in the city's political division. Since November 1948 there have been separate and inimical governments in the Soviet sector on the one hand and, on the other, the three western sectors. This process of division received its capstone in August 1961 when the East Germans built a wall of concrete and barbed wire between the two halves of the city, and in September 1971 when quadripartite agreements paved the way for stabilizing the new status quo.

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## THE LOSS OF CORE AREA FUNCTIONS

A political consequence of the occupation and division of Greater Berlin was its loss of the central importance that it once had for Germany as a whole. This is less true for East than for West Berlin. The Soviet Union maintains occupation rights, but East Berlin is the capital of the German Democratic Republic (GDR, or Deutsche Demokratische Republik). For more than two decades, but particularly since the construction of the wall in 1961, it has served an organizing function for East German life. The American, British, and French hold occupation rights in the western sectors, even after the quadripartite accords of September 1971. They blocked West German efforts in 1949 to integrate West Berlin formally into the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG, or Bundesrepublik Deutschland) as a full-fledged state. In all but name, however, West Berlin has attained that status. West Germany's communi-

cation, social, economic, and organizational patterns extend to the island-city. Unless the occupying powers exercise their veto right, laws adopted by the federal parliament semiautomatically become part of West Berlin's legal code.

Political decisions thus turned West Berlin into an exclave.[1] More than 2.1 million people inhabit its 185 square miles (480 km²). Over half (fifty-six percent) is built-up, twenty-two percent comprises forests, lakes, and waterways, and fourteen percent is devoted to agriculture and gardening. Around its 100-mile perimeter, beyond solid walls and armed guards, lies the German Democratic Republic, to which West Berliners have only restricted access. The FRG lies more than a hundred miles to the West. Highway, rail, canal, and airlines routes connecting West Berlin with West Germany pass through the GDR, requiring, except in the case of air travel, more or less extensive checks by East German border guards. Agreements concluded in early 1972 between the two Germanies should make access and transit easier, but without mitigating essentially the physical isolation of West Berlin.

These political and locational circumstances have had a dramatic effect upon the life of postwar West Berlin. Of particular importance at the outset was the part played by the Western occupying powers. The combination of decentralizing policies in the first months of the occupation, and the subsequent refusal to accept any measure that could jeopardize the principle of four-power responsibility for the whole of Berlin, meant an initial delay in recreating those economic and other patterns of prewar Germany that had Berlin as their central node. When life began to assume more normal proportions in the FRG, and especially as its economy began to boom, West Germans began to construct new patterns that did not center on Berlin. Rather than wait until a reunited Germany could move forward together, West Germans chose to move ahead without their former capital city in the hope that political conditions would someday enable Berlin to catch up and possibly assume the lead once again.[2]

West Berlin's geographic isolation and its constant exposure to harassment from the East made it risky to stress its centrality to German reconstruction. Few really felt that the city would fall wholly into the hands of the GDR. More real were the ever-present danger of a new blockade, periodic hindrances to the flow of people and goods along the main highways connecting West Germany and West Berlin, and the simple nuisance of being so far away from other centers of West German economic activity. Symbolic and financial considerations made maintaining a foothold in West Berlin worthwhile, but few business firms relished the thought of tying their own fortunes too closely to those of West Berlin.

West Berlin, the larger part of the city that had once been the very heart of Germany, soon found itself at the periphery of West German life. It had been the main arena for prewar Germany's largest banks. Their postwar successors, however, have located in West Germany, creating West Berlin subsidiaries that "are important only within the money and credit system of West Berlin, not that of the rest of Germany."[3] Advertising moved to Frankfurt, Hamburg, and, more recently, Düsseldorf, which is rapidly becoming the FRG's "Madison Avenue."[4] Once the source of national newspapers, West Berlin with its increasingly provincial press has given

[1] On the geography of postwar Berlin, see G. W. S. Robinson, "West Berlin: The Geography of an Exclave," *The Geographical Review,* Vol. 43 (1953), pp. 540–57; Peter Schöller, "Stadtgeographische Probleme des geteilten Berlin," *Erdkunde,* Vol. 7 (1953), pp. 1–11; Hans-Georg Schindler, "Die Sektorengrenze und ihre Auswirkung auf das Stadtbild," *Geographische Rundschau,* Vol. 7 (1955), pp. 308–12; G. W. S. Robinson, "Exclaves," *Annals,* The Association of American Geographers, Vol. 49 (1959), pp. 283–95; Klaus Schroeder, "Struktur und Funktion einer geteilten Stadt," in E. Meynen, ed., *Geographisches Taschenbuch und Jahrweiser für Landeskunde, 1962/63* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH., 1962), pp. 75–100; Ferdinand Friedensburg, "The Geographical Elements in the Berlin Situation," *Geographical Journal,* Vol. 133 (1967), pp. 137–47; and T. H. Elkins, *Germany* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1968), 2d ed., pp. 309–20.

[2] The selection of Bonn as the "provisional" capital of the nascent Federal Republic rested, among other things, upon its insignificance as a major center with strong regional interests. The sleepy university town on the Rhine River did not pose the threat to Berlin's position as capital city (that is, to the principle of reunification) that such metropolises as Frankfurt or Hamburg might have. But, as the French say, there is nothing so permanent as the provisional!

[3] Hans Weber, *Der Bankplatz Berlin* (Köln and Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1957), p. 205.

[4] Jürgen Jahns, "Deutschlands heimliche Madison Avenue: Düsseldorf als Zentrum der Werbung," *Die Welt* (Berlin ed.), July 4, 1970, "Die geistige Welt," p. iii.

up this role to Hamburg and Frankfurt.[5] The city's ladies' garment manufacturers, who had produced eighty-five percent of prewar Germany's entire output, are now struggling to keep pace with the new fashion centers of Munich and Düsseldorf.[6]

Political and eventually physical barriers between West Berlin and the adjacent area did little to improve the quality of life in the city. In 1938, for instance, the city was heavily reliant upon this area for its food. All the milk, ninety-three percent of the potatoes, and sixty-five percent of the food grains imported into Greater Berlin came from German farms now a part of the GDR, Poland, or the Soviet Union; postwar West Berlin, with 21.5 square yards of agricultural land per person, must import most of its foodstuff from West Germany or abroad.[7] Similarly, a star-shaped rapid transit system had brought workers from the suburbs into the city; in 1960, shortly before the construction of the wall stopped virtually all traffic from the GDR into West Berlin, only a minuscule fraction (0.3 percent) of its work force came from outside the city, and a mere 5.6 percent from the eight boroughs of East Berlin.[8] Limitations upon commerce with Warsaw Pact countries and extensive construction in the GDR to reroute rail and even canal traffic have effectively removed West Berlin from its central position in a major transportation network.[9]

