

Fall of the Berlin Wall Remembered by a Berliner

Claus Dubisz
November 8, 2013



Berliners protest the wall dividing East and West Berlin

There are so many aspects to consider when Unificationists talk about the unification of Germany. Different people, circumstances and developments played a significant role in enabling the opening of the wall on November 9, 1989.

I often wondered about the role of our Unification Movement in that process and I came to the conclusion: It was the spirit behind it, the yearning of the founder Rev. Sun Myung Moon to see unity.

As a religious person, Rev. Moon often asked himself, “Why was there division and separation?” He once told us that the main reason for this was mankind’s separation from God, the consequences of which were to be found in every aspect of life: in the various languages, different cultures and religions. Barriers divide people and cause

misunderstandings and resentment, which can lead to war. However, God’s ideal is completely different. He wanted to see mature people with ideal families caring for the creation in a responsible manner.

With this in mind, I would like to highlight some of our contributions to peace in Germany:

I was born in Spandau, a part of former West-Berlin. I lived there for 21 years and witnessed the Berlin Wall being built. So many times I experienced the value of living in a free country and the feeling of liberation, when, after crossing the German Democratic Republic (GDR) on their old highway, one left the border behind and could finally breathe the air of freedom again. The slogan “The Wall must go!” was one I carried deep in my heart and later pursued as a lifetime-task.

I learned from Rev. Moon that unity cannot be achieved by force. His own suffering under Korean communism was traumatic: He was persecuted, tortured almost to death and finally sent to work in a concentration camp. However, when he met Kim Il Sung in 1991, he showed us that true love can heal all these wounds.

I love to recall the scenes of November 9, 1989 in Berlin. I watched them again and again on television or on the internet. It is so moving to see how the people responded when they heard that they had freedom to travel. At first, a few went to the Wall - and could pass through! Then more and more people followed and finally the turnpike was raised! And remember the joy, the cheers, the tears? One woman expressed that she had never seen so many men crying.

One can easily understand the joy of the East-Germans. But also in the West we discovered a new joy, one that seemed lost and buried. We shared the joy of the people in the East as they finally gained the freedom to travel to the West and the relief that this chapter of German history had finally come to an end.

When we experience such joy, we may ask: Where does it come from? It must have been hidden deep in the hearts of men. In the basic teachings of the Rev. Moon, the Divine Principle, we find an explanation:

“With the progress of history, people have been ever more zealously aspiring for freedom, even at the cost of their lives. ... The purpose of our search for freedom is to facilitate the accomplishment of our God-given responsibility, which is essential for fulfilling our purpose of creation. ... Moreover, as aspirations for freedom mount in intensity, people will demand a social environment conducive to its realization. When the social circumstances of an era cannot satisfy the desires of freedom-loving people, revolutions inevitably erupt... Revolutions will continue until true freedom has been fully restored.”
(Divine Principle, chapter 2, section 5.2, 5.3)

It is interesting to note that the roots of the uprising in the German Democratic Republic are to be found in the churches: in the prayers for peace. These started long before 1980. So, we can only evaluate and appreciate the history of the German unification properly when we recognize God’s work behind the scenes.

The Unification Movement carried out various activities, some of which had a more symbolic meaning. I remember that on May 1, 1985 several of us visited East Berlin, each with a copy of the Divine Principle. We were to give it to somebody who believed in God. We asked the people, “Do you believe in God?” If they said, “Yes!” then we were to give them the book, together with the official spending money of around 20 Ostmark and then return home. It wasn’t easy to find those people. And we all have exciting stories to tell of that adventure.

Then there were the ideological discourses presented by our partner organisation, CAUSA, as a counter-proposal to the Communist ideology. CAUSA illuminated the faults of the Communistic ideology and explained its basic mistake: the denial of God. As a consequence, the awareness of God’s existence had to be raised in the West, in order to bring about any change.

At that time, the confidence that an individual could influence anything in this world had almost disappeared from society. Our student CARP had set the goal of re-kindling and cultivating this awareness. In 1974, we were handing out hundred thousands of pamphlets in Frankfurt University, one of the strongholds of Communism in Germany, and later, 1976 and 1977 all over the country. Those were two very intense years for CARP.



More than one million leaflets were distributed to cultivate awareness about the faults of Communism.

One may assume that it wouldn’t be a problem to hand out pamphlets and share one’s opinions in a democratic society, but we discovered that it could be dangerous. Mobs of students would suddenly gather and beat us and push us into the bushes. They called us “fascists!”

In a unique action, one million leaflets were distributed everywhere: “Pray-Fast-Unite: Against Communism, for the Re-Unification of Germany.” This was against the spirit of the age, but I believe it made an impact.



