

respond to the Soviet challenge. Although the speech was interpreted as "hardline," and motivated a healthy enthusiasm in the U.S. population for that reason, the military experts on the Berlin situation, those at the Berlin mission and others known as "the Berlin mafia," were horrified by Kennedy's references to his determination to defend "West" Berlin. This would be read in the Kremlin, they correctly warned, as meaning Kennedy had conceded the right to the Soviets to do whatever they wanted in "East" Berlin—a right the Allies had taken great pains never to concede.

Nonetheless, it looked to the world like the superpowers were facing each other down. The flow of refugees from East Germany, through the Marienfelde refugee center in West Berlin, reached record levels. On the weekend after Kennedy's speech, 3,859 came through.

In the United States, thousands of young Americans volunteered for the draft. Talk of civil defense measures and bomb shelters reverberated across the land. On Aug. 9, Khrushchov announced that the Soviets had developed the capacity to build a 100-megaton nuclear warhead, adding, "Soviet missiles are not for slicing sausages."

Despite the relentless build-up of tensions, President Kennedy debarked for a weekend at his Hyannis Port retreat Friday, Aug. 11. At midnight, exactly, beginning the day of Sunday, Aug. 13, 1961 a siren sounded through the barracks of the militarized East German border police, 25 miles from the center of Berlin, and the mobilization to erect the Berlin Wall—ringing West Berlin's 103-mile perimeter with an impenetrable barrier—was begun.

By 3:30 a.m. the East Germans were installing obstructions on all major streets that previously had been crossing points. Vehicles with East Berlin license plates and East German pedestrians attempting to cross to the West through the obstructions were being turned back, while West Berliners trying to return home from the Soviet Sector were required to show identity papers before being let through. By 4:00 a.m. the first sketchy reports of barbed-wire barriers began playing on the radio.

By the time dawn broke that day, the West was confronted with a Wall that had not been there the night before. Still, it wasn't until that evening, Berlin time, that President Kennedy was even notified of the development. When Kennedy released a statement to the press, it said merely that "limitation on travel within Berlin is a violation of the four-power status of Berlin and . . . will be the subject of vigorous protest through appropriate channels." Gelb reports that many in Kennedy's cabinet were, in fact, "relieved" at the development, noting that "the refugee situation was getting out of hand, anyway." The State Department line, he said, was "basically to lie low and do nothing."

The rest is history. Two months later, on Oct. 27, the "Checkpoint Charlie" incident occurred, when 10 American M-48 tanks faced off against a like number of Soviet tanks for a few tense hours before both backed away. But the willingness of the U.S. to allow the permanent division of

## Books Received

**Winter Hawk**, by Craig Thomas, William Morrow and Co., Inc., New York, 1987, 525 pages, \$18.95 hardcover.

**The Road to Trinity, A Personal Account of How America's Nuclear Policies Were Made**, by Maj. Gen. K.D. Nichols, U.S.A. (ret.), 401 pages, \$19.95 hardcover.

**Anthony Eden: A Biography**, by Robert Rhodes James. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1987. \$22.95 hardcover, 665 pages, 16 pages of black and white photographs.

**Energy and the Federal Government: Fossil Fuel Policies 1900-1946**, by John G. Clark. Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1987. \$39.95 hardcover, 511 pages.

**America's Wars and Military Excursions**, by Edwin P. Hoyt. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1987. \$24.95 hardcover, 540 pages. (A Military Book Club main selection)

**Meditations at Sunset: A Scientist Looks at the World**, by James Trefic. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1987. \$16.95 hardcover, 208 pages, illustrated.

**Worth Dying For: A Pulitzer Prize Winner's Account of the Philippine Revolution**, by Lewis M. Simons. New York: William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1987. \$18.95 hardcover, 320 pages.

Berlin invited Khrushchov to test Kennedy again the following year in Cuba, and the Soviets have not stopped—using irregular warfare, deceit in arms negotiations, and other tactics—pushing the West further and further onto the defensive ever since.

Gelb reminds the reader, almost inadvertently, that it was the "hardliners," those, he said, who were considered "too obsessed with the Communist menace" to have their views taken seriously, who turned out to be right. An example he cites was Stephen Koczak at the Berlin mission. Gelb says, "He was convinced the Communists would divide the city, and said so with a passion. . . . One mission member who served with him said Koczak has 'a brilliant mind which produced brilliant ideas but because he was thought to feel so strongly about issues generally, other minds were closed to his suggestions.' "