

A FREE VOICE OF THE FREE WORLD



**RIAS**  
BERLIN

THAT THIS WORLD  
UNDER GOD SHALL  
HAVE A NEW BIRTH  
OF FREEDOM

FREEDOM BELL INSCRIPTION



**RIAS** is today, more than ever, the bridge between the Free World and the people of the Soviet Zone of Germany. When Walter Ulbricht began the erection of the Wall the morning of August 13, 1961, the manifold contacts between East and West came abruptly to a halt. Where before August 13, thousands of East Berliners worked or visited in West Berlin daily, and literally millions attended theater and cinema programs or visited the East Reading Room at the Amerika Haus each year, all such cultural and economic contacts ceased after the erection of the Wall. Radio, and to a lesser extent, television, remain the only media of exchange between the Free World and the unwilling inmates of the "German Democratic Republic." RIAS now carries an even heavier responsibility than before in informing the East Berliners and the East Germans of the true nature of events in their own country and in the world, and in providing continuing cultural contacts with the West.

RIAS began its first broadcasts early in 1946 because the Soviet Occupation Authorities prevented the free dissemination of news and information in Greater Berlin by their monopolization of the facilities of what was left of Radio Berlin. RIAS, an acronym for Radio im Amerikanischen Sektor, began as a wired radio net. Its first broadcasts were news and recorded music, received by a few hundred telephone subscribers in bleak and dreary post-war Berlin. Its audience grew rapidly and in July 1946, RIAS presented its first radio drama, the world premiere of Gerhart Hauptmann's previously unpublished "Agamemnon's Death." RIAS expanded rapidly under the Soviet threat to Berlin, impelled as it was by the intense desire of the Berliners themselves for objective news and cultural freedom after the stultification of the Nazi era. The RIAS Symphony Orchestra, later under Ferenc Fricsay, was founded in 1947, and RIAS began broadcasting 14 hours daily in the spring of 1948; with the beginning of the Berlin Blockade in June, RIAS increased its airtime to 22 hours daily.

From its beginnings as a local Berlin station, RIAS has developed into a German institution whose principal audience is in the Soviet-Occupied Zone. In a broad sense, RIAS now exists to bring to these captive peoples, under tyranny since 1933, the true and objective story of world events, to renew their courage, and to assure them that, despite Ulbricht's Wall, they have not been, and will not be, forgotten by the West.

◀ On August 13, 1961, the East German Communist regime began to barricade itself behind a wall of concrete blocks and a fence of barbed wire that runs entirely around free West Berlin, dividing brother from brother and cutting off the last route to freedom



▲ The Soviet Army monopolized all broadcasting facilities in Greater Berlin at war's end and used them for Communist propaganda purposes. To bring factual news, music and entertainment to war-battered Berlin, RIAS began its first transmissions in February 1946 as a wired radio station

**Airtime.** RIAS, now a part of the U.S. Information Agency, broadcasts in German on all portions of the radio spectrum. Its principal program is carried on RIAS I, on the air 24 hours a day. Its Berlin battery of transmitters includes one 300 kilowatt, one 100 kilowatt, and a 20 kilowatt medium wave transmitter, as well as one 20 kilowatt short wave and two FM stations. In Hof, in Bavaria, RIAS broadcasts on a 40 kilowatt medium wave transmitter. RIAS II, on the air in the evening and other selected times, repeats political and cultural programs from RIAS I at different listening times, as well as original programs ranging from music to extensive features analyzing important political and cultural topics for a demanding