Though separated from its traditional hinterland, now the GDR, and occupying a peripheral position in the life of the FRG, West Berlin has not died on the vine. The governments of West Berlin and West Germany have expended considerable financial and political capital to prevent this. Heavy subsidies to the municipal government cover construction and budgetary deficits, to industries in the form of tax relief keep them in West Berlin or encourage them to trade with West Berlin firms, and to individual citizens compensate them for the hardships of life in the island outpost. West Berliners have not shared fully in the economic progress of the FRG, to be sure, but they are not far behind. A constant flow of political pressure and propaganda to maintain at least the status quo in the city has sometimes prevented the FRG from attaining other policy goals, such as détente with the East, desired by its citizens.

What is happening is a process of adjustment: West Berlin is reducing the scope of its political and economic activity to bring it into balance with its current capabilities. In the short run this process can turn West Berlin into a self-sufficient, viable political entity, besides making life in the city even more pleasantly bearable. Its long-run effect, however, is to reinforce the consequences of the city's political division: the encapsulation and withdrawal of West Berlin from its traditional hinterland, and the acceptance by West Berlin of a peripheral position in West German life, in contrast to the centrality enjoyed by Greater Berlin in pre-1945 Germany.

## A NEW CORE

West Berlin, cut off from its former core area, has had to develop a new one on its own soil. The victorious Allies of World War II divided Greater Berlin into four sectors for occupation. The Americans and British (later joined

[5] "The 'frontline' atmosphere [of the postwar years] ruined the Berlin press, which once was great and famous throughout the world. It became local, aggressive, and also so unpolitical that it hardly pushed beyond the walls of the city. . . . A bunch of provincial rags. . . ." Horst Krüger, "Die Reise nach Westberlin: Bilder aus einer beschädigten Stadt (I)," *Die Zeit,* July 28, 1967, p. 10.

[6] Werner Dopp, "Vom Hausvogteiplatz zur Gedächtniskirche," *Berlin im Spiegel,* Vol. 3 (February 1960), p. 33; and Uwe Schlicht, "Ringen der Modestädte," *Der Tagesspiegel,* October 11, 1970, p. 16.

[7] Horst Funk, "Die Lebensmittelversorgung West-Berlins," *Geographische Rundschau,* Vol. 15 (1963), pp. 333–42.

[8] Otto Schlier, "Berlins Verflechtung mit der Umwelt früher und heute," *Geographische Rundschau,* Vol. 11 (1959), pp. 134–43; data on work force from Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, *Statistisches Jahrbuch Berlin 1960* (Berlin: Kulturbuch Verlag, 1960), p. 123.

[9] Walter Behrmann, "Die Lage Berlins im Wandel der Zeiten," in *Die unzerstörbare Stadt: Die raumpolitische Lage und Bedeutung Berlins* (Köln and Berlin: Carl Heymanns Verlag KG, for the Institut für Raumforschung Bonn, 1953), pp. 46–55; and Ilse Wolff, "Die Verkehrssituation Berlins nach dem Kriege," ibid., pp. 106–11. For a discussion of the position of prewar Berlin, see Ernst Gerlach, "Berlin im deutschen und europäischen Verkehr," ibid., pp. 87–105. For East German views, see *Berlin: Die Hauptstadt der DDR und ihr Umland,* Wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (Botha/Leipzig: VEB Hermann Haack, Geographisch-Kartographische Anstalt, 1969), Vol. 10, pp. 237–71 by Alfred Zimm; the Zimm article is a short version of his *Zur Funktion der geographischen Lage Westberlins* (Gotha/Leipzig: VEB Hermann Haack, Geographisch-Kartographische Anstalt, 1969).

by the French) shared twelve boroughs in the west, containing fifty-four percent of the city's land and sixty-two percent of its postwar (1946) population. The remaining eight boroughs comprised the Soviet sector. Unlike occupied Vienna, also broken into occupation sectors from 1945 to 1955, but with the central borough under joint and alternating control, Berlin's central borough (Mitte) was totally within the Soviet sector.

Just as Greater Berlin was the main core area for prewar Germany, so too Mitte was the heart of Berlin. It contained the Reich's most important administrative offices, the city hall, and key embassies. Streets such as Unter den Linden and monuments such as the Brandenburg Gate were known to the world. Mitte had the university, state library, world-famous museums, state opera, cathedral, national theater, and a host of other cultural establishments. It was the center of Germany's newspaper and book trade. Two-thirds of Berlin's insurance firms, three-quarters of its banks, and half of its ladies' garment manufacturers were located within a few blocks of each other. Mitte, no more than 4.1 square miles in size, clearly set prewar Germany's political, economic, and cultural patterns.

Wartime destruction all but wiped out Mitte. Not a single building was left untouched, and most were totally destroyed by the bombings or vicious street fighting that led to the Soviet capture of Hitler's chancellery. In many instances, given the cost of rebuilding and the urgent demands of other priorities, Soviet and later GDR officials simply tore down what was left of such historic buildings as the former royal palace, and for ideological reasons these same officials were not overly eager to contribute to the restoration of the borough as the center of German capitalist enterprise. Ruins left standing and acres upon acres of flat space where once buildings had stood gave the entire area an aura of desolation that lasted until well into the 1960s.

After the fighting stopped and the occupation began, however, Mitte once more became the focal point of Berlin life. The city hall and other municipal offices began operations under the aegis of the occupying powers, particularly the Soviet Union. Theaters, the university, and the opera opened their doors again. The electricity and gas companies, along with other municipal utilities with headquarters in the borough, undertook the task of restoring vital services to the beleagured Berliners. To all this activity was added a new note, born of ideological intrigue, a flourishing black market, threats and counterthreats, and withal the emerging alienation of the cold war.

