

## Chronology of the “house” at Sven-Hedin-Strasse 11

**1904** 01 November = After thirty years of steaming past, Wannseebahn suburban trains begin stopping at a new station, Zehlendorf-Beerenstrasse. The station, from **1987** 07 March known as Mexikoplatz, was a joint project of real estate developers (Zehlendorf-West Terrain-Aktiengesellschaft), the local government of Zehlendorf and the Royal Prussian Railways. Trains go into the center of Berlin at the Wannseebahnhof, on the west flank of the major Potsdamer Bahnhof.

**1908** = the famed *Bankierzüge* (*Bankers' trains*) provide express service on the main line tracks into Potsdamer Bahnhof itself, speeding up commuter travel for stations between Wannsee and Zehlendorf, including Zehlendorf-Beerenstrasse.

**1911** = Hjalmar Horace Greeley Schacht has a house built at Numbers 13 and 15 on Dessauer Strasse in Zehlendorf-West. The street is later re-named in 1927 and in 1947. The most recent name is Gilgestrasse. In Schacht's memoirs, he states that he lived in the house with his family for 15 years and commuted by train to his banking jobs in Mitte.

**1914** 06 February = design of a two-story, single family Landhaus, as large suburban homes had been called in Germany, is commissioned for property at Prinz-Friedrich-Karl-Strasse 11. Prominent Schlachtensee architect John Kruse designs the villa, as houses of this type were beginning to be called. Kruse's best regarded pre-WWI project is a schoolhouse on Dübrowplatz. The German Reich, united only in the previous generation, is thriving. Its products are sold around the world. Architects respond with “heavy” buildings that almost swagger. Construction manager is Robert Haberling.

**1914** 28 June = Archduke Franz Ferdinand is assassinated in Sarajevo. A month of hectic and bungled diplomacy follows and then World War I.

**1915** 13 March = the house at Number 11 is turned over to its first owner. The property also includes the lots for Number 7 and 9. Walking past their expanse, it is about a ten-minute stroll to the new commuter train station. Along the way, a drugstore and other businesses have sprung up.

In the political and economic turmoil that followed the war, the house changes hands several times.

**1924** January = Schacht takes office as President of the Reichsbank. His official residence is next door to the bank headquarters.

**1926** = Schacht buys country property at Gühlen (Lindow).

**1927** May = Leo Scheibner, director of stock market activities and personnel of the Reichs-Kredit-Gesellschaft mbH, buys the property at Numbers 7, 9 and 11.

(The Reichs-Kredit-Gesellschaft AG (common abbreviation ERKA or RKG), the Bank Group of the national government owned United Industrial Enterprises AG (VIAG).)

RKG was organized in 1917 as the "Statistical Office for War Corporations" with the German Reich Treasury, the later German Reich Ministry of Finance, set up to compensate for money surplus and demand for money at the war material corporations. For the settlement of the war companies after the end of the First World War in 1918, the transfer of this "Statistical Office" into the Reich-Credit and Inspection Firm GmbH was carried out, whereby the German Reich took over all shares of the GmbH and in 1923 it was transferred to the VIAG that on March 7 was founded in Berlin as the holding company for previously directly owned, industrial participations of the German Reich.

In 1923 the company was renamed to the Reichs-Kredit-Gesellschaft mbH, which in 1924 was converted into a limited company. The company was active, except for retail banking business, in the fields of industrial and commercial credit, the issuing business, asset management and the financing of German imports and exports. When the Great Depression began, its inability to pay debts with Reichs Marks that were blocked from leaving Germany stressed the Chemical Bank of New York, contributing to leading that firm into a questionable cotton commodities trade designed to evade currency controls.

In the 1930s, it became one of the five biggest Berlin banks; however, it had no branches. Its growth came as it assisted in the "aryanization" of German companies, in establishing interlocking control of banks in Axis countries and covert trade deals during World War II with Swiss firms. But Leo Scheibner missed all that.

**1927** 14 September = Prinz-Friedrich-Karl-Strasse is renamed Sven-Hedin-Strasse in honor of the Swedish explorer of Central Asia.

**1927** October = Leo Scheibner sells the villa to generic-named Industriebauanlagen GmbH, but continues to reside in Number 11. City directories from **1927** through **1931** also show a resident gardener and other resident household staff.