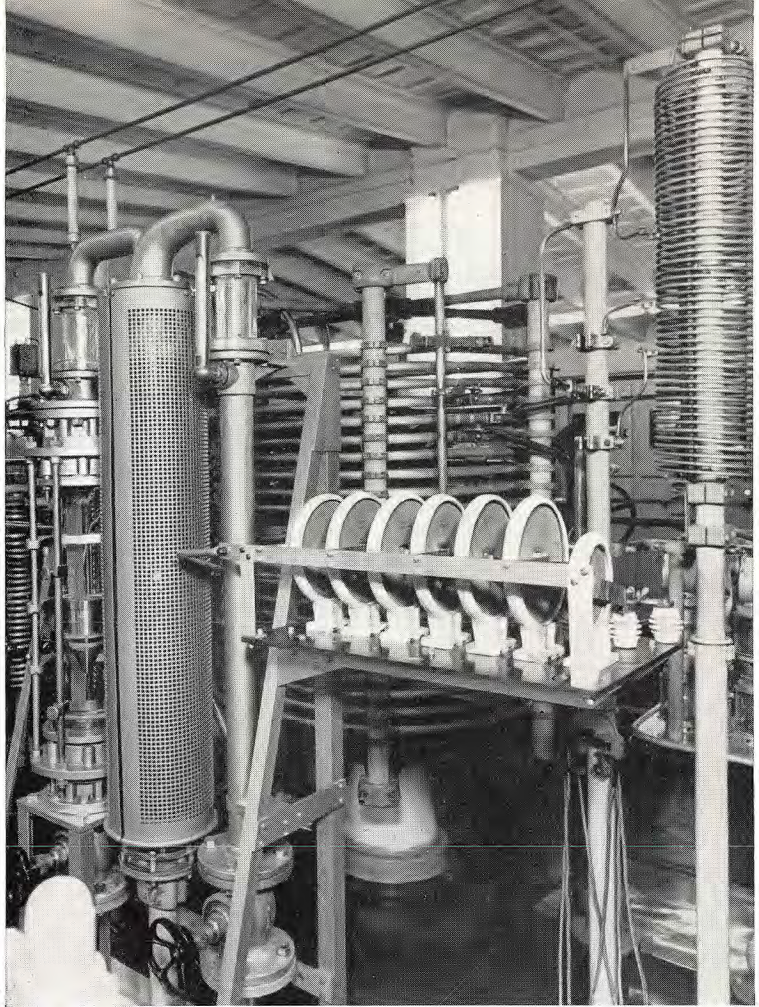
▲ RIAS Master Control regulates program output to the entire battery of transmitters in Berlin, as well as output to the long distance telephone lines carrying the program to Hof and Munich

audience. In addition, RIAS broadcasts more than nine hours daily on the 1,000 kilowatt long wave transmitter of the Voice of America in Munich. This program, the carefully selected "best of RIAS," is largely devoted to the political and word programs of RIAS I and II, carried in full or in condensed versions. RIAS is thus on the air some 41 hours a day. RIAS still has over 12,000 wired radio subscribers in Berlin, and is carried on wired radio in government buildings in Bonn.



▲ The tuning equipment through which the output of the medium wave transmitters in Berlin are fed into the antennas





*The final stage tuning elements  
of the Berlin 100 KW transmitter* ▶

**Staff.** The RIAS staff consists of 475 permanent employees and an American staff of seven. Its network of correspondents includes a representative in every major European capital; stringers are available to report on developments in the Middle East, Japan, North Africa, and India. A two-man bureau in Bonn reports regularly on West German governmental activities, prepares a weekly half-hour program of recorded excerpts of important parliament speeches, and provides special coverage from West Germany.

**The RIAS Audience.** How well RIAS has succeeded and is succeeding, can be seen from the size of its audience. Public opinion polls conducted annually at the autumn Berlin Industrial Fair and at the spring Green Week, both visited by large numbers of East Berliners and Soviet Zone residents prior to August 13, 1961, indicated that some three quarters of the adult inhabitants of the Soviet Zone (total population 16 million) listen to RIAS "regularly," and that over 50 per cent of them regard RIAS as their favorite station. These polls, the last of which was taken in the spring of 1961, demonstrate that 90 per cent of the East Zone residents hear or are aware of RIAS broadcasts, although the RIAS audience falls off significantly in the industrialized region south of Leipzig where the RIAS signals are weakest. Despite intense government pressure since August 13 to prevent people from listening to RIAS and Western TV, the RIAS audience apparently has remained cohesive if listener's mail and the stridency of the Soviet Zone anti-RIAS campaign may be used in judgment. Indeed, the RIAS audience may have been significantly increased by those Eastern residents who formerly found their cultural freedom at first hand in the West Berlin theaters and concerts, and their news in the Free World's press.

