

Anniversary of East Berlin Uprising Being Observed Today

By EDWARD SHIELDS
United Press International
Berlin — UPI — If the world hadn't known it before, it learned just nine years ago this week end what Soviet Russia was prepared to do if any Red-ruled "people's democracy" tried to be democratic.

In East Berlin at 7 a.m. on June 16, 1953, a small group of building workers — there were about 80 of them — decided to strike for higher wages. It was a spark that flared into a two-day rebellion now known as "the uprising of the 17th of June."

The world was to witness similar Russian ruthlessness in Hungary a little more than three years later. But it was in East Berlin in 1953 that the cloak of "friendship treaties" and faked "elections" the Kremlin had thrown over its post-war satellites was torn away in naked force.

Much Has Changed

Much has changed since then in East Berlin, but not its Communist rule. And since last Aug. 13 — the days the Reds began to build "The Wall" that now shuts off East from West — it has been more a prison than ever. More than 40 persons have been slain trying to get through the wall.

Mayor Willy Brandt of West Berlin referred to the wall in a 17th of June anniversary statement in which he called it a second major confession of failure by Walter Ulbricht, diehard Stalinist boss of East Germany.

"Ulbricht has misjudged the situation for the second time," Brandt said. "On the 17th of June, 1953, the angry bitterness of the people (of East Berlin) exploded. With the wall, the Communists have provoked the anger and abhorrence of all freedom loving mankind. The shabby facade of the last nine years has collapsed for the second time."

On that June 16 morning, the men who went on strike had been working on shops and apartment houses being erected to provide East Berlin with a showpiece street along broad Stalinallee (now de-Stalinized to Frankfurterallee).

There was an economic squeeze on at the time. Workers' pay had been reduced and their working hours raised in a Communist effort to step up production but keep down wages due to wide shortages in consumer goods. Food and clothing prices were higher. Some had risen as much as 100 per cent in less than a year.

There had been some minor protest walkouts for a few hours and there had been talk of a general strike. Communist authorities ignored the protests and only demanded more work. By June 16, the building workers on Stalinallee had had enough, and at 7 a.m. they walked off the job.

Having quit, the men decided to carry their complaints to officials at the main ministerial council building on Leipzigerstrasse a couple of miles away. They started walking. It was too casual a parade to be called a march. But as the strikers, still a little indecisive, walked along something began to happen.

Other workers along the route, learning what the building men were doing, stopped working and joined them. By 9:30 a.m. the handful of strikers had become a line of hundreds shouting "on to the ministry!"

Then the first violence occurred. A small band of Vopos (people's police) met the paraders at Strausberger Platz and tried to break them up. They were punched in a brief tussle and shoved aside.

Grow In Numbers
Growing in numbers by the minute, the parades — shouting louder now and increasingly excited — moved through the city, to Alexander Platz, from there to the Lustgarten and then along Unter den Linden to the Wilhelmstrasse.

By 1 p.m. the throng had grown into several thousands of persons as they reached the ministerial building. The streets echoed with their roared demands. "End the work norms!" "Give us proper pay!" A Soviet zonal official appeared at a ministry window. He tried to speak to the crowd, to quiet it. He was shouted down.

Suddenly, a voice was heard above the rest crying: "We want to be free! This is a people's uprising! We demand free, secret elections!"

As one observer remarked later, "that pushed the button."

The crowd, milling and noisy, started moving away, apparently back toward Stalinallee. The shouting and demands increased. Now there were cries of "free the political prisoners!" and a chanted "General Strike! General Strike!"

Communist vans drove up to the crowd and through crowd clashed with Vopos



TANK ATTACKED—A Russian tank is attacked by stone-throwing East Berliners in this photo taken during the short-lived anti-Soviet uprising in 1953. The Russians declared martial law in several East German cities and, with the aid of tanks and armored cars, crushed the revolt within 36 hours. (UPI)



MARCH THROUGH GATE—Flag-waving East Berlin workers march through the Brandenburg Gate into the Western sector of the city after the start of the short-

lived workers' revolt, as shown in the photo taken June 17, 1953. The anti-Soviet uprising was crushed within 36 hours by Russian tanks and guns. (UPI)

loudspeakers the demonstrators were urged to go back to work. They were promised "The council of ministers has cancelled the work norms!" But the cries of "General Strike! General Strike!" and "Free Elections!" continued.