**1929** = U-Bahn service is extended to Krumme Lanke, about a 15-minute walk to Sven-Hedin-Strasse.

**1930** 2 April = Schacht resigns as President of the Reichsbank. "On leaving the Reichsbank my wife and I finally moved out to Gühlen the property I had acquired in 1926. Gühlen is part of the little town of Lindow so excellently portrayed by Theodor Fontane in his book *Wanderungen durch die Mark* (Wanderings through Brandenburg).

**1931** January = Leo Scheibner dies.

**1931** = "On the 13th July the Gühlen telephone rang. For the second time Chancellor Brüning asked me to come to the capitol." – Schacht.

**1931** December = Schacht recovers from an auto accident at home in Gühlen.

**1932 - 1933** = City directory shows Sven-Hedin Strasse 7 as under construction and 11 as vacant.

**1933** 17 March = Schacht is appointed by Adolf Hitler as President of the Reichsbank.

**1933** 15 May = Electrification of the Wannseebahn speeds up S-Bahn service, cleaner and quieter than steam trains, responds to indirect U-Bahn competition.

**1934** 27 July = Hitler asks Schacht to add the Ministry of Economic Affairs to his portfolio.

**1934** = City directory shows Sven-Hedin Strasse 7 as under construction and 11 as vacant.

**1934** 2 August = Schacht takes office as Minister of Economic Affairs.

**1935** October = city directory shows Sven-Hedin-Strasse 11 as vacant, but *Wer ist's* (a German counterpart of *Who Is Who*) shows it as the residence of Dr. Walther Funk, Chief of the Reich Press Bureau since 1933. It also mentioned that his family had been Evangelisch (Lutheran) since the 1600's and that in 1927 he had sailed to New York City.

**1936** 14 January = German journalist Bella Fromm writes in her diary:

Musical entertainment in the home of the French diplomat Pierre Arnal and his wife. Very posh. I am interested above all things in Walther Funk and his spouse. The stout Walther has never been very popular. Usually he is not quite sober. I still remember the time when he was very friendly with the non-Aryan Emil Factor from *Börsen-Courier*. The two were inseparable. He is now in StS RMVP [Secretary of State for the Reich Propaganda Ministry], his position requires that he lives in a magnificent palace. God knows who Funk has chased from his home to get his current home in the Sven Hedin road ..."

**1936** = "Bankers' trains" add electric express operations using main line tracks parallel to the Wannseebahn into Potsdamer Bahnhof. New rolling stock is equipped for 120 km/h speeds.

**1937** 26 November = Schacht relieved from office as Minister of Economic Affairs.

**1938** = *International Who's Who* reports that Funk has served as Secretary of State in the Reich Ministry for the National Economy, then Secretary of State in the Ministry of Propaganda, Vice-President of the Reich Cultural Chamber, Chairman of the Publicity Council of German Industry, Chairman of the Reich Broadcasting Association, and Chairman of the Board (Vorsitzer des Verwaltungsrates) of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.

**1938** = Funk appointed Minister of Economic Affairs.

**1938** = Because he was Jewish, the owner of a villa on Am Sandwerder was forced to sell the property for a token price to the German Ministry of Finance. The ownership changed title again in 1942 to the Deutsche Reichsbank. Funk, as the President of the Reichsbank took the property as his official residence.

**1938** = Schacht legally separated from his wife, Luise. In his autobiography, he states that they lived apart until her death in 1940.

**1938** Fall = Czechoslovakia's capital city is crowded with refugees from Hitler's Germany: intellectuals, Jewish and other minorities, Social Democrats, Communists. Agitation by the Sudeten Germans increases

**1938** = September 29–30, 1938: Germany, Italy, Great Britain, and France sign the **Munich agreement**, by which Czechoslovakia must surrender its border regions and defenses (the Sudeten region) to Nazi Germany. German troops occupy these regions between October 1 and 10, 1938.

**1938** October = In the tumult following the Hitler-Chamberlain agreement at Munich, Dr. František Chvalkovský is named Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia. German Foreign Ministry Counselor Wolf tells colleagues that the new minister is known as "a right charming man."

Chvalkovský launches into consultations in Central Europe with the Italian Foreign Minister, German Foreign Minister, Reichs Chancellor Hitler, Polish officials, etc.



Dr. Chvalkovski, der bisherige tschecho-slowakische Gesandte in Rom, wurde mit dem Außenministerium betraut. Dr. Chvalkovski hat 1926 die Tschecho-Slowakei als Gesandter in Berlin vertreten.