RIAS has a large secondary audience in West Berlin and the Federal Republic (mostly on its short wave and long wave frequencies), as well as a sizable audience in Austria and Switzerland where listeners engage in lively correspondence with RIAS. There is evidence of regular listening groups from as far away as Bulgaria, and among the German-speaking population of Poland and Czechoslovakia.

**The RIAS Broadcasting Day.** To attract a large and permanent audience, and to compete with the greatly improved programming of the East Zone stations, RIAS must offer a large variety of first-rate programs using the best available talent. A typical RIAS day includes educational and religious programs, serious and light music, political cabaret, pure entertainment, clearly labeled political commentary, and news broadcasts almost every hour.

**RIAS News and Special Events.** News coverage is as complete and as rapid as modern communications can make it. Based on German and American wire service reports and augmented by the RIAS monitoring section, the 25 original news broadcasts each day are in the traditional European pattern of uninterrupted, single-voiced newscasts, without cor-

respondents reports or inserts. The news is played straight; the bad is reported along with the good; commentary is not a part of RIAS newscasts.

The principal vehicle for eye-witness and on-the-scene reportage is the RIAS Current Events program, "Die Zeit im Funk," broadcast on RIAS I and II in the early evening hours. This chronicle of the day consists of interviews, reportage, and background reports designed to

*Reports from the Wall and the barbed wire fence are a feature of the current events program "Die Zeit im Funk." West Berliners are no longer permitted to visit their relatives in East Berlin*



inform the listener and explain the significance of current events. The program heavily accents developments in the Federal Republic (of particular interest to the Eastern audience since August 13), but includes important events in all major European capitals. RIAS coverage of major events of a continuing nature outside Europe is frequently done in cooperation with the West German radio network.

Current events coverage of the United States is provided daily in a special radio relay link from the Voice of America in Washington. This 15-minute evening program, carried on RIAS I and II, keeps the listener up-to-date on happenings in Washington, the United Nations, and the United States in general. A 5-minute spot fed by the Voice especially for the morning program, and other regularly scheduled features, keep the RIAS audience abreast of non-political events.

Since listeners also want to hear what other people and other countries think about current events, RIAS carries two daily programs of press editorials. The morning program features the Berlin press exclusively, while the noon program is devoted to the West German and international press, including papers from the Soviet Union, Japan, India, the UK and the United States. Twice a month significant magazine coverage is carried on the Magazine Review, a program devoted largely to German-language publications.

**Political Commentaries.** While the basic philosophy of RIAS is that the facts speak for themselves, it is imperative that RIAS expresses its own opinion on the significance of particular events in the public eye at the moment. When RIAS takes a stand on such an issue, it is clearly labeled as commentary. Thus, the RIAS main political commentary is introduced with the words, "And now, our evening commentary," followed by the author's name. When comments on developments outside Germany are necessary, the commentary may be written in Berlin, or by the RIAS correspondent in the country indicated. This correspondent is generally a German journalist with an international reputation, also representing a major German newspaper. In this case, the commentary is by the individual concerned, and carries his name. All commentaries are succinct; rarely do they exceed 6 minutes. In addition to the evening commentary, RIAS carries two other commentaries each day. The morning commentary is short and deals largely with more general topics in less detail; the late eve-



▲ Willy Brandt addressing his fellow-Berliners in his bi-weekly talks over RIAS

ning commentary is more interpretive in nature, and is frequently combined, in theme at least, with a daily program, "And Today?" that examines some current development in depth, giving facts, details, background, geographical data, and the historical information necessary to a complete understanding of the topic. Every two weeks, West Berlin's Governing Mayor Willy Brandt discusses Berlin problems with its citizens in a program entitled, "Where the Shoe Pinches," carrying on a tradition established by the late Ernst Reuter.