The growing East-West intransigence came to a head during the blockade months from June, 1948, to May, 1949. The Soviet Union evidently felt that such a step would force the Western powers to recognize Soviet preeminence in decision-making about Berlin's future; its leaders may even have hoped that the West would be forced to withdraw from an untenable situation. The United States, however, supported by Britain and France, responded with a counterblockade of the Soviet zone of occupation and an airlift operation that was to provision two and a quarter million West Berliners for ten and a half months. Faced by the West's countermeasures, the Soviet Union opted to split the city. In August, 1948, Soviet-inspired mobs prevented representatives from the western sectors from entering the city hall, even threatening bodily harm in some instances. These delegates, constituting a majority of the entire Magistrate, withdrew to the American sector where they reconstituted themselves as the sole "legitimate" government of Greater Berlin. Meanwhile Communist leaders in the Soviet sector organized a new Magistrate, proclaimed in November 1948 as the sole "legitimate" government of Greater Berlin. Ensuing months saw the division of the municipal utilities and other elements of municipal life. By the time the Soviet Union lifted its blockade in May 1949, Berliners found themselves under two separate governments, not one.

### *Central Business District*

The loss of Mitte as an organizing focus produced varying degrees of disorientation among West Berliners. Least problematic was the search for a new central business district. Even before the war writers and statisticians had noticed certain movements away from Mitte. The most important was the emergence of a fashionable shopping center near the Berlin zoo and the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in the borough of Charlottenburg, about two miles southwest of the Brandenburg Gate (Fig. 1). For a distance of well over a mile Tauentzien Street and Kurfürstendamm presented a glittering array of expensive shops, and luxurious apartments continued even farther. Though

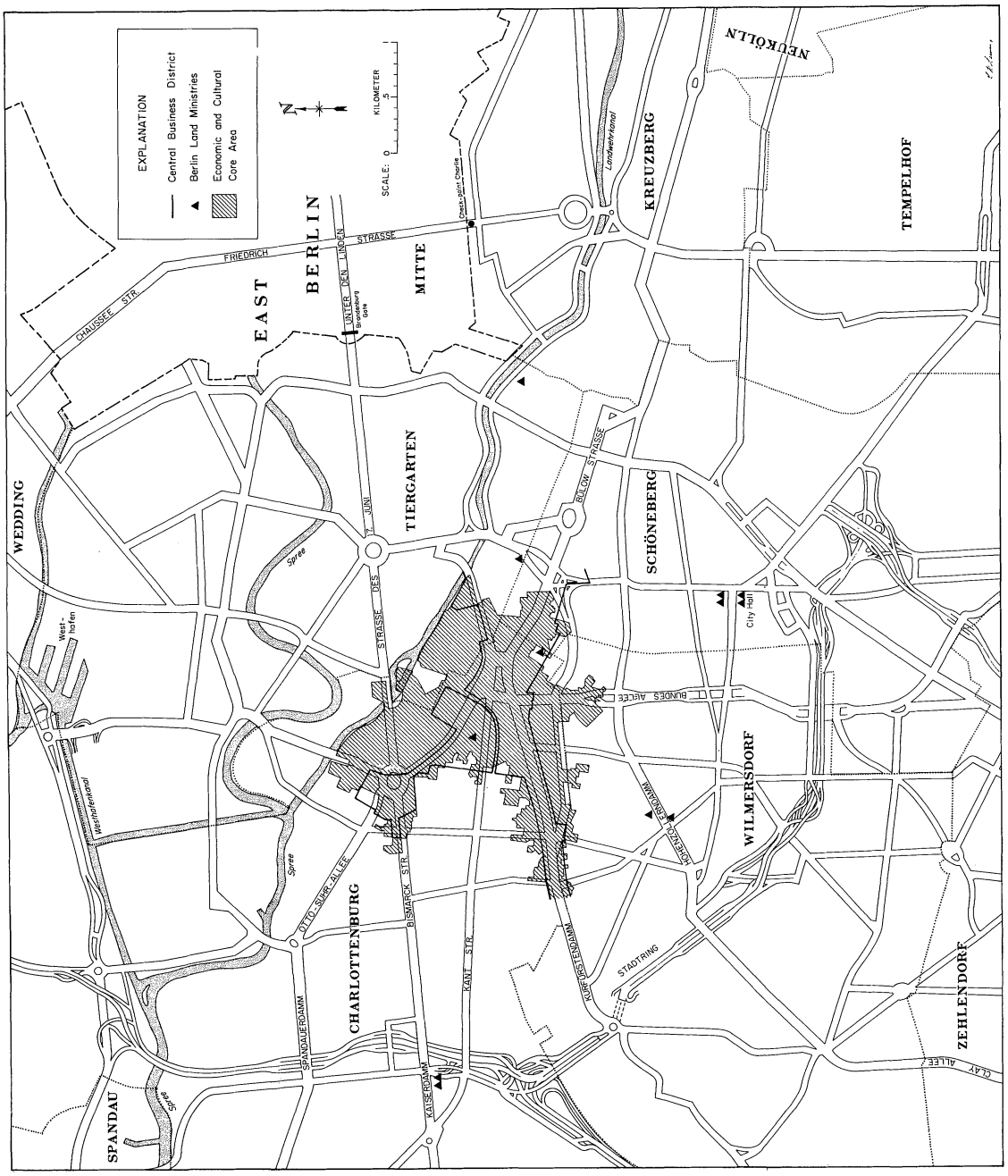


FIG. 1. The Zoo Quarter, West Berlin's core area in 1973, after West Berlin government sources and K. Schroeder, *Deutscher Planungsatlas: Atlas von Berlin* (Hanover: Gebrüder Jänecke Verlag, 1962).

heavy, wartime damage left many of these buildings in usable shape. Their availability, plus the inability of some entrepreneurs to get Soviet permission to reestablish their businesses in Mitte, had led to a small-scale revival of this area even before the blockade.

Political division and the economic recovery of West Berlin during the early 1950s merely enhanced this trend. Before the decade was over the Zoo Quarter had firmly established itself as West Berlin's central business district. The borough of Charlottenburg, which had six of Greater Berlin's 236 banks in 1938, had forty (thirty-six percent) of West Berlin's 112 banks in 1960, and thirty-four of these were in the few blocks comprising the Zoo Quarter at the eastern end of the borough. The home of six insurance firms (four percent) in the prewar years, Charlottenburg had thirty-seven (twenty-one percent) and the Zoo Quarter twenty-nine in 1960, and the area immediately west of the Zoo Quarter had another sixty-seven (thirty-eight percent).[10] The stock market is in the Zoo Quarter, as are the headquarters of advertising, public relations, and other commercial firms.