**1939** 20 January = Schacht relieved from office as President of the Reichsbank.

**1939** 26 January = The U.S. Ambassador to Czechoslovakia telegram to the Secretary of State: "I visited the Foreign Minister yesterday. In contrast with his appearance at the end of December he seemed worn and dispirited, but this may have been due to the fact that he had not been well and carried out his recent trip to Berlin despite a high fever. The Reichs Chancellor, he said, had expressed himself as dissatisfied with Czech attitude toward several matters principally the Jews, the press, the army and the German minority."

**1939** 27 January = The German Chargé d' Affaires in Prague wrote that "Even if outwardly a certain satisfaction is displayed, the

course of the Berlin conversations actually means a disappointment for the Czechoslovak Government. Leading circles in Prague expected Dr. Chvalkovský to return with definite basic demands from Germany for a final settlement by treaty of German-Czechoslovak relations. [There followed a long list of concessions made to Germany and a list of more to come.]

“Considerable enmity has been shown toward Foreign Minister Chvalkovský, and special provisions have to be made for his personal safety. Typical of the feeling prevailing against him is a joke being circulated here that M. Chvalkovský “is now learning shorthand to be able to keep up with the dictation more quickly.”

**1939** March 14 = Slovakia with German backing secedes from Czechoslovakia.



**1939** 14 March = Czech state president Dr. Hácha travels to Berlin to the Fuhrer to place the fate of the Czechs in his hands. President Dr. Hácha on arrival in Berlin’s Anhalter Bahnhof, where he is greeted by Dr. Meissner. Dr. F. Chvalkovský looks on. Official German photo by Heinrich Hoffmann. The last leg of their journey is shown in the first 3½ minutes of the classic 1925 film *Berlin – Symphony of a City* available at: <https://youtu.be/TVqPoV9q4ck> .

**1939** 15 March = After midnight the Acting President of the Czech Republic, Dr. Emil Hácha, and Foreign Minister Chvalkovský sign the agreement turning over their country

to the protective hands of the German Chancellor. It is signed by Hitler and Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop.

**1939** 15 March = Chaos in Prague as German troops arrive, followed by the SS and Gestapo. Since the previous October, H.D. Harrison of the London *News-Chronicle* estimated that 200,000 refugees from the Sudetenland – Czechs and left-leaning Germans – had come to the Czech capital.

**1939** 16 March = Proclamation by the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (German occupation government of Czechia) that Chvalkovský will represent the Protectorate in Berlin with the title “Ambassador”.

**1939** May-June = Funk’s role in the preparations for war as described on-line in the Jewish Virtual Library:

Funk actively participated in the planning of wartime financial measures. This was natural since Funk, after 1938, occupied three positions crucial to finance: Minister of Economics, President of the Reichsbank (to which he was appointed in January 1939), and Chief Plenipotentiary for Economics. Funk's role in war financing is illustrated by a letter, dated 1 June 1939, from the Chief Plenipotentiary for Economics (Funk), signed on his behalf by Dr. Posse (3562-PS). This letter found in the captured files of the Reich Ministry of Economics, transmitted the minutes of a meeting concerning the financing of the war. This meeting had been held under the chairmanship of Dr. Landfried, Funk's Undersecretary in the Reich Ministry of Economics. The document bears a marginal note in the bottom left hand corner, dated 5 June, stating that the document was "to be shown to the Minister" [i.e., Funk]. Only eight copies were made of the Minutes, which were marked "Top Secret". Four of these copies were sent to officials directly subordinate to Funk (two in the Reich Ministry of Economics, one in the Reichsbank, and one in the Office of the Chief Plenipotentiary for Economics). During the course of the meeting, which was attended by twelve officials, five of whom were directly responsible to Funk in his various capacities, the conferees discussed a memorandum regarding war finance which had been prepared by the Chief Plenipotentiary for Economics on 9 May 1939.

**1939** May 23 = U.S. Consul General in Prague reports to the Secretary of State.

That Czech “autonomy” has proved a fiction is no longer open to doubt. Despite continued German assurances to the contrary the Protectorate system, as guaranteed to the Czechs by the Reichschancellor in his decree of March 16, has never been seriously put into effect. Such steps as were originally taken towards even the formal observance of its provisions are now being steadily retracted in practice if not in theory.

The civil administration, which was supposed to have been restored to the Czech authorities upon the relinquishment of executive authority by the Reichswehr in April, has actually remained in German hands.