Members of CARP organized the first demonstration against the Berlin Wall on the Kurfuerstendamm

In 1982 Eldridge Cleaver, the former Black Panther leader, who was a well-known public figure at that time, came to Europe. He had been accused of attempted manslaughter in America and had fled to some Arab countries where he had joined terrorist camps. It was there that he had a conversion experience with Christ. Afterwards, he returned to the United States to surrender to the authorities. He was pardoned and thereafter dedicated himself to fight against Communism.

He met CARP in the United States, and came to speak in a European CARP Workshop. Inspired by his testimonies we organized our first demonstration (the anniversary of the

building of the wall) on the Kurfuerstendamm. At the closing rally, Eldridge spoke at the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church. As he was very well known in leftist circles his appearance together with CARP created kind of shockwaves. The following day we discovered a full-page article about the event in the leftist newspaper “TAZ.” In their commentaries they raised the puzzling question, of how such a person can suddenly go along with CARP!

This is what Eldridge Cleaver said:



Former Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver (far right) speaking in Berlin!

“We call a new generation to the ramparts and barricades. We must begin a new hope, a new movement to overcome the divisions of humanity and heal the wounds and scars of the past.

This great and ancient land of Germany which has known so many tragedies and triumphs must be re-united and the genius of the people must be allowed to blossom once again ... So we believe that some day Germany will be free, united and sovereign again...

Let's tear down this inglorious and despicable wall! ... To the leaders of the free world: Where are you heading to with your business as usual? To the international bankers: Did you not know that the red on your balance sheet is the blood of martyrs? ... We cannot go further down this path...

Together we must say: Down with communism! Freedom for all the people of the whole world. We want a real brotherhood, and we want to unite all races and all colors of the people. And we must reject all those who say it cannot be done, because it can be done!

Here on this earth we all can have a good life. But first we must unite. And together we can have the dream of paradise. We have great hope that we all can live the good life which God wants us to live. And we will sweep away in the garbage can of history everything which stands in the way of realising this dream. God bless you.“

We were grateful for that experience, as none of us had much experience of public marches, demonstrations and rallies. However, we gained the burning desire to go out again on the streets and speak the truth.



Even though it was pitch dark, CARP continued to march along the wall in Bernauer Strasse

We decided to hold a demonstration in Berlin on June 17th, the following year, the 30th anniversary of the people's uprising in East-Germany, which was brutally suppressed by Soviet guns and tanks back in 1953. Our CARP Blue Tuna band played: “and the walls came tumbling down”. In a symbolic act the Berlin wall was broken.

1985 then became a decisive year. On March 11th May Mikhail Gorbachev was elected leader of the Soviet Communist Party and introduced changes such as perestroika and glasnost, which shook the rigid structure of the Soviet Union and later caused the USSR to disintegrate.

In August of the same year, the “Professors World Peace Academy”, an academic organisation founded by Rev. Moon, held a conference in Geneva entitled, “The End of the Soviet Empire,” a theme chosen by the founder himself. It was a challenge to organize a conference under such a title.

However, more than 200 renowned scientists, professors and journalists from both East and West

participated.

In Berlin, CARP organized four rallies on one day. The highlight was a march along the wall in Bernauer Strasse. The sky became pitch-dark. A cloudburst hit our demonstration, but nobody ran away. On an observation stage directly at the wall we shouted our key message in 21 different languages towards the East:

“Brothers and sisters in the East, we will never forget you! We are fighting for the unification of Germany and all people of the world. Thank you!”



CARP members cheer during Ronald Reagan's speech at the Brandenburg Gate during his visit to West Berlin

Such action may not sound so special, but on the next day a tragic incident became eternally connected to that rally: The Portuguese CARP leader Henrique D'Araujo who had attended the rally, was killed on his return journey as a bomb exploded in Frankfurt airport. This made us realize that what we were doing was not a game, it was a serious spiritual confrontation which cost the precious life of our brother.

During the next years we realized important changes taking place. In June 1987, Ronald Reagan visited West-Berlin and held a speech at the Brandenburg Gate. Under much applause he demanded:

“Mr Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek

liberalisation, come here to this gate. Mr Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr Gorbachev, tear down this wall!”

Such words weren't heard for many years. And developments like this encouraged us in the preparations for the long planned “CARP Convention of World Students” in August 1987. Such congresses had already been held in Korea, Japan and America. Many German CARP members had attended these meetings and were impressed by the great events and the eloquent guest speakers. We knew that we didn't have such impressive guest speakers, but we had something else, we had a mandate to tear down a Wall! The time had come for thousands of students from all over the world to protest against it! This finally fulfilled Rev. Moon's prophetic words to CARP from 1981:

“One day in the not-too-distant future, we hope we will go to Berlin and shout to the communists, 'break down that wall. That wall doesn't belong there.' ... In Germany, as the hub of non-communist and communist activity, if we win the battle, namely in Berlin, we will get world support, and this is the end of VOC (Victory over Communism). After that, we start loving them. It's different from American and Japanese VOC in that it's directly linked. If we win, there is no more fighting, but straight to Moscow. Then the communists will be in their twilight, whereas Unification Church will be in its early morning, like the rising sun.”