Round-table discussions are frequently used to present divergent but basically free opinion on matters of political and cultural interest. The traditional European political cabaret is not used to make fun of the problems of the people in the Soviet Zone, but rather to point out in a light vein the understanding and sympathy of the free peoples for those problems. Thus, the RIAS tradition of political cabaret, so successfully represented by the famous "Insulaner" (The Islanders), is carried on in such programs as the monthly "Rueckblende" (Flashback), which has also become a familiar part of West German radio and television. This satirical review of the human foibles of the past month is now carried by West German radio stations, and a special adaption by RIAS personnel is presently appearing on Berlin and West German television.

**Zonal Programming.** While the entire RIAS content is predicated on the fact that its total programming must make its impact on the listener in the Soviet Zone, certain regularly scheduled features deal with topics of particular interest to the Zone. A major Communist effort is to fragmentize its population, both geographically and professionally. Thus, local papers tend to treat each issue as local in character: there may be shortages in Rostock but

things are pretty good in Chemnitz. Except that the Chemnitz papers may write about shortages in Chemnitz while pointing out that things are pretty good in Erfurt. Similarly, farmers are treated as a unit of recalcitrants who don't collectively farm well, but on the other hand, metal workers are turning out 120 per cent of their norms, voluntarily, and for the same pay. It is RIAS' job to reaffirm the uniformity of developments throughout the entire Zone. This is done in programs dealing with labor and farm problems. Western labor law and practices, as well as Free World farming methods are cited freely in contrast. After August 13, RIAS broadcast daily programs dealing specifically with the so-called VOPO's, the East



▲ One month after the erection of the Wall, RIAS broadcast a special 20-minute live program from the few remaining crossing points. This is Check Point Charlie

German border guards on Ulbricht's Wall. These programs have featured interviews with VOPO's who have crossed over to freedom, examined the morality of shooting at would-be refugees, reasons for flight, expectations on reaching the West, and problems of Communist indoctrination of youth.

The most popular RIAS program designed specifically for the Zone audience is, "Aus der Zone fuer die Zone," a program containing broader, more general topics than the other Zonal broadcasts. It includes such themes as ideology, the East-West conflict, and the problems of the intensely personal accommodation each individual must make in his relation with the regime. Once a week this program is devoted to Zonal listeners' mail, continuing the RIAS function of the bridge between East and West, thus influencing and reflecting topics of discussions currently taking place in the Zone. Increasingly, this program reflects what one Zonal resident wrote to RIAS: "You must emphasize that there are more things that tie us together than separate us."

**Educational Programs.** The Soviet Zone school system is designed for thorough indoctrination of the youth in Communist ideology. Working closely with the Berlin Senator for Education and coordinating its program with Radio Free Berlin, RIAS generally keeps pace with the curricula, corrects distortions, supplies missing facts, and offers the viewpoint of the modern, free world. Although these school broadcasts are primarily intended for the 10-18 age groups, there is evidence that a number of adults also listen; parents can thus obtain intellectual ammunition to use in discussions with their own children.

There are two additional levels of education programs. The "University of the Air" series provides an international forum in which respected scholars in many academic fields and from all over the Free World deliver lectures with considerable intellectual content. These programs are aimed at the university level, or above, and are designed for specialists, teachers and serious students, enabling them to participate in the latest Western thought on important fields of learning. The other category of education programs is the pedagogical series. Here RIAS presents developments in Western theories of child development and education, enabling both parents and teachers to keep abreast of Western thought and to resist unwitting compliance with Communist indoctrination methods.