**1939** June = Envoy of the German-controlled remnant of Czechoslovakia begins his work in Berlin.

*Google translation from German language version in Czech Radio website edited ...*

No one was going against the restriction of competence but it was in "RGBJ 1940 p.22" set so that the Embassy did not exist as a subject *de facto*. The Reich Protector von Neurath also stressed in the Regulation "VBI. R. Prot. 1940 p.15" that representation existed not as an official, but only as a natural person titled envoy called the Protectorate in Berlin Representative. When the imperial institutions, except the Reich Chancellery, with its affairs turned to Chvalkovský, it was mandatory to cede that matter to the Office of the Reich Protector in Prague. The envoy -- Chvalkovský -- was not part of the diplomatic corps.

The definitive end of the representation in the protectorate began on 25 February 1945, when Ambassador Chvalkovský in Berlin died during the allied bombings.

Embassy: Kurfürstendamm 190/92

Residential Villa of protectorate ambassador: Sven- Hedin- Straße 11, Berlin Zehlendorf

**1939** 30 August at midnight = Adolf Hitler announces formation of the Ministerial Council for the Defense of the Reich, headed by Hermann Göring, including Funk.

**1939** 19 September = The villa is transferred to the German Reich for RM125,000.

**1940** 25 July = At an evening press conference, CBS Radio Correspondent William L. Shirer notes “Funk, a shifty-looking little man who, they say, drinks too much, and not devoid of humor, admitted quite frankly that the purpose of the ‘new order’ was to make Germany a richer land.” Shirer’s notes provide a detailed outline of Nazi Germany’s economic goals and commented on Funk’s dislike of Schacht.

**1940** August = Chvalkovský dines as guest of diplomat turned Abwehr officer Otto Carl Kiep, other guests included diplomats Ulrich von Hassell and Theodor Kordt, plus former Reich Finance Minister Hjalmar Schacht. Discussion included speculation as to when America would enter the war and the potential deadly consequences for those charged with “eroding military discipline/moral.” In **1944** Kiep, von Hassell and Kordt were executed for plotting against Hitler and Schacht was in prison for his contacts with plotters.

**1941** 18 March = edited Google translation of typewritten memo from the SD Leitabschnitt Prag (Security Service) to Karl-Hermann Frank, State Secretary to the Reichs Protector for Bohemia and Moravia. It reflects the perspective on German-Soviet relations from his sources in Berlin three months before the Hitler-Stalin treaty ended with the German invasion of the Soviet Union. Two weeks after this meeting, the Wehrmacht was moving troops to prepare for the April 6<sup>th</sup> invasion of Yugoslavia, certainly a “new development” in relations.

It is not clear regarding the actresses, whether Chvalkovský saw them as distractions or suspected them of being informers. Given their notoriety the meeting would have attracted public attention. Hotel Šroubek was a mid-sized hotel with a dining room, located centrally on Wenceslas Square.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%C3%ADda\\_Baarov%C3%A1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%C3%ADda_Baarov%C3%A1)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adina\\_Mandlov%C3%A1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adina_Mandlov%C3%A1)

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According to a message received here - which has not yet been checked for the time being - Chvalkovský arrived in Prague a few days ago in question and had a meeting with the members of the Protectorate Government and

the former Minister-president Baren. Right away after his arrival he called by phone with Minister-president ~ in connection and to get the order from him to summon the Protectorate Ministers and to suggest to the Minister of Commerce Kratochvíl that he may drop by "without the women", which means possibly the actresses Baarová and Mandlová were meant to come. Furthermore, there is a get together arranged between Chvalkovský and Beran in the Hotel Šroubek ~ where Chvalkovský was staying.

Chvalkovský: During the discussions, Y is said to have given information above all about the German-Soviet-Russian pact, which the Russians would no longer recognize in any way, and about the German-Yugoslav relationship that was about to start a new development.

Speaking for the correctness of the report that Chvalkovský actually stayed at the Hotel Šroubek a few days ago, as could be ascertained, and returned on the same day to Berlin.

**1943** August 11 - edited Google translation of typewritten memo from the SD Leitabschnitt Prag (Security Service command detachment) to Karl-Hermann Frank, State Secretary to the Reichs Protector for Bohemia and Moravia. It followed other memos discussing the problems with what they termed as a "two-track" situation:

+ Reichs Protector ⇔ Autonomous Czech Government

+ Envoy Chvalkovský ⇔ Reich Ministries in Berlin.