The Zoo Quarter has also become the central focal point of tourists and West Berlin residents alike. It houses the city's best restaurants and night spots, its first-run movie houses, and its most exclusive shops. The entire borough of Charlottenburg accounted for forty-three percent of West Berlin's hotels in 1955 and half of its hotel beds.[11] At the periphery of the Zoo Quarter is a lively underworld trading in women and drugs. At its center are the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church and the brightly-lit Kurfürstendamm which, along with the Brandenburg Gate, have come to symbolize postwar Berlin in the popular mind, just as the magnificent Unter den Linden did for old Berlin.

### A POLITICAL BELT

When representatives of the western boroughs were thrown out of Greater Berlin's city hall in August 1948, they repaired to the administrative offices of the borough of Schöneberg to set up shop again. Given the circumstances, the decision was not a bad one. The building had come through the war relatively unscathed. It was near what was becoming West Berlin's new central business district—about a mile and a half south of the Zoo Quarter—and at the same time sufficiently deep inside the American sector that it could be protected from possible incursions of East Berlin mobs. Most important, the Schöneberg city hall was spacious enough to accommodate West Berlin's central administration for some time to come. This had immense symbolic value; the construction of a new city hall in West Berlin would have sealed the political division of the city. Camping in Schöneberg's offices stressed the "temporary" character of the political split, and strengthened the West Berlin government's asserted right to return to the old city hall in Mitte.

The Schöneberg city hall was not large enough, however, to contain West Berlin's entire administrative structure. Officials had to locate usable buildings or build new ones. The combination of available space, differential land costs (increasingly high in the Zoo Quarter), and the desire for proximity to the Schöneberg city hall produced a belt of administrative offices south of the central business district (Fig. 1). Only one ministry (Transportation and Municipal Services) is located directly in the Zoo Quarter, although another (Finance) is at its southern boundary. The remainder are in an area about a mile wide and three miles long northwest of the Schöneberg city hall.

### SHIFTING RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS

Residential patterns began to accommodate themselves to the changing structure of West Berlin. The main concern of city officials in the first decade after the blockade was to make habitable partially destroyed buildings and construct new ones in the inner boroughs. This strategy provided more housing for people more quickly, without incurring the need to build new ancillary services (such as sewers and transportation networks) in the city's outermost reaches. Indeed, fifty-two percent of the newly available dwelling units from 1950 to 1960 were in the six inner boroughs (which had a steady proportion of fifty-three percent of all dwelling units in West Berlin during those years). Public attention focused upon housing developments in the inner city, most particularly in the Hansa Quarter near the zoo, constructed in the mid-

[10] Data on the location of firms are from the 1938 and 1960 editions of *Berliner Stadt-Adressbuch* (Berlin: Berliner Stadt-Adressbuch, 1938 and 1960).

[11] Data are from Rudolf Krause, *Die Berliner City: Frühere Entwicklung, Gegenwärtige Situation, Mögliche Perspektiven* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1958), pp. 72–73.

1950s within the framework of an international architectural competition.

The 1960s emphasized the construction of mammoth housing projects at the periphery of the city, although not especially on the boundary between East and West Berlin. Far to the south was Gropius City, completed in 1964 and providing 15,000 apartments for some 50,000 people. Far to the north was the slightly larger Märkische Quarter, completed at the end of the decade and providing housing for an estimated 65,000 West Berliners. The percentage of West Berlin's population living in the outer boroughs increased from fifty in 1960 to fifty-four at the end of 1969. Of the new dwelling units constructed during the course of the decade, seventy-eight percent were in these outer boroughs; their share of the total number of dwelling units in West Berlin increased from forty-seven percent in 1960 to fifty-two percent at the end of 1969.[12] Meanwhile, despite extensive construction in its suburban north end, the population of Charlottenburg decreased from 10.2 percent of West Berlin's total in 1960 to 9.7 percent in 1969, and the borough's share of dwelling units declined from 10.3 to 9.7 percent. The effect of these population movements and construction patterns was a trend toward depopulation of the core area into which commercial, financial, and administrative institutions were moving.[13]

Historic patterns and the possibility, however remote, of their recreation nonetheless built an asymmetry into developments in West Berlin. If the city were in fact an island, with the Zoo Quarter at its center, then we might have expected business and residential patterns to develop in more or less concentric circles around the center. Were this the case, we would expect land values and construction patterns in West Berlin's eastern periphery—that is, at the border between East and West Berlin—to be roughly similar to those at the western or southern periphery. In fact this has not been the case. Land bordering on the East Berlin borough of Mitte in the West Berlin boroughs of Wedding, Tiergarten, or Kreuzberg is fairly expensive real estate. There can be little doubt that prices have been kept high for political reasons; some firms, such as the Axel Springer Publishing Company, are eager to demonstrate their desire for German reunification by building along the wall. More important, however, are purely economic reasons. Areas along the wall already have municipal improvements, such as sewage and transportation systems, and they are relatively close to the new center of West Berlin with its banking and other commercial facilities.[14] If Berlin should some day be reunified, these lands would skyrocket in value, but even if this should never come about, the advantages of these properties over unimproved farmland in the outer boroughs make them a good financial bet.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Traffic patterns in Berlin clearly reveal the developments which have taken place (Figs. 2 and 3). Prewar traffic (whether automobile, truck, or public transport) was heavy in the inner city and radiated toward the suburbs, and an east-west axis had begun to develop between Mitte and the West End, including the Zoo Quarter. The political division of Berlin sharply reduced traffic on the main access routes from the West to Mitte. The construction in 1961 of the wall all but eliminated this traffic. West Germans and foreigners visiting East Berlin —West Berliners, save for exceptional circumstances such as the serious illness of an immediate family member, were unable to enter East Berlin from August, 1961, until spring 1972— could cross the wall by automobile or tourist bus at only two checkpoints, and by subway or elevated train only by exiting at the Friedrich Street Railway Station in Mitte. Agreements concluded in late 1971 and early 1972 between the city's two governments expanded the number of permissible visits and border-crossings, but the strong east-west axis of prewar years remains broken.

