

# A GORBACHEV HINT FOR BERLIN WALL

It 'Can Disappear,' Russian  
Says, if Need for It Ends

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Special to The New York Times

BONN, June 15 — Wrapping up a triumphant visit to West Germany, President Mikhail S. Gorbachev said today that the Berlin wall was not necessarily permanent, but would be taken down only when conditions that created it fell away.

Though Mr. Gorbachev's visit produced no concessions on Berlin's status, his willingness to address the emotionally charged issue in practical terms was taken by West Germans as evidence of the "new chapter" that the Soviet leader proclaimed in Soviet-West German relations.

"The wall was raised in a concrete situation and was not dictated only by evil intentions," he said at his concluding news conference. East Germany "decided this as its sovereign right, and the wall can disappear when those conditions that created it fall away," he continued. "I don't see a major problem here."

He did not elaborate, and the reference to "conditions" had an echo of the hard-line stand taken by Erich Honecker, the 76-year-old leader of East Germany. But in the past, any talk of the wall was either stonily ignored by the Russians or assailed as "revanchism."

Hans Klein, the West German Government spokesman, called Mr. Gorbachev's comment on the wall "extremely positive," reflecting a consis-

*Continued on Page A6, Column 3*

# Gorbachev Says Berlin Wall 'Can Disappear' if Reasons for It End

Continued From Page A1

tent effort by the Germans to frame all facets of the visit in the best possible light. Mr. Klein said Berlin had been discussed at some length in the three meetings between Mr. Gorbachev and Chancellor Helmut Kohl, but he declined to give any details.

Mr. Gorbachev also did not rule out a resolution of the division of Germany, though he spoke only in broad terms. "Time itself must determine this," he said. "The current situation in Europe was created at a specific time by specific realities, and we are bound by this situation. But we hope that time will resolve this."

During Mr. Gorbachev's visit, officials who traveled here with him suggested several times that the "German question" could eventually be resolved by bringing relations between the two Germanys to the level of West German-Austrian relations.

Such soothing sounds abounded in the finale of a visit in which star-struck Germans lustily chanted the Soviet leader's name at every stop.

The cheers followed Mr. Gorbachev to the end. Nine thousand workers in white hard hats roared their support at the giant Hoesch steel works in Dortmund on the Soviet delegation's final excursion to the industrial heartland of the Ruhr before leaving from the Düsseldorf airport.

## Cold War's 'Chills and Drafts'

Mr. Gorbachev showed a bit of embarrassment at his news conference over the excitement he had caused. But he also seemed genuinely moved by the adulation of a nation whose aggression a half-century ago is keenly remembered in the Soviet Union.

"I think we have come out of a period of cold war, even if there are still some chills and drafts," Mr. Gorbachev said. "We are simply bound to a new stage of relations, one I would call the peaceful period in the development of international relations."

At the same time, after the demonstration of German enthusiasm and his own intensive lobbying for economic and technological help, Mr. Gorbachev felt compelled to defend the warm new embrace between Europe's biggest economic and military powers against misgivings in their respective camps.

"I want to stress that relations between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany do not threaten anyone and cannot threaten anyone," Mr. Gorbachev said in the opening remarks at his news conference. "In no case do they impinge on membership and responsibilities in our respective alliances."

Efforts not to alienate their allies was a thread throughout the visit. Mr. Kohl repeatedly insisted that he never deviated from NATO positions, and the Chancellor was to call leaders of the



President Mikhail S. Gorbachev of the Soviet Union autographing the hardhat of a worker yesterday at a steel plant in Dortmund before ending a four-day visit to West Germany. Reuters

## The Russians often ignore or assail talk of the wall's removal.

United States, Britain and France today to report on the summit meeting.

In their joint political declaration, Mr. Gorbachev and Mr. Kohl took care to say the United States and Canada "have their place" in the "common European home" the two leaders declared as their goal.

On the Soviet side, Mr. Gorbachev's reticence on the "German question" evidently reflected a reluctance to anger Mr. Honecker, the East German leader, who has doggedly resisted the spirit of restructuring and openness espoused by the Soviet leader.

In an interview with Newsweek on the eve of Mr. Gorbachev's arrival, Mr. Honecker declared that "border installations must at all times be kept at the requisite levels." Mr. Honecker further showed his annoyance at the visit by giving it only cursory coverage.

At the news conference, Mr. Gorbachev made a point of treating the Ger-

man reaction as a tribute to his program of perestroika and to the entire delegation, making no reference to himself.

"We of course knew that this country has great interest in perestroika, in our country, in the large changes there," he said. "I think that this is at the foundation" of the West German reaction. Other reasons, he said, were fatigue with the cold war the yearning of people who remember the war to put relations on a different track.

Mr. Gorbachev's approach suggested that he was wary of appearing to relish his popularity, which could give ammunition to critics at home or set off grumbling in the West.

Soviet experts on Germany traveling with Mr. Gorbachev said they saw an element of gratitude and relief from a nation that is burdened with guilt over World War II and highly sensitive to East-West tensions by virtue of its division, location and huge Allied military presence.

## Technology Curbs Assailed

For the Russians, Mr. Gorbachev confirmed that the primary thrust of the visit was to attract help for the reconstruction of the Soviet economy. The Soviet leader strongly courted West German businessmen and bankers at meetings in Cologne, Stuttgart

and the Ruhr valley, stressing that even as the Soviet Union's largest trading partner in the West, West Germany's trade was "ridiculously low."

"The visit allowed us to look at the situation in economic relations, to clarify many problems," he said. "Summing up these substantive discussions, I can say both sides see great possibilities not only in boosting the relationship, but in finding new directions, especially in science and technology."

During his visit, Mr. Gorbachev assailed the mechanism by which the West restricts exports of technology that the Russians could put to military use. The West Germans have also been strenuous critics of what they consider the excessive scope of the regulations.

In addition to long meetings with Mr. Kohl, he managed to hold separate talks with President Richard von Weizsäcker and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher. In trip to Stuttgart he met Lothar Späth, the Premier of Baden-Württemberg who is sometimes mentioned as a potential successor to Mr. Kohl.

In Dortmund, in addition to including real workers in his itinerary, Mr. Gorbachev visited a stronghold of the Social Democrats, sharing his spotlight with such Social Democratic leaders as Hans-Jochen Vogel, Johannes Rau, Helmut Schmidt and Willy Brandt.