Further friction was revealed by complaints that Chvalkovský communicated with the Czech government officials in Czech. When the Protectorate officials complained, he pointed out that the Austro-Hungarian government had permitted their use of Czech as a convenience.

Secret!

According to a report here, Chvalkovský viewed the current situation in the Reich as critical and stated that the crisis would come with mathematical certainty. This attitude was also expressed in the following incident: On the occasion of his last vacation in Prague, Chvalkovský suddenly stopped playing the piano with his sister and commented that "If things go wrong, we both could play in a bar."



**1945** January 16 = in a telephone call with Dr. Popelka of the Czech occupation government, K. H. Frank discusses protocol for a decoration to be awarded Chvalkovský for his service. In the same call he learns that Popelka has not heard from the ambassador “in ages”, that the phones in Chvalkovský’s office have been knocked out by enemy action, and that the ambassador is “not at his post” due to a nervous condition. [He may have remained in Zehlendorf at home, rather than at his office in a heavily-targeted area.]

**1945** February = American planes bomb Switzerland. Belgium is declared free. Budapest falls to the Red Army. Previously neutral Latin American countries declare war on Germany. World War II is coming to a chaotic end in Europe.

**1945** February 25 = Royal Air Force bombing of Berlin area pauses for a day due to weather over the Channel. High-tech Special Duties Group 100 continued with their fast Mosquitos, sending 91 of the planes against the Berlin, Bremen, Erfurt and Mainz areas without a British loss.

“Several contacts were obtained but no combats resulted. Airfields, military targets, [railway] rolling stock, and *targets of opportunity were bombed and strafed.* [My italics.]

**1945** February 25 = Ambassador Dr. František Chvalkovský is killed on a highway near Berlin when his car is strafed by a “dive bomber.” His wife is severely injured. None of the material I have found indicates what they were doing there in a time of gas rationing and potential air strikes, except for his daughter’s recollection that her mother was going to Switzerland. The OKW report of war news for the 25<sup>th</sup> reported attacks by British planes in that region.

**1945** February 27 = the Swiss foreign ministry discusses recognition of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile, which is packing up in London and preparing to return to Prague and the foreign ministry has notified the Slovakian consul in Switzerland that they no longer recognize his government. Reports that Berlin is angry. Ambassador Chvalkovský – often credited for being well-informed – may have picked up indications of these “final curtain” events in the war.

**1945** March 13 = memorial service for Ambassador Dr. František Chvalkovský in Prague.

**1945** March 19 = Medical update on Frau Chvalkovský reports she remains in great pain. She could only open her mouth up to 1 cm, making feeding difficult. Mouth and throat wounds still were releasing pus. Her body temperature was below 95F/35C degrees. Also she was experiencing heart problems. She had left the Belzig hospital and was staying at the country villa of the Swiss ambassador Feltscher in Gross-Wudicke, near Rathenow, about 60 miles (100 kms) from Sven-Hedin-Strasse.

**1945** March 27 = Legation Secretary reports there is no change in Frau Chvalkovský’s condition.

**1945** April 11 = Protectorate receives word that Frau Chvalkovský can now take a few steps on crutches, but that her face muscles are still stiff. She had been moved to a hospital in Kissleg im Allgäu, near the Swiss border and already had permission from the Reichs Chancellery to proceed into Switzerland.

**1945** April 12 = Reichs Chancellery sends word to H. K. Frank that the Führer has approved the posthumous Knight's Cross for War Service with Sword for the ambassador. The letter takes seven days to reach Frank. The actual medal is at a Munich atelier waiting for someone to pick it up.

**1945** April 12 = Hungarian consul general in Prague invites H. K. Frank and Frau Frank to a piano concert by renowned pianist Julian Károlyi, encloses two complimentary tickets. Frank did not use the tickets.

**1945** April 14 = Soviet planes drop German language military propaganda magazines over Bohemia (western portion of the Czech lands).

**1945** April 22 = Berlin telegraph office closes (last msg was "Good Luck To You All" from Tokyo). Last passenger plane departs Tempelhof, destination Stockholm.

**1945** April 25 = U.S. and Soviet forces meet up at two locations on the Elbe.

**1945** April 28 = the Red Army enters southwest Berlin.

**1945** April 29 = house to house fighting in Berlin.

**1945** April 30 = the Red Army is in every district of Berlin.

**1945** July 1 = Advance units of U.S. forces scout locations in what is to become the American Sector of Berlin. Public Relations Officer Lt. Col. Barney Oldfield spots Sven-Hedin-Strasse 11 as ideal location for a Press Club. He confronts a Soviet general and bodyguard in the villa who insist that they will remain. (There is no indication as to whether any of these people realized it was owned by the German government rather than being a private home.)