[12] Data from Statistisches Landesamt Berlin, *Statistisches Jahrbuch Berlin 1961* (Berlin: Kulturbuch Verlag, 1961), pp. 25 and 187; and *Berliner Statistik,* Vol. 24 (1970), p. 236 and Statistischer Bericht A I 3–j/69.

[13] In 1958 Krause, op. cit., footnote 11, pp. 47–48, argued that West Berlin cannot be said to have a "true city center," since the economic and political functions are not conterminous and since what might be viewed as its city center has a substantial number of residents; population movements in the subsequent dozen years suggest that the combination of the central business district and the political belt will give West Berlin a city center in this narrow sense by the end of the 1970s.

[14] The continuing importance of the border property was suggested in July 1972, when the West Berlin government purchased 20.8 acres of wasteland at Potsdamer Square for $9.6 million from East Berlin.

The new traffic pattern in West Berlin centered on the Zoo Quarter. Its main streets (Kurfürstendamm, Tauentzien Street, and Hardenberg Street) became the most heavily-traveled arteries in the new core.[15] Feeder streets were broadened or constructed to form a new radial pattern focusing, not on the old East Berlin borough of Mitte, but the expanded downtown area near the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church. Major north-south highways were built on either side of the central business district to connect the northern and southern portions of West Berlin. In effect, city planners restructured the existing road system to fit the new political circumstances, all the while leaving open the possibility of extending the new highway network to East Berlin should the two parts of the city ever become reunified.

Changes came even more abruptly in other aspects of Greater Berlin's infrastructure. Officials of the GDR, for instance, cut off all telephone communication (except for a very small number of official lines) between the two halves of the city in 1952; not until early 1971 would any telephone contact for the general public be reestablished. Early in the blockade months of 1948–1949 East and West Berlin began to sever the networks of electrical, gas, water, and sewage lines that unified the city underground. In most cases this was complete by 1952. The sewage lines remain open, for both practical and political reasons, but it seems likely that even they will be cut by the mid-1970s.[16] For the most part, in their municipal services the two cities have established complete independence from each other.

All these developments point to a central fact: the western portion of Greater Berlin broke off to form a new political community with all the aspects of any other isolated city. The process resembled the division of a cell. West Berlin has a new core area, comprising both a highly developed central business district and an adjacent belt of high administrative density; population is beginning to shift from the center to the periphery; the lines of communication feed into and focus upon this new core area; and sharply delineated boundaries mark off West Berlin from East Berlin and the German Democratic Republic. The questions of its viability and its future relations with the adjacent area are political rather than purely locational.

[15] Klaus Schroeder, "Der Stadtverkehr als Kriterium der Strukturwandlungen Berlins," *Erdkunde,* Vol. 14 (1960), pp. 29–35.

[16] Richard L. Merritt, "Political Division and Municipal Services in Postwar Berlin," in John D. Montgomery and Albert O. Hirschman, eds., *Public Policy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), Vol. 17, pp. 165–98.

### EAST BERLIN

"Berlin, as capital city, is simultaneously the largest industrial area and center of scientific and cultural institutions in the GDR," wrote the East German geographer, G. Suchy.[17] One may quibble about East Berlin's role as capital city, and technically it remains under Soviet control, but for all practical purposes it serves the normal functions of a capital city.[18] It houses the national headquarters of the ruling Communist party (SED), offices of such mass organizations as the Free German Youth and the Free German Labor Union Federation, state organs, the national parliament, economic agencies, mass media, and foreign embassies. With 0.4 percent of the GDR's territory and 6.3 percent (1.1 million) of its population, it accounts for 8.2 percent of the country's national income and 8.3 percent of its investments. In individual industries, such as electronics and graphics,

[17] G. Suchy, "Funktion und Standortproblematik ausgewählter Bereiche des Berliner Verkehrswesens," in *Exkursionsführer,* supplement to *Berlin: Die Hauptstadt der DDR und ihr Umland,* op. cit., footnote 9, p. 17. More generally, see the article in the same volume by Alfred Zimm, "Das Stadtzentrum der sozialistischen Hauptstadt Berlin," pp. 7–16, with photographs.

[18] An indicator, sometimes amusing to the non-involved observer, of a certain embarrassment on this point is the simple question of what to call the city so as to differentiate it from the western sectors. The ultimate decision was to term the latter not "West Berlin" but "Westberlin," thereby implying that it is distinguishable from Berlin itself. The term given to the Soviet sector was "Berlin, Capital City of the GDR," or, less frequently, "Democratic Berlin." (Motorists driving to Berlin along the highway through the GDR will still encounter directional signs to "Capital City of the GDR" without specifying its name.) Underlying this semantic issue, of course, is a serious political one. The GDR's concern has been to assert two principles which amount to nothing less than outright revisions of the quadripartite agreements of the wartime allies: the first argues that the whole of Berlin lies on territories originally designated for Soviet occupation; the second, that at least the eastern portion of the city is an integral part of the GDR. The United States, Britain, and France have rejected these interpretations.