▲ In the fall of 1961, the façade of the RIAS studio building was repaired and painted

▼ A mass demonstration of Berliners before the Schoeneberger Rathaus in memory of the fallen Freedom Fighters of the Hungarian Revolution – carried live by RIAS







▲ Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson and Ambassador Walter Dowling visited Berlin shortly after the erection of the Wall to bring a message of support and reassurance from President John F. Kennedy

▼ RIAS, now freshly painted, is still visited by hundreds of Berliners every month – on Kufsteinerstrasse and not in Luxembourg





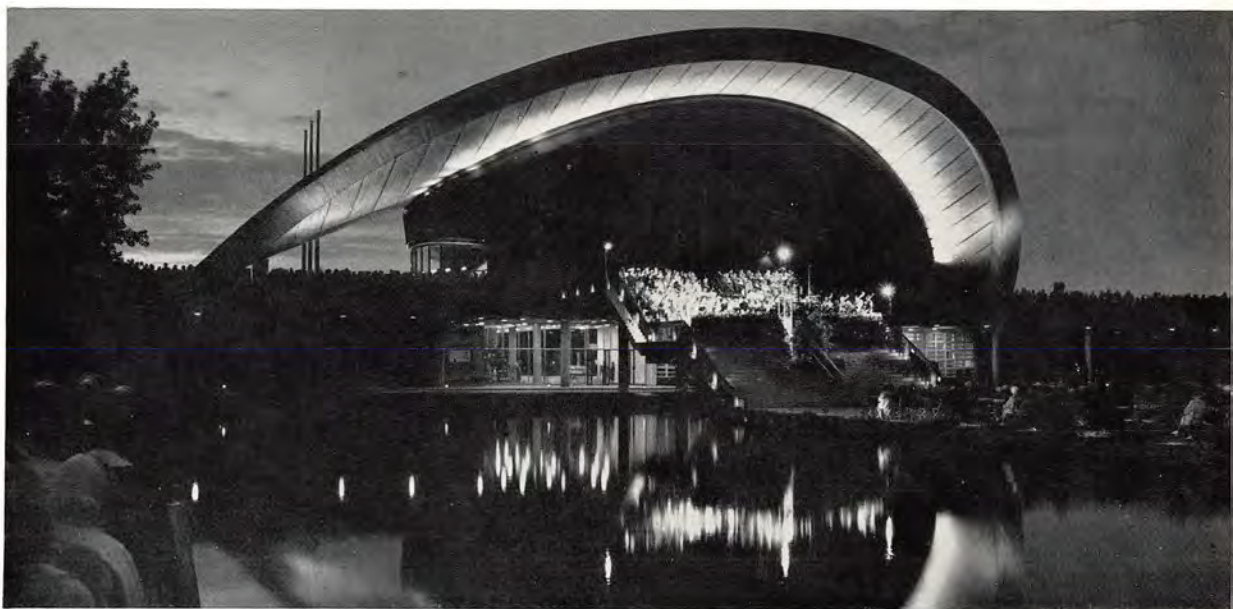
▲ Senator of the Interior Joachim Lipschitz answers questions in a Berlin classroom. This program of politics and current events is a regular part of the curriculum of Berlin high schools

▼ The RIAS Youth Orchestra under Willy Hannuschke has won highest honors in many international competitions in Europe, climaxed by its outstanding performance at the Brussels World Fair of 1958, where it represented Germany in competition with youth orchestras of 11 other countries



**Youth Programs.** Since the indoctrination of youth begins at an early age in Communist East Germany, RIAS programs for and about youth are of particular importance. One series deals with the developing child and the influences home and society have in moulding his character. Another series for parents and teachers stresses democratic principles of education and the relation of the grade school student to his environment. Paralleling these programs about children are programs for children, starting with tiny tots and going on up to teen-agers and their own special set of problems and interests. Emphasis is placed on youth activities in the Free World and the part young people play in the social structures of various countries. Young German technicians and professional people working in the developing countries explain their tasks and objectives. Vocational and professional training are examined in the series, "Working Youth." One particularly successful program for teen-agers is "Club 18," where jazz fans attend studio concerts featuring local amateur groups, join in forming impromptu combos, hold jam sessions, and discuss the pros and cons of the various schools of jazz. Jazz, hobbies, leisure time, travel tips, political discussions at Berlin schools, all these round out the total RIAS output for and about youth.