**1945** July 2 = American and British front line journalists begin arriving, radio men set up broadcast links to home networks.

**1945** July 3 = Main force of occupation troops from 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division arrive. Their convoys are disrupted by Soviet-ordered detours and uncertain bridges.

**1945** July 4 = American flag raised over Andrews Barracks, the former cadet school that had been used as an SS barracks.

**1945** August 10 = Press Club of Berlin at Sven-Hedin-Strasse 11 opening night.

**1945** September = Press Club member Rudolph Dunbar, accredited correspondent for the Associated Negro Press, conducts the Berlin Philharmonic in a successful performance of William Grant Still's 'Afro-American Symphony' despite an internal struggle within the U.S. military government.

**1945** October 4 = Lt. Col. Oldfield smuggles Isted Lion through Soviet lines.

**1948** Looking back as part of the Soviet takeover of postwar Czechoslovakia, *New Times*, from Moscow summed up the activities of Hácha's government: "They sabotaged defense measures and did everything in their power to avoid accepting Soviet assistance." Of Chvalkovský they wrote "the Foreign Minister, formerly Minister to Berlin, a German agent, traitor and careerist."

**1952** United States Military Liaison Mission moved into the former Press Club at Sven-Hedin-Strasse 11. Its headquarters were in Potsdam where it was accredited to the Soviet forces. The villa in Zehlendorf provided a support base. Indications are that the adjacent tennis court was replaced by parking for their vehicles.

**1955** July 20 = Title to property turned over to the German Federal Government.

**1957** U.S. Military Liaison Mission moved out of Sven-Hedin-Strasse 11.

**1959** JAROC(B) moved into Sven-Hedin-Strasse 11.

**1970-71** Author of this history lived in the villa. Other occupants included the Commanding General's enlisted aide, USMLM bachelor quarters, JAROC(B) bachelor quarters, security personnel assigned to the Department of State.

**1981-85** The villa was renovated.

**1989** JAROC (B) forecasts fall of the Berlin Wall.

**1990** October 30 = U.S. Military Liaison Mission ends its service.

**1991** July 15 = The villa was turned over to the BND, Bundesnachrichtendienst.

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**1997** April 16 = A report from a committee of the Fraktion Buendis 90 and the Greens party states that deserters from the Russian and former Soviet states' armies were interviewed at Sven-Hedin-Str. 11.

**1999** August 2 = BND President [Director] August Hanning had his official residence on the first floor, while the rest of the villa was being renovated.

**2001** March 2001 = An official dinner was held in the villa.

**2004** Interviews of refugees of interest to the BND were still being carried out at Sven-Hedin-Str. 11.

**2006** November = Ernst Uhrlau, director of the BND from December 2005 into December 2011 was the last resident of the villa.

**2012** Mid-January = Uhrlau moves out.

**2012** Summer = New BND director, Gerhard Schindler, gives up on moving into the villa, which is being damaged by roof leaks. Estimated cost of repairs is DM500,000.

**2015** It was reported that the Federal Intelligence Service (BND, Bundesnachrichtendienst) wanted to dispose of the deteriorated villa.

**2019** The property was listed in the “offerings” of the federal property disposal agency.

**2019?2020?** = The property was divided and the open grounds where formerly the U.S. Army office building had stood were separated from the garden space and the villa itself. As the villa was located at the corner of the original property, it was renumbered to become Karl-Hofer-Strasse 31, using the cross-street address.

**2020** January = The property was sold to the City/State of Berlin. The purchase of the property at Karl-Hofer-Str. 31 in Berlin-Steglitz-Zehlendorf by the purchase contract dated January 14, 2020 for UR no. 12/2020 of the notary Reinhard Arf in Berlin.

The allocation of the property, district Zehlendorf, corridor 5, parcel 247 - building and open space Karl-Hofer-Straße 31 with a size of 2,348 m<sup>2</sup> for special assets of real estate of the State of Berlin (SILB) for the purpose of building and maintaining facilities for advice, support and care in old age, in the event of illness, disability, disability as well as for other social and charitable purposes..

**2022** A plan for the property was announced. *Tagespiegel* published a short history of the villa. Prior to that, a Google search would unearth references to the villa, but this Berlin 1969 site apparently was the only “published” history.