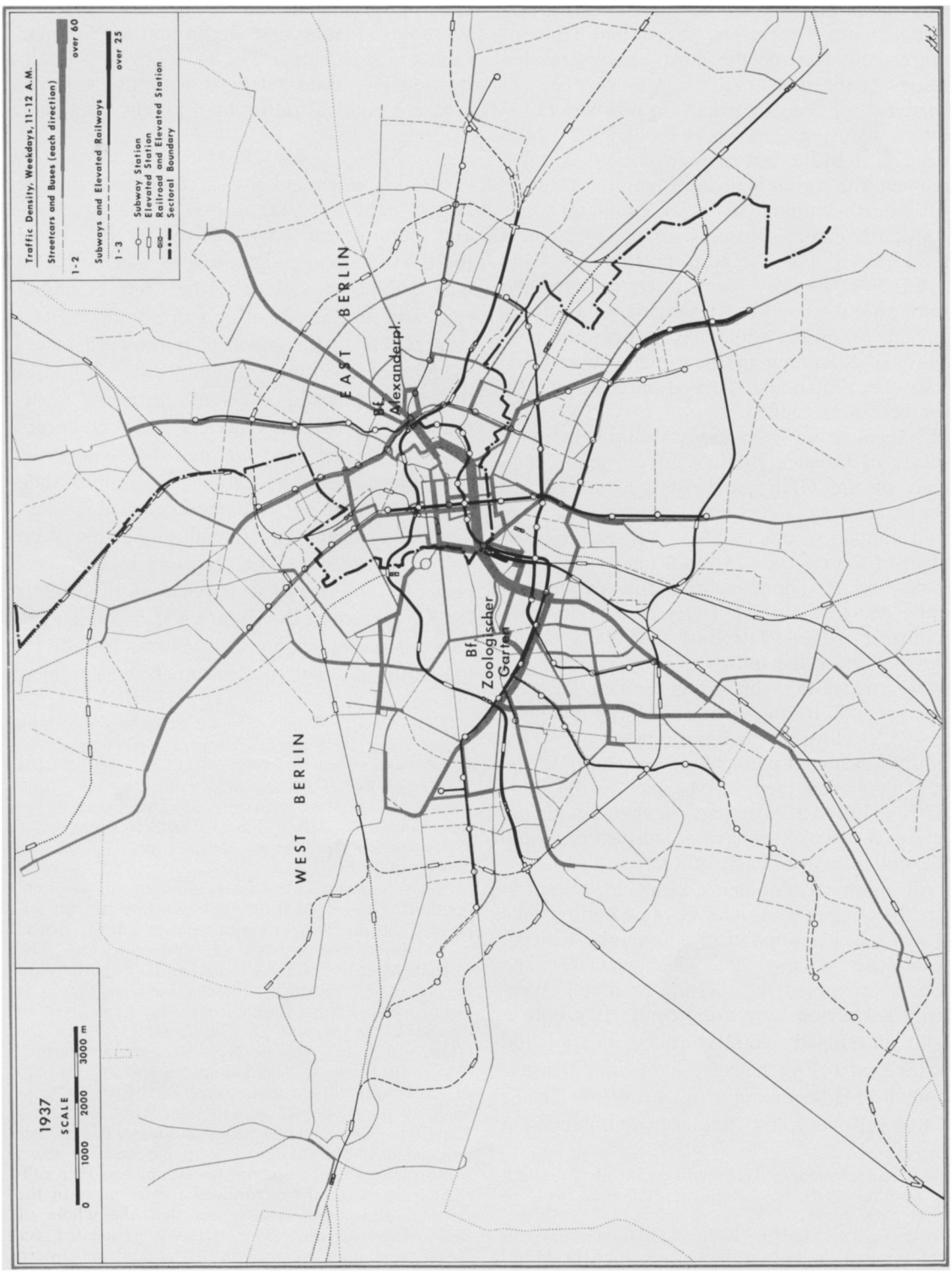


FIG. 2. Public transportation in Berlin, 1937, after K. Schroeder, *Deutscher Planungsatlas: Atlas von Berlin* (Hanover: Gebrüder Jänecke Verlag, 1962).

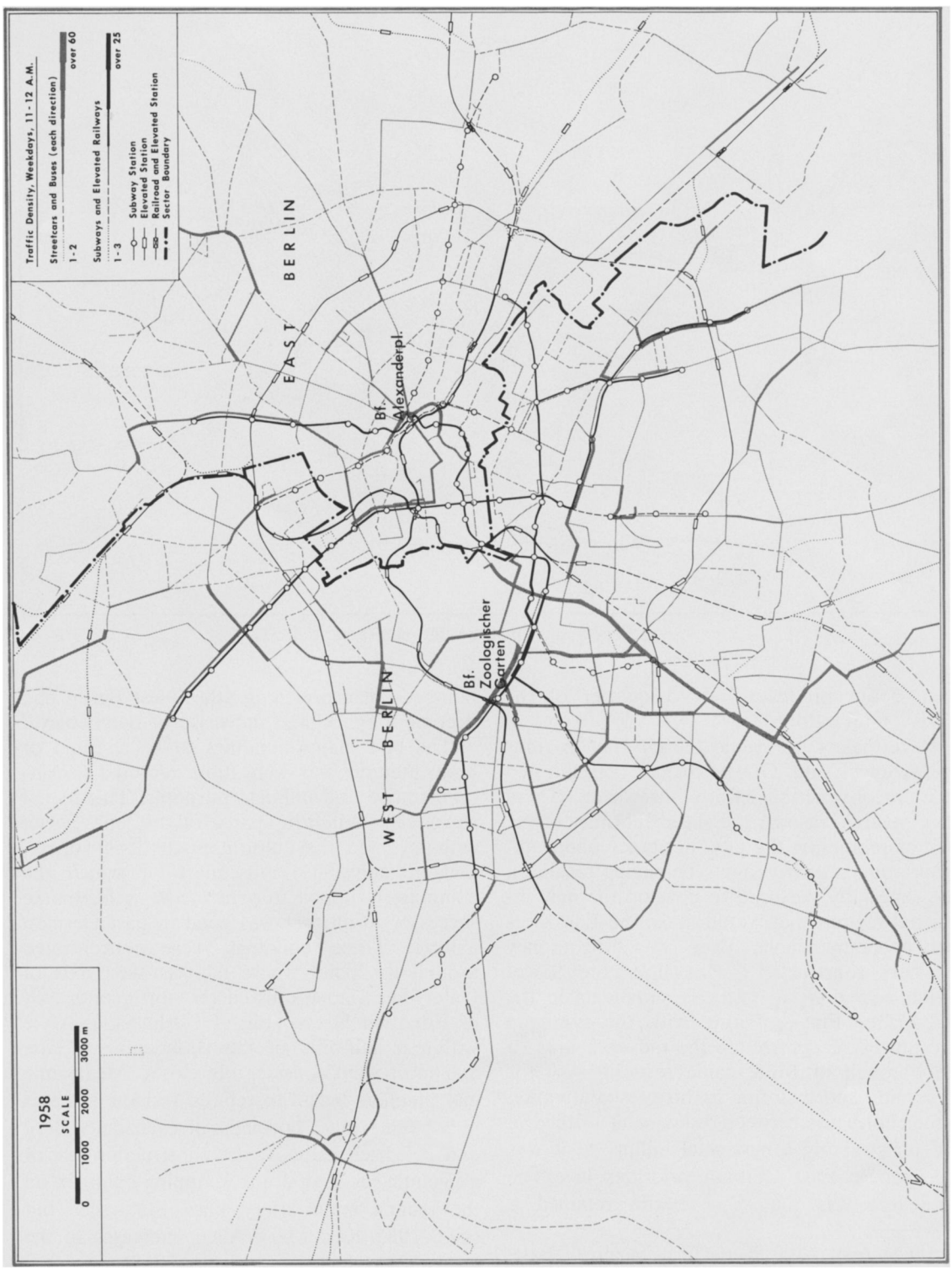


FIG. 3. Public transportation in Berlin, 1958, after K. Schroeder, *Deutscher Planungsatlas: Atlas von Berlin* (Hanover: Gebrüder Jänecke Verlag, 1962). Erratum: The last figure on the first scale (streetcar and bus traffic) in the upper right hand corner should be 41–50 rather than over 60.