The officials of Berlin were quite sceptical about our activities and started to oppose us: Churches, politicians, leftists, and anarchists attacked us legally, with negative propaganda, and also physically (That's a story in itself, with incredible situations, frustrations and victories). However, we could get international support: professors, politicians and other VIP's protested against the unjust opposition. Representing many, Prof Arnljot Svendsen, professor of economics from the University of Bergen in Norway and a conservative party leader in that city said:

“I am not a member of Rev. Moon's Unification Movement, however I deeply impressed by the moral commitment of the CARP members. They represent human nobleness, intellectual and mental idealism. If we could have more student movements of this kind in the world we could calmly trust the future.”

Finally the Convention took place. During the main assembly former SED (Sociality Unity Party of Germany) party ideologist Edda Hanisch pointed out:

“You are the first ones, who will demonstrate tomorrow with many people against the wall. Since 1961 we haven't seen any mass demonstration of the West-German political parties against this wall!”

Hyo Jin Moon, the eldest son of Rev. Moon led the final protest march to the Peter Fechter memorial, which honored a young man who was killed by communist border guards when he tried to escape to the West.

Our Blue Tuna band, supported by musicians from England and Germany, lead the crowd in rhythmic chanting: ‘The wall must break’. I vividly remember German CARP President Dieter Schmidt shouting to

the watching East German border police:

“This rally is only the beginning. We will not stop here. We will march forward until Moscow. Please remember that and write it down in your newspapers!”



German CARP President Dieter Schmidt addresses the East German border police during a rally.

At this point a small note: after the GDR collapsed, the documents of the secret police (Stasi) were all collected, and even many shredded reports could be restored. In 2011, we had asked the government documentation center if there were relevant documents about the Unification Movement and specifically CARP. The results were amazing: 3,000 pages with observations and reports. The communists had carefully watched leading CARP members, the CARP houses and all the activities, especially in West-Berlin!

On August 8, 1987 in Hyo Jin Moon’s speech at the wall he pointed out the special support for Germany from students all over the world who were dedicating themselves for unification. We were not there to provoke an argument or conflict, but to bring true love! He ended his speech by

reminding everyone that:

“Inside of God's heart there is even room for communism. Inside of God there is even room for Gorbachev! Come on, let’s go to the wall and pray”



Hyo Jin Moon, the eldest of Rev. Moon, sheds tear while he prayed at the Berlin Wall on August 8, 1987

The rest is history. Unexpectedly, without a visible plan, the people of East Germany gathered strength to demand more freedom. Demonstrations grew in numbers, peacefully, carried by prayers and candlelight. In October 1989 the East German army was ordered not to suppress the protest rallies with guns. And on November 9, 1989 freedom of travel was officially announced in a press conference, including the area of East-Berlin. The East-German border guards were taken by surprise – and stranded without clear orders – some just followed their hearts. As the gates were opened, a country united with tears of joy.

One year later, Germany was officially re-unified. It was time to remind the German people that all this could only

happen, because God was behind it.

“Thank God for the Unification of Germany in Peace and Freedom”



The Stasi (German secret police) collected thousands of documents about the Unification Movement and specifically CARP during the demonstration period

Today we are able to live in a united Germany, but let us remember that there is another land which still remains divided because their wounds and clefts are much deeper than ours. I am referring to North and South Korea.

To conclude, I would like to quote from Rev. Moon’s reflections about the unification of Germany as written in his autobiography. He reminds us that the events which took place here in Germany have influenced the rest of the

world:

“In any country, one reason a dictator will tend to tighten his grip is that he fears for his life in the event he may lose power. I think that if a dictator can be certain that his own life will not be placed in danger, he will not go headlong down a dead-end street in the manner of Ceausescu.

Our country too, will be unified before long, by one means or another. So politicians and economists need to make the necessary preparations in their own fields of expertise. As a religious person, I will work hard to prepare to greet the unified Korea, in which we can embrace the North Korean people with love and share in a common peace



CARP member celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall. The banner reads, "Thank God for the Unification of Germany in Peace and Freedom."

I have studied the unification of Germany for a long time. I have listened to the experiences of those who were involved with regard to how it was that unification could come without a single bullet being fired or a single drop of blood being spilled. In so doing, my hope has been to find a way that is appropriate for Korea. I have learned that the main reason Germany could be unified peacefully, was that East German leaders were made to understand that their lives would not be in danger following unification. If East German leaders had not believed this would be so, they would not have allowed unification to occur so easily.

I came to believe that we need to give a similar understanding towards the rulers of North

Korea."

(As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen)

I believe that everything we do is a process of give and take, so everything in which we invest will one day return its fruits, and what we do here will influence the whole world.



Claus Dubisz