**2023** Neighborhood historian Klaus-Peter Laschinsky writes about the history of the villa in the *Zelehendorf-Jahrbuch*.

**2024** *Berliner Morgenpost* publishes a detailed history on-line. The villa waits.

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## Miscellaneous:

<http://www.warcross.cz/wordpress/?p=4841> Information on the first decoration awarded to Dr. František Chvalkovský. (A second was awarded posthumously.) A Google translation unedited.

Nevertheless, in the following years, under the influence of Germany's defeats on all fronts, it became necessary to appreciate conscious loyal Czechs and especially members of the protectorate government and thus strengthen the declining spirit and faith in the ultimate victory of the Reich. Therefore, by decree of June 4, 1944, Minister of State Karl Hermann Frank established an award for members of the Protectorate, who demonstrated by example their sense of duty in industry, agriculture, technology or culture and their constant readiness to deploy for the Reich. The award was called "Der Ehrenschild des Protektorates Böhmen und Mähren mit dem Herzog-Wenzel-Adler" ("Honorary Shield of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia with the St. Wenceslas Eagle") (often abbreviated the name "St. Wenceslas Eagle").

The Honorary Shield of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was established in three stages:

III. degree with gold wreath (RRR!)

II. degree with silver wreath (RR!)

Ist degree without wreath (R!)

The patronage of this award by the most important patron of the Czech nation was not accidental, as the Germans constantly presented this historical figure as a faithful lazy man of the empire and thus used it for their propaganda purposes.

[https://youtu.be/NqP\\_oANxoTA](https://youtu.be/NqP_oANxoTA) = Video of Anyta Dover, actress daughter of Frantisek Chvalkovský.

<https://www.csfd.cz/tvurce/68777-nyta-dover/> = Czechoslovak Film Database.

## Biografie

Herečka a zpěvačka Nyta Dover prodělala více či méně úspěšnou kariéru v Evropě i ve Spojených státech, ale zatímco v zahraničních zdrojích je o ní poměrně dost informací, u nás je tato původem česká umělkyně naprosto neznámá. Narodila se jako Anita Chvalkovská ve Švýcarsku, jejím otcem byl československý diplomat František Chvalkovský (1885-1945), který byl tehdy velvyslancem v Německu, matka Blanche Roussel byla původem z Francie. Podle otcova aktuálního působení na diplomatických postech vyrůstala Anita postupně v Německu a Itálii, koncem třicátých let se rodina vrátila do Československa (František Chvalkovský byl v letech 1938-1939 československým ministrem zahraničí). Vyrůstání ve dvojjazyčném rodinném prostředí i pobyt v různých zemích vedl k tomu, že Anita Chvalkovská nakonec ovládala devět jazyků.

Po celou dobu druhé světové války byl František Chvalkovský vyslancem Protektorátu Čechy a Morava v Berlíně, jeho funkce však byla pouhou formalitou a v Německu byl víceméně zadržován proti své vůli. Dcera Anita v té době studovala ve Švýcarsku, každých třicet dní se ale musela hlásit v Berlíně, pobývala také ve

francouzském Lausanne u rodiny své matky. Život pod dohledem přerušila v roce 1944, kdy se rozhodla nevrátit do Berlína, byla ale zadržena německými úřady. Konec války prožila Anita Chvalková v sérii úteků, napřed prchala před Němci, poté před sovětskými vojáky, otec František Chvalkovský mezitím v únoru 1945 zahynul při náletu na Berlín. Po skončení války byla Anita Chvalková odvezena do gulagu v Oděse, kde byla zadržována dva roky.

Koncem čtyřicátých let se Anita Chvalková vrátila do Evropy a pod uměleckým jménem Nyta Dover zahájila úspěšnou hereckou dráhu v Itálii, kde pobývala již několik let před válkou. Hned první role v komedii ZATRACENÁ VÁLKA (Accidenti alla guerra, 1948) pro ni znamenala úspěšný vstup do světa filmu, na přelomu 40. a 50. let již točila několik filmů ročně a většinou poměrně velké role, připomeňme několik zdařilých počínů zasazených do doby z konce války jako KLÁŠTER SVATÉ KLÁRY (Monastero di Santa Chiara, 1949) nebo ŽENY BEZE JMÉNA (Donne senza nome, 1950). Se svým temperamentem ale více uplatnění nacházela v komediálním žánru (PSÍ ŽIVOT – La vita di cani, 1950; BYL TO ON, ANO, ANO – Era lui... sì! Sì!, 1951), z tohoto typu filmů vyniká spolupráce s Robertem Rossellinim a slavným komikem Toto (KDE JE SVOBODA? - Dov'è la liberta?, 1954). Zmínku si zaslouží i snímek ŽÍZEŇ PO ŽIVOTĚ (Febbre di vivere, 1953), kde hrála s Marcellem Mastroiannim. Kromě filmu působila také v divadle a zvláště úspěšná byla na menších scénách kabaretního typu.