**Music.** Because of the tendentious nature of Soviet Zone radio programming in music – ignoring some composers and over-emphasizing others – RIAS attempts to project an objective and comprehensive image of Western musical culture. In programs of chamber, choral and orchestral music, ranging from the pre-classical to the ultra-modern, carefully written texts put into proper perspective the various schools and styles of music. Those cate-



▲ One of the many public performances given by RIAS was this concert by the RIAS Chamber Chorus and Symphony Orchestra on the steps of the Congress Hall in West Berlin

gories that are targets of abuse by Communist media, such as experimental contemporary music and jazz, are given equal attention as an integral part of overall programming. Performances by the greatest artists and musical bodies of the Free World, most of them ignored by the Soviet Zone in favor of Communist Bloc performers, are to be heard daily.

Important recurring programs are: *Orchestras of the World*, portraying the achievements of prominent symphony orchestras and conductors; *Folk Music of the Nations*, arranged by well-known composers of many countries; *American Music*, in which composers discuss and perform their own compositions; *Report on Music in the World*, a topical review of musical events. These, together with first-hand reports from music critics in various parts of the world, as well as jazz, opera and chamber music programs, underline the international scope of RIAS in music. In addition, the concerts and public performances of the Berlin Philharmonic, and those of artists and orchestras visiting Berlin, supplemented by standard programs of the various internationally known musical groups affiliated with RIAS, such as the Radio (formerly RIAS) Symphony Orchestra, the RIAS Dance Orchestra and the RIAS Chamber Chorus, provide East German listeners a mosaic of musical culture in West Berlin, Western Europe and the Free World.

**Religious Programs.** RIAS regularly broadcasts Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish religious services, and makes its facilities available to other faiths and denominations normally not given air time on German radio. Particularly full coverage is given to those church events stressing the universality of religious experience and the unity of the churches in East and West despite the Wall dividing Germany in two. In addition to services and sermons of the various denominations, RIAS carries regularly-scheduled religious and church news broadcasts, generally prepared in cooperation with the church radio services.

**Drama.** Since its beginning, RIAS has paid particular attention to radio drama. After August 13, a regular feature of the RIAS drama program has been guest appearances of West German radio stations featuring their finest dramatic productions. The RIAS program "Let's Go to the Theater," previously confined to a radio version of plays on the West Berlin stage, has been extended to include famous theaters in the Federal Republic, Austria, and Switzerland. Prominent theater critics lead the audience through an especially adapted live performance by describing the purely visual episodes and connecting by narration the highlights of the play. Letters from the Zone have reflected the hunger for contemporary and classical western drama, and this expanded program goes a long way to meet this need.



A radio drama rehearsal in  
recently renovated Studio Six ▶

**Entertainment.** RIAS quiz shows, dramatic series, and situation comedies have won a large and active following. In response to one single quiz program in 1960, some 130,000 listeners wrote their answers to RIAS. Since RIAS has been on the air, almost 2,000,000 letters have been received. In the first two months that "Music Knows No Boundaries" was broadcast, 6,500 listeners wrote greetings to their friends and relatives on the other side of the Wall. This program began shortly after August 13, and draws about 12 per cent of its letters from the Soviet Zone. In addition to the regular RIAS broadcasts open to the public, RIAS also produces many public concerts and performances each year by outstanding musical groups or artists.