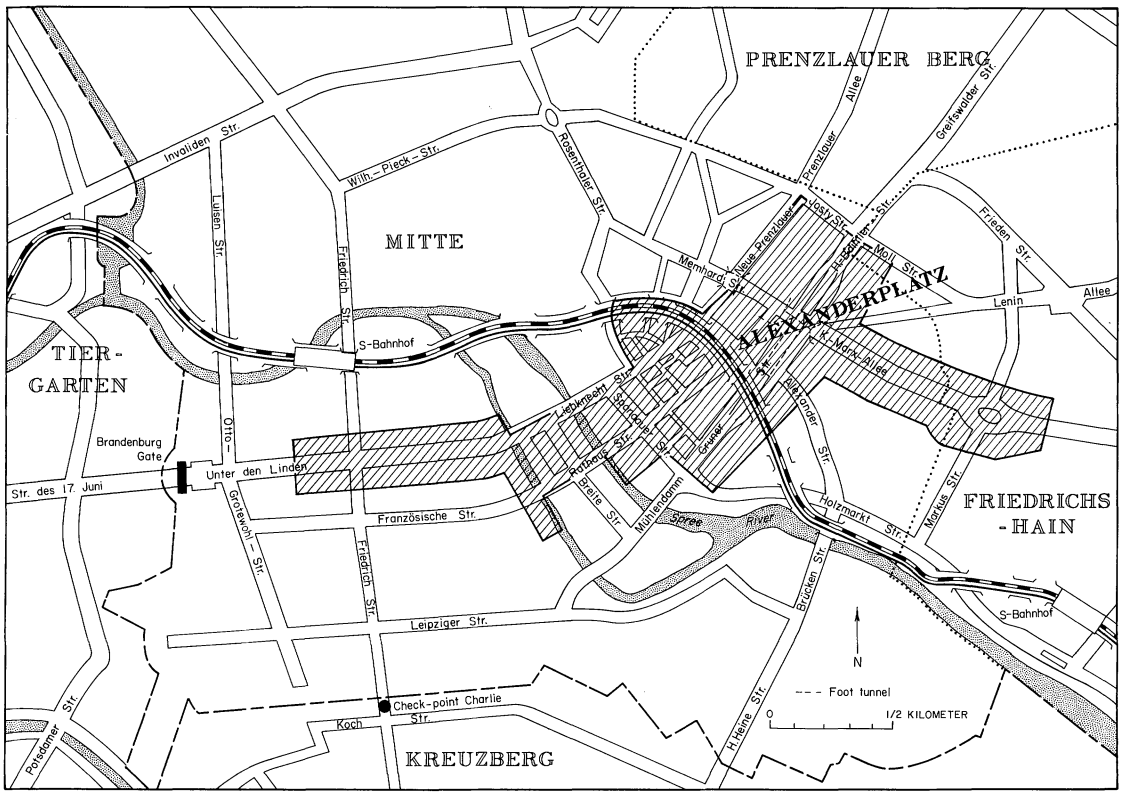


FIG. 4. Alexanderplatz, East Berlin's core area in 1973.

East Berlin produces over a quarter of the GDR's total output.[19]

Nevertheless, for years the city lay in ruins while Soviet and GDR officials concentrated their reconstruction efforts elsewhere. There were several reasons: the sheer enormity of the task of rebuilding the city, hesitancy about expropriating property rights belonging to aliens, and especially the need to develop the new industrial regions that would make the East German economy viable. There was little money for new construction, even after the Soviet Union ceased its reparations shipments in the mid-1950s. Finally, along with the symbolic advantages of controlling the old core area in the borough of Mitte came responsibility for preserving and restoring its historic landmarks. If the choice was between restoring the cathedral and constructing a new steel mill, then it was clear where East German priorities lay. The net effect was that East Berlin retained a bombed-out aspect long after West Berlin had become a sparkling "showcase of democracy."

The first major buildings to be restored or built after the war were those required for administrative and political purposes. This meant some city buildings, party offices, the Soviet embassy, and the cultural institutions (opera, theater, university, museums) by which the communists hoped to gain credit as legitimate successor to all that was good in past German culture. These buildings were concentrated around the point where the east-west axis of Unter den Linden crossed the north-south axis of Friedrich Street (Fig. 4). Almost all were within a half-mile of the Brandenburg Gate, and most were considerably closer. Meanwhile city planners began to rebuild residential areas in the other inner boroughs of Prenzlauer Berg and Friedrichshain. At the construction site of a gigantic residential and shopping complex on the latter's main artery, then Stalinallee but since 1961 Karl Marx Allee, increases in the workers' production norms tipped off the short-lived revolt of June 17th, 1953.

[19] Data from Karl Menzel and Manfred Haase, "Die Hauptstadt der DDR Berlin," in *Berlin: Die Hauptstadt der DDR,* op. cit., footnote 9, pp. 1 and 5.

The pattern of construction in the 1960s moved eastward, especially after a decision in September 1964 by the Politburo of the SED's Central Committee to focus new construction around Alexander Square. "Alex," as Berliners have fondly termed it since 1805 when, upon the occasion of a state visit by Czar Alexander I, the square received its present name, is roughly 1.7 miles east of the Brandenburg Gate, and close to the point where the boroughs of Mitte, Prenzlauer Berg, and Friedrichshain meet. A parade ground in the eighteenth century, by the late nineteenth century it had become an important nodal point in Berlin's new elevated railway system. An extensive shopping area sprang up around the railway station, and with it a lively nightlife and underworld. Before its destruction in 1944–1945 it was well on its way toward becoming the focal point of Berlin's east, just as the Zoo Quarter was becoming the center of the fashionable West End.

