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WEST WINS BERLIN BLOCKADE BATTLE

Britain and her allies had won. After nearly eleven months of cold war - another start is made. The front door to Berlin (shabby through disuse) gets a springclean as a new mood of conciliation thaws out the old suspicion. The loneliest road in Europe (the 150 yard strip between the British and Soviet zones) waits for zero hour and the first flow of through traffic.

Helmstedt - the frontier post (till now the dead end of the West's supply route to Berlin) leads up for the first journey through the Iron Curtain. 25,000 tons of fuel and food (doubling the record total of a day's air-lift) head for Berlin.

As midnight nears, tension mounts at the British frontier control post. Though the timetable for the lifting of the blockade had been finally fixed in New York, nagging fears of a last minute breakdown persist. Among those on the spot, there is still the doubt whether this may not be just another move in the Soviet war of nerves. Familiar with the old Russian habit of changing their minds when it suits them, seasoned campaigners could not quite grasp this new mood of co-operation.

One minute to midnight. Magnesium flares and camera flashlights reveal the scene. Civilian sightseers and 500 world pressmen strain their ears for the first rumble of the traffic, as on the stroke of twelve, the barrier goes up and a British jeep leads the race into Berlin. First to cross is the first Parachute Battalion - a detachment of the 7th Armoured Brigade - the old Desert Rats. After them, come the heavy supply convoys - and the joyriders. So re-opens the lifeline into Berlin. After 11 months of siege, the West is again linked with the East. The autobahn, overgrown with weeds of neglect, is now choked with bumper-to-bumper traffic.

At Helmstedt station, it's "clear the lines for Berlin." It was this railroad that began the dispute that led to the blockade. According to the Russians, the lines and bridges needed repair and they were closed to the West. This was the front they presented to the outside world to cover their bid to force Britain, France and America out of the German capital. The West's determination to stand firm - plus the weapon of the airlift - beat Soviet tactics and called their bluff. Now, with the normal supply route open again, a new life begins for Berliners.

At the Berlin check-point, jubilant crowds greet the first car in. An American pressman wins the race into the city with a 100-mile-an-hour dash, completing the journey from Helmstedt in quarter the normal time.

Charlottenburg - the Charing Cross of Berlin (for nearly a year deserted station) springs back into life as the first train reaches the city.

Through the arteries into the German capital flows an unending stream of traffic. A year ago, no one would have dared prophesy this heroes' welcome for men four years ago their enemies. This (far more than figures and speeches) is vindication of the West's resolute policy over Berlin.

Still the airlift goes on. Barely a year ago, short of desperate measures, Berlin seemed doomed to Communism or starvation. That was Russia's challenge to the world. Now, as the city rejoices, the West, too, acclaims the first major victory of its new found resolution. History will call Berlin a Munich in reverse. For out of Berlin's peril and the plight of her millions, has grown a Western alliance powerful enough to enforce Europe's right to peace. In Berlin, where East meets West, the gates are opened to the hope of a world without war.