

## BERLIN WALL'S CONTRIBUTION TO DETENTE HAILED

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[Gerolf Schoenfelder article: "Good for Europe"]

[Text] Today, 12 years later, one understands better than ever the deep political effect of 13 August 1961, how it became one of the foundation stones of European security, and that this date was of historical significance.

As is known, the atmosphere on our continent in that summer was heated to the point of incandescence. In Bonn they thought they were very close to the "victorious march of the Bundeswehr through the Brandenburg Gate with flags flying and drums beating" (as the Duesseldorf paper INDUSTRIEKURIER wrote literally in its editorial of 2 September 1961). But our workers combat detachments which had suddenly assumed positions at this very gate and backed by the entire military might of our fraternal alliance made it clear: The GDR will never become a prize to imperialism!

This illuminated like a flash the fundamentally changed constellation of power in Europe. It is as follows: one cannot encroach upon socialist borders; they must be respected (an obligation that the FRG has meanwhile assumed in the well-known treaties).

By placing our border with West Berlin under effective guard and control in 1961, a peace which had been seriously endangered, was saved. It was not a communist paper but the bourgeois London SUNDAY TELEGRAPH which wrote: "In the weeks before 13 August 1961, Europe was dangerously close to a war. The building of the wall ended the crisis. "But it was not only an acute situation of conflict that was mastered and defused by the resolute action of socialism. The day of 13 August tangibly affected the entire subsequent course of events on our continent.

Now, in 1973 Europe constitutes that region of the world where the process of detente has made the greatest progress and has led to the security conference of 35 states, the first round of which is already behind us. Would such a development have been possible if an explosive situation at the borders still existed in central Europe? The question itself supplies the answer.

Thus the British Labor politician Richard Crossman hit the mark when he stated as early as 1962 that "the wall constitutes a prerequisite for peaceful coexistence." Without calm and security at this border there can be no calm and security in Europe.

This protection of our borders which guarantees the undisturbed progress of the GDR along the socialist path (everyone knows of the good successes since 1961) was naturally not to the liking of those revanchist forces that would have liked to convert the cold war into a permanent ice age. But their slander only shows how well socialism acted in also reliably securing this section of its western flank in Europe. This is how it will remain.

That our state border with West Berlin and the FRG is being passed by a greater stream of visitors and tourists than hardly any other border in the world can be gathered from incontrovertible figures. This border blocks nothing but the attempt to harm our country or to endanger its security. It is the revolutionary and national duty of our GDR border guards to prevent both. As loyal guards of socialism and peace they are fulfilling it in an excellent manner.