The planners of the 1960s merely reinstituted this trend. They closed off the square itself, and built tunnels under it to facilitate the flow of motorized and pedestrian traffic. A television tower, one of the world's tallest structures (1,086 feet), was constructed near its western rim, apartment houses to the southwest, and the GDR's largest and most luxurious hotel on the north side. Office buildings, a huge department store, a conference center, and well-appointed shops now ring "Alex." Municipal engineers broadened the radial streets leading to Alexander Square, and began planning a set of limited-access highways that formed a ring, with the square as its central node.

"Alex" is rapidly becoming to East Berlin what the Zoo Quarter is to West Berlin. Construction continues near the Brandenburg Gate and on Friedrich Street, to be sure, but it is Alexander Square that is increasingly acting as the focal point of East Berlin's social and cultural life and point of attraction for East German and foreign visitors.[20] As in West Berlin, traffic patterns circle the new core area just as though the other part of the city did not exist. If East Berlin's core area is not completely encapsulated, as West Berlin's is, it is merely because the city opens out to the rest of the GDR. Quadripartite legal provisions notwithstanding, East Berlin is definitely the capital city of the GDR.

[20] Suchy, op. cit., footnote 17, p. 18.

## EAST-WEST COOPERATION

The probability of Berlin's reunification before the end of this century, if ever, appears slight, and yet the dream persists. At each step in their work, West Berlin's city planners must ask themselves what impact their decisions would have upon a reunited Berlin. In principle, of course, the task of developing communication lines to tie together two separate cities is straightforward. It has faced cities divided by broad rivers, or twin cities that grew up next to each other, as well as planners for metropolitan regions. Indeed, the least of the problems confronting a reunited Berlin would be the technical aspects of repaving the main east-west arteries, cleaning out or replacing the rusty water pipes that have lain idle for two decades, or building new transformers to reconnect the city's two electricity systems. What complicates the picture are the changes in the city's infrastructure wrought by new construction.

Planners in Greater Berlin sought to develop rational procedures for accommodating developing or needed expansion. Of particular importance in shaping the future city would have been the highway grid designed and in part constructed under Albert Speer's direction in the Third Reich, and redesigned in terms of postwar considerations during the preblockade months.[21] An overall plan for inner city reconstruction should maintain some of old Berlin's charm and historic treasures while modernizing its central aspects. Given the extensive wartime damage, planners had a wide range of options for developing a new Greater Berlin.

The blockade and division of the city's municipal offices ended this opportunity. In the immediate postblockade years, to be sure, planners from East and West Berlin met informally to exchange ideas and programs. There was a conscious attempt to develop plans on both sides of the political barrier that would facilitate rather than hinder the reunification of the city. By the mid-1950s, however, even this officially recognized but informal cooperation broke down. One reason for this was irritation over planning decisions that were essentially political. Some West Berliners, for instance, will never forgive Soviet authorities for permitting the demolition of the heavily damaged royal

[21] Friedrich Fürlinger, "Entwicklung und Probleme der Planung von Berlin nach dem Kriege," in *Die unzerstörbare Stadt,* op. cit., footnote 9, pp. 166–79.

palace on the Spree River in Mitte, and turning the area into a Marx-Engels Square for May Day parades. Second, the older planners of Greater Berlin, who had known each other well and could easily cooperate on an informal basis, retired or in some cases were replaced by younger men who did not have the common socializing background (and who, in some cases, saw their future in adherence to the politics of the new governments rather than the principle of a reunified Greater Berlin). A third reason was the growing GDR demand for the recognition of its government and stabilization of its borders. Even informal groups meeting to discuss plans that crossed these boundaries could compromise the political position of the GDR, and hence had to be terminated.

The final breach came in the mid-1950s when West Berlin authorities organized an international architectural competition for rebuilding the Hansa Quarter. This area lies about midway between the Zoo Quarter and the Brandenburg Gate, and is adjacent to what was the main east-west axis in prewar Berlin (now called the Street of the 17th of June, to commemorate the 1953 uprising in East Berlin and elsewhere in the GDR). When published plans showed the Hansa Quarter as part of a larger cultural belt that would extend from the West into East Berlin, East German officials seized upon this "evidence" of "planning imperialism" to terminate even informal discussions. From then until August, 1961, when the wall and its attendant restrictions prevented virtually all communication between the two sides of the city, information could be exchanged only at meetings of old friends over coffee. Planning officials in West Berlin now claim that all they know about developments in the East is what they read in the newspapers, but they still deliver plans to their counterparts in East Berlin, and have the feeling that East Berlin architects take them into account in laying out new streets, gas and power lines, and public transportation networks.[22]

The possibility of reestablishing regular contacts exists if and when the political situation should change as a result of the 1971 Berlin agreements. West Berlin planners continue to develop a highway system that accords well with decisions made before the division of the city; it could be expanded to East Berlin should reunification or some other political accommodation come about. Changes in municipal services do not preclude such a possibility, and land values along the wall in the inner city remain fairly high. In the meantime, forced by political exigencies of which it was in part the author and in part the victim, West Berlin has turned itself into a political community with all the attributes of independence from its surrounding area.

The infrastructural aspects of a political community exhibit remarkable durability and tenacity in resisting change.[23] In a situation of political change—growth, decay, or merely a transition from one type of system to another—the infrastructure is the last political element to undergo change. The very tenacity of the infrastructure, however, suggests that, once change is initiated, its reversal will be very difficult. Hence the developments outlined here portend an ever growing divergence of West Berlin from the old center of Greater Berlin, and increased solidification of West Berlin around its new core area.

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[22] "Der 'Alex' erhält ein neues Gesicht," *Die Welt* (Berlin ed.), July 31, 1968, p. 9.

[23] Dietrich Storbeck, *Berlin—Bestand und Möglichkeiten: Die strukturelle Beharrung und Gemeinsamkeit unter der politischen Spaltung,* Dortmunder Schriften zur Sozialforschung, Vol. 27 (Köln and Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1964).