

# Writer has fond memories of Berlin

In a letter-to-the-editor last month (July 6, 1973 issue), Ralph Callaway wrote of how many soldiers complain of their predicament (being stationed) in Berlin. It is probably true

that many return to the United States with only wallet-size visions of the great Divided City. This is sad.

Fortunately for me, such was not the case at all. From June 1968 until

August 1971, I lived in Berlin and treasured every minute of it. The Army was not my job nor my life, but an education and graduation from Berlin American High School did occupy much of my time.

It angers me to hear tales of people complaining of such an ideal location in a fascinating and foreign land. When I reflect now (and often do) on the adventures and advantages found in Berlin, it sends goose bumps up and down my arms and into this typewriter. Since returning to the U.S. and to college at the University of Missouri, there is much I miss.

There were subway rides on chilly, gray Saturday mornings to the British Naffi;

There were brilliantly-colored trees lining the U-Bahn near Foodland in the fall;

There was a tremendous feeling of spirit at the former Berlin Bear football games at McNair;

There was stuffy air in the photo lab at Andrews Barracks that lead me toward a college study of photojournalism;

There were shopping trips to Steglitz, and bouncy bus rides out to the Wannsee;

There was an exciting atmosphere and good wine at the fantastic Italian restaurant near Breitenbachplatz;

There was a feeling of fun in buying big pretzels and strolling down the Ku-damm;

There was fluffy snow falling in the duck pond near the officers' quarters, strange German sleds in the parks, and a moving candlelight service on Christmas Eve;

And now, two years since I left Berlin in the summer of '71, there are tears in my eyes.

John G. Freeman  
Kansas City, Missouri

## Write to us

Have you got something you'd like to get off your chest but don't know how to do it? Write a letter to the editors of The Berlin Observer. The Observer welcomes letters from its readers. Simply follow a few simple guidelines. Letters should be typed, double- or triple-spaced, and written on only one side of a sheet of paper. Letters must bear the writer's signature, typed name and unit address, and duty telephone number. The editors reserve the right to edit or reject any letters submitted for publication.

## — LIBRARY NOTES —

### NAACP

Quite a few people have asked me about the forming of the Stuttgart chapter of the NAACP because I was stationed there at the time, and very much involved in it. I'm taking this means, if you'll forgive a digression from library notes for just one column, to tell just a little about it.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, so named because it includes all ethnic groups, actually has three chapters in Germany. The one in Stuttgart, of which I am a member, started organization in 1972, and the charter members included all ranks and all colors.

Our first effort was the celebration of Negro History and Culture Week, which included art and sculpture shows, drama and the personal appearances of Chester Himes and James Baldwin.

The NAACP moves very slowly and pacifically in some ways, but over the years it has developed an amazing record of gaining and consolidating ground in the battle against prejudice. There is a book — **Fight for Freedom** by Langston Hughes — which is an excellent history of the organization. Also for those who are interested, I have a copy of the by-laws of the Stuttgart Chapter.

Like I always say — when you need to know, read to know. Keep reading — and have a good week!

— Miriam Steward

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