Demonstrating Continues
All through the afternoon the demonstrating went on, but without a major blowup. By 6 p.m. the main crowd was back at Stalinallee and again Communist functionaries, talking through loudspeakers, tried to calm the atmosphere.

There were several minor clashes and the Communists were chased from the scene. Hour after hour the noise, the marching and the speech making went on, until at 9 p.m., weary by the path matters were taking, a radio broadcast from the West German government seat at Bonn urged the East Berliners and other East Germans to be prudent.

How many East Germans heard this appeal was not known. It had little, if any, effect. The crowds' leaders called for a mass meeting at 7 a.m. the following day, June 17, in Strausberger Platz.

The stage was set for bloodshed. At 8 a.m., Soviet authorities took over the "practical administration" of the city, including command of the people's police.

At 9 a.m. five Red armored cars drove full tilt into a crowd massed at Alexanderplatz. Some demonstrators were knocked down but most scrambled safely out of the way and there were no deaths or serious injuries. The crowd, instead of dispersing, became angrier and the armed reconnaissance vehicles and their crews were in danger of being overwhelmed.

First Real Trouble
The first real trouble, however, was brewing at the Soviet zonal ministry building in Leipzigerstrasse, where by 10 a.m. more than 20,000 demonstrators had gathered.

There was another demonstration at the corner of Friedrichstrasse and Zimmerstrasse. In Leipzigerstrasse the barracks of the people's police were set afire. At 10 a.m. the

Oregon Delegation Votes on Debt Bill
Washington — UPI — Reps. Edith Green and Al Ullman (D-Ore.) Thursday voted for President Kennedy's bill to temporarily increase the ceiling on the national debt to \$308 billion.

The measure was passed by the House 211-192 and sent to the Senate. Reps. Edwin Burne and Walter Norblad (R-Ore.) voted against the bill.

trying to defend their building. Fighting was hand-to-hand.

At noon the first Soviet T34 tanks rolled into the heart of East Berlin, several rumbling into the Lustgarten, 15 more into Leipzigerstrasse. At least 20 armored reconnaissance cars and more than 30 other armored Soviet military vehicles converged on demonstrators in different parts of the city. In Leipzigerstrasse, the heart of the uprising, the first shots were fired.

First Death Came
"Our first death came to us at Brandenburger gate," a survivor of the demonstration said later. "Seven armored reconnaissance cars came and drove right into our procession from behind and there the first man was killed."

Soviet tanks and many of the armored cars were placed strategically around government buildings. They opened machinegun fire into the crowds even as people scattered in panic. At Leipzigerstrasse the strikers fought the tanks with stones and fists.

Some freedom fighters were crushed under the treads.

Declare Martial Law
At 1:30 p.m. the Soviet commandant declared martial law. It was the beginning of the end. Scattered demonstrations and fighting continued through the afternoon. At the old Berlin city hall, in mid-afternoon, T34 tanks opened up on a crowd there.

At 6 p.m. the East Berlin radio broadcast an announcement by East German Premier Otto Grotewohl that "the decision of the government as to the raising work norms of May 28, 1953, is rescinded."

By 9 p.m. Soviet armor was in control and the West German radio told its listeners:

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Albany — UPI — Proposed salary increases for elected officials ranging up to \$2,340 per year were attacked in an editorial in the Albany Democrat-Herald.

Only 6,000 Sign for Korean Vet's Bonus

Albany — UPI — Only 6,000 signatures statewide have been obtained for the initiative petition for a Korean veterans bonus, Charles Draper, Albany, state commander of the

American Legion, said Friday. The petition must have 53,000 names to place the measure on the November ballot. There have been 3,000 sig-

natures obtained in Linn County. Final deadline is July 5. Korean veterans eligible would be those serving between June 25, 1950 and July 27, 1953 inclusive.

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