



## John F. Kennedys "Ich bin ein Berliner"-tale

### Taler

John F. Kennedy  
USA's 35. præsident

### Dato

26. juni 1963

### Sted

Vest-Berlin, foran Schöneberger  
rådhus

### Omstændigheder

I anledning af besøg i Vestberlin. Berlinmuren var blevet rejst to år forinden – i august 1961.

1 I am proud to come to this city as the guest of your distinguished Mayor, who  
has symbolized throughout the world the fighting spirit of West Berlin. And I  
am proud to visit the Federal Republic with your distinguished Chancellor who  
for so many years has committed Germany to democracy and freedom and  
5 progress, and to come here in the company of my fellow American, General  
Clay, who has been in this city during its great moments of crisis and will come  
again if ever needed.

Two thousand years ago the proudest boast was "civis Romanus sum." Today,  
10 in the world of freedom, the proudest boast is "Ich bin ein Berliner."

I appreciate my interpreter translating my German!

There are many people in the world who really don't understand, or say they  
15 don't, what is the great issue between the free world and the Communist world.  
Let them come to Berlin. There are some who say that communism is the wave  
of the future. Let them come to Berlin. And there are some who say in Europe  
and elsewhere we can work with the Communists. Let them come to Berlin.  
And there are even a few who say that it is true that communism is an evil  
20 system, but it permits us to make economic progress. Lass' sie nach Berlin  
kommen. Let them come to Berlin.

Freedom has many difficulties and democracy is not perfect, but we have never  
had to put a wall up to keep our people in, to prevent them from leaving us. I  
25 want to say, on behalf of my countrymen, who live many miles away on the  
other side of the Atlantic, who are far distant from you, that they take the  
greatest pride that they have been able to share with you, even from a distance,

the story of the last 18 years. I know of no town, no city, that has been besieged  
30 for 18 years that still lives with the vitality and the force, and the hope and the  
determination of the city of West Berlin. While the wall is the most obvious and  
vivid demonstration of the failures of the Communist system, for all the world  
to see, we take no satisfaction in it, for it is, as your Mayor has said, an offense  
not only against history but an offense against humanity, separating families,  
35 dividing husbands and wives and brothers and sisters, and dividing a people  
who wish to be joined together.

What is true of this city is true of Germany--real, lasting peace in Europe can  
never be assured as long as one German out of four is denied the elementary  
40 right of free men, and that is to make a free choice. In 18 years of peace and  
good faith, this generation of Germans has earned the right to be free, including  
the right to unite their families and their nation in lasting peace, with good will  
to all people. You live in a defended island of freedom, but your life is part of  
the main. So let me ask you as I close, to lift your eyes beyond the dangers of  
45 today, to the hopes of tomorrow, beyond the freedom merely of this city of  
Berlin, or your country of Germany, to the advance of freedom everywhere,  
beyond the wall to the day of peace with justice, beyond yourselves and  
ourselves to all mankind.

50 Freedom is indivisible, and when one man is enslaved, all are not free. When all  
are free, then we can look forward to that day when this city will be joined as  
one and this country and this great Continent of Europe in a peaceful and  
hopeful globe. When that day finally comes, as it will, the people of West Berlin  
can take sober satisfaction in the fact that they were in the front lines for almost  
55 two decades.

All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and, therefore, as a  
free man, I take pride in the words "Ich bin ein Berliner."

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