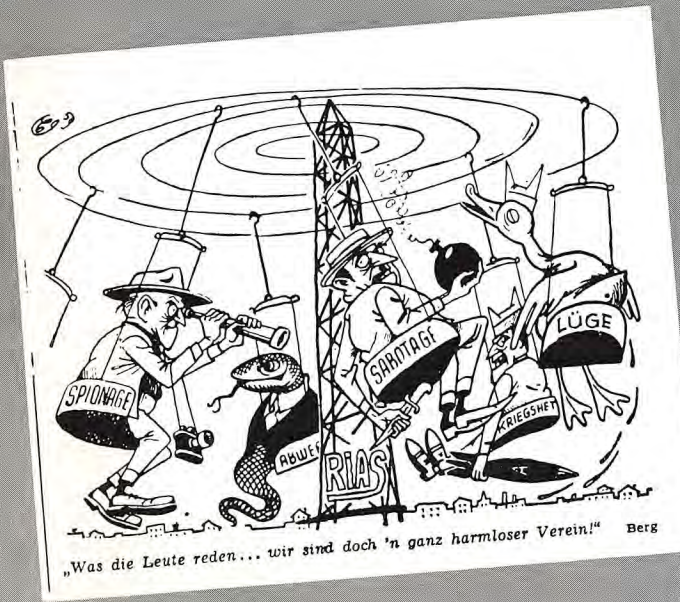
*Over 2,200,000 persons have attended 1,300 public concerts and performances since RIAS began broadcasting. Proceeds from such performances are distributed to local charities*





▲  
*RIAS has been instrumental in bringing many great artists to Berlin. During the 1961 Berlin Music Festival, Igor Stravinsky conducted the Santa Fe Opera in two of his own compositions; he is shown here in rehearsal*

**Other Programs.** There are regularly scheduled programs for women, for parents, and for small children. Extensive sport coverage informs the Zonal audience on national and international sports events. Popular science lectures and features keep the listener up to date on new advances in science and technology, such as space science and in the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Literary broadcasts bring to the RIAS audience in the Zone extensive excerpts from important literary works not available, or available only in distorted versions behind the Iron Curtain. In addition, current books are reviewed, and important literary events and personalities are commemorated. Cultural forums and art reviews of international scope as well as extensive coverage of such events as the Berlin Cultural Festival demonstrate the variety and freedom of art and thought. An important part of the overall RIAS program are the major documentary productions devoted to an analysis in depth of moral or political problems of the day.





## BRANDT(REDEN



„Schnell noch'n paar neue Mikrotone für den Regierenden und alarmiere vorsorglich die Hausfeuerwehr!“

Zeichnung: Aisch



In letzter Zeit wurden in Österreich, der DDR, in England und in der Sowjetunion Spinnwebballons amerikanischer Herkunft festgestellt. Diese Ballons amerikanischer Geheimdienste werden vom Territorium des Adenauer-Staates gestartet.

Das Gesicht der Amerikaner in Westdeutschland

Zeichnung: Berg

## The Communist Anti-RIAS Campaign.

Since RIAS went on the air, it has been denounced, threatened, and ridiculed by the Soviet Zone press, radio, and lately, television. The favorite Communist accusation is that RIAS is a cover for espionage and actively encourages sabotage, arson, and subversion. RIAS has been consigned to hell, encouraged to “dunk itself in liquid manure,” has been regularly referred to as a Hetzsender (Gutter Station), and was recently promoted to the accolade Goebbels used to describe the BBC, Feindsender (Enemy Station). Recent attacks have included personal calumny against RIAS individuals, threats of jail once the situation in Berlin is “normal,” and “sensational disclosures” that RIAS is about to move to Luxembourg where things are safer.





▲ One of RIAS' popular political commentators reads a few of the hundreds of letters still received from the Soviet Zone each month. Excerpts from these letters are broadcast each Wednesday in the program "Aus der Zone - fuer die Zone" to provide the last forum of free public opinion for Zonal residents

RIAS listeners in the Zone react quite differently. Here are a few brief excerpts from letters or comments by visitors from the East:

*"Let (the Freedom Bell) ring out hourly over RIAS across all the barbed wire; I promise to resist every kind of oppression and tyranny!"*

*"We ask that you act as our spokesman. Protest against the latest attempts to deceive us! Do not forget us!"*

*"Without RIAS it would be scarcely possible to endure . . ."*

*"RIAS is the salt on our bread . . ."*

*"RIAS is our link to the Free World . . ."*

*"RIAS is a symbol of spiritual freedom . . . the secret hope for a better time."*

**Jammers.** An estimated 600 jamming transmitters in the Soviet Zone attempt to block the RIAS signal. All wave lengths except FM are jammed, but RIAS gets its message through by using several different frequencies on all wave lengths, and by virtue of the fact that its main and very powerful transmitters are located within the relatively small area to which it broadcasts. It has been estimated that the Soviet Zone jammers use enough electricity each day to light the city of Leipzig.

