

BERLIN: NEW THREAT.

Into Berlin Russia has played the ace card of her cold war diplomacy. She tells the people of the Western sector that the Soviet Government will soon hand over control of East Berlin to the East German Government. Berliners of the West are so far unperturbed. They have come through the total defeat of Hitler and many crises since then. They're confident they'll weather this one. Russia's apparent object is to compel the Western Allies to recognize East Germany.

Our Newsreel reporters sought the views of the man and the woman in the street.

We just go on working. It's a breach of the Four Power Pact. The cryptic waiter says, "Nothing is served as hot as it was cooked". A taxi-driver: "I don't worry; it's all hot air". "With this news I've sold a lot more papers". Evidently Berlin's much less concerned than the outside world.

Ten years ago barriers and barbed wire divided Berlin. Russia tried to force the Allies to abandon the city by closing roads, canals and railways to the West. The only access was by air, and but for the historic air-lift, which kept West Berlin supplied with everything, Russia would have had her way. Where Stalin failed can Khrushchev succeed with his more cunning methods? Legally, under the four power agreement between Britain, France, America and Russia the Soviet cannot abandon East Berlin. What they hope to do is to get the Allies out of the west sector, and so put the whole city under the puppet regime of East Germany. And if they can meanwhile cause the Western Powers to disagree among themselves, the Russians will be half-way to a diplomatic victory. If not, the boundaries will be marked out again and perhaps NATO will mount another airlift. Everybody hopes it won't happen.

So far normal traffic flows along the four autobahns into Berlin. The trains run; the canals are open. And in every way Berlin is far stronger now than in the airlift days of ten years ago. The Western Allies must win this crucial battle of diplomacy.