DER REGIERENDE BÜRGERMEISTER  
VON BERLIN

Geschäftszeichen: III/E

① BERLIN-SCHÖNEBERG, DEN 5.9.1961  
RUDOLPH-WILDE-PLATZ  
FERNRUF: 71 02 61, APP. 3366  
(95)  
(nur im Innenbetrieb)

Mr. Robert H. Lochner  
Intendant des RIAS  
Berlin-Schöneberg  
Kufsteiner Strasse 69

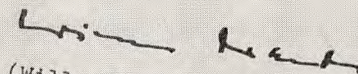
Sehr geehrter Mr. Lochner,  
wenn die tragischen Ereignisse vom 13. August und  
weiten Kreisen unseres Volkes mit  
werden konnten

Dear Mr. Lochner:

If the tragic events of August 13 and after were understood and shared by wide circles of our people, this is in large measure due to the reporting by RIAS. Particularly to the people on the other side of the barbed wire and concrete wall, the reports and commentaries of your collaborators have presented a comprehensive and objective picture of the events of the last weeks. I know how many sacrifices and how much effort your staff members have put into arousing the men and women in the free part of our country and into letting our compatriots on the other side of the bleeding frontier know that we are conscious of their misery. Since August 13, radio has perhaps become the most important bridge from us to them. I would like to express my gratitude to you and all your staff for the highly responsible work performed during the past few weeks.

Ich möchte Ihnen und  
in den letzten Wochen herzlich danken.

Ihr



(Willy Brandt)

A letter written to the RIAS staff by  
Berlin Governing Mayor Willy Brandt in September 1961, a month after the erection of the Wall

## Schedule of RIAS News and Political Broadcasts

### Daily Newscasts

0000  
 0100  
 0200  
 0300  
 0400  
 0500  
 0530  
 0630  
 0730  
 0815 LW  
 0830  
 0930  
 1130  
 1200 LW  
 1230  
 1300 LW  
 1330  
 1630  
 1730 LW  
 1900  
 1930 RIAS II  
  
 2100 LW  
 2130  
 2150 LW  
 2200 RIAS II  
 2300

### Important Political Broadcasts

0500-0730 "What's New?"  
 (Music and Berlin events plus short spots  
 of interest to Zonal residents)

1220-1230 "Farm Program" (For Soviet Zone farmers)

1530-1545 "Cross Section of Political Broadcasts"  
 (Repeats for night-shift workers)

1910 RIAS I  
 1940 RIAS II  
 1915 RIAS I  
 1945 RIAS II  
 Evening Political Commentary  
 "From the Zone - For the Zone"

2145 RIAS I  
 2215 RIAS II  
 Second Political Commentary

2150 RIAS I  
 2220 RIAS II  
 "And Today?"  
 (Current problems examined in depth)

2305 RIAS I  
 "Five Minutes for 20,000"  
 (Thrice weekly for VOPOs on duty  
 around Berlin)

### RIAS II Broadcasts

1000-1045  
 1500-1545  
 1800-2400 daily  
 1500-2400 Saturdays  
 1000-2400 Sundays

### RIAS Long-Wave Broadcasts

0100-0205  
 0500-0830  
 1200-1340  
 1600-1800  
 2100-2200

### Broadcast Frequencies

Medium Wave Berlin 683 KC  
 989 KC  
 Medium Wave Hof 737 KC

Short Wave Berlin 6005 KC  
 FM Berlin 88.8 MC  
 92.1 MC  
 Long Wave Munich 173 KC

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BERLIN