Koncem padesátých let přesídlila Nyta Dover do Spojených států, kde znovu dokázala prodat své umění, půvaby i schopnost hovořit devíti jazyky. K filmu se sice již nedostala, ale jako zpěvačka vystupovala s nejslavnějšími umělci typu Louise Armstronga nebo Franka Sinatry. Právě tehdy začala užívat uměleckou přezdívku La Contessa, což v konečném důsledku vedlo k tomu, že některé zahraniční prameny spojují titul hraběnky i s jejím vlastním jménem. Je pravděpodobné, že šlechtickou identitu si Nyta Dover budovala sama, protože modrá krev měla v Americe vždy otevřené dveře, mohlo to ale vzniknout i nízkým americkým povědomím o evropských reáliích a mírně pomýlené teorii, že v Evropě je každý ministr zahraničí šlechtic. Což ovšem nebyl případ Františka Chvalkovského ani jeho dcery. Kromě řady televizních vystoupení v Americe měla také angažmá jako kabaretní umělkyně v Argentině, kde nakonec svou kariéru zakončila.

Nyta Dover byla několikrát provdaná, jejím posledním manželem byl od roku 1997 zpěvák David Scism. Nyta Dover zemřela v americkém Fort Lauderdale 13. dubna 1998 ve věku 70 let následkem rakoviny. Během své deset let trvající kariéry v italské kinematografii natočila bezmála čtyřicet filmů.

[Pavel "argenson" Vlach](#)

Biography – Google translation – 26 Aug 2020.

Actress and singer Nyta Dover has had a more or less successful career in Europe and the United States, but while there is quite a lot of information about her in foreign sources, this Czech artist is completely unknown in our country. She was born Anita Chvalková in Switzerland, her father was the Czechoslovak

diplomat František Chvalkovský (1885-1945), who was then ambassador to Germany, her mother Blanche Roussel was originally from France. According to his father's current work in diplomatic positions, Anita gradually grew up in Germany and Italy, and in the late 1930s the family returned to Czechoslovakia (František Chvalkovský was the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister in 1938-1939). Growing up in a bilingual family environment and living in different countries led to Anita Chvalkovská eventually speaking nine languages.

Throughout World War II, František Chvalkovský was an envoy of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in Berlin, but his position was a mere formality and he was more or less detained in Germany against his will. Daughter Anita was studying in Switzerland at the time, but she had to report to Berlin every thirty days, and she was also in Lausanne, France, with her mother's family. She interrupted her life under supervision in 1944, when she decided not to return to Berlin, but was detained by German authorities. Anita Chvalkovská lived through the end of the war in a series of escapes, first fleeing from the Germans, then from Soviet soldiers, while Father František Chvalkovský died in February 1945 during a raid on Berlin. After the war, Anita Chvalkovská was taken to the gulag in Odessa, where she was detained for two years.

In the late 1940s, Anita Chvalkovská returned to Europe and, under the stage name Nyta Dover, began a successful acting career in Italy, where she lived for several years before the war. Her first role in the comedy DAMNED WAR (Accidenti alla guerra, 1948) was a successful entry into the world of film, at the turn of the 1940s and 1950s she already made several films a year and mostly relatively large roles. the end of the war as THE MONASTERY OF THE HOLY CLAY (Monastero di Santa Chiara, 1949) or WOMEN WITHOUT NAME (Donne senza nome, 1950). With her temperament, however, she found more use in the comedy genre (DOG LIFE - La vita di cani, 1950; IT WAS ON, YES, YES - Era lui... si! Si!, 1951), this type of film excels in collaboration with Robert Rossellini and the famous comedian Toto (WHERE IS FREEDOM? - Dov'è la libertà?, 1954). The film THIRST AFTER LIFE (Febbre di vivere, 1953), where she played with Marcel Mastroianni, also deserves mention. In addition to film, she also worked in theater and was particularly successful on smaller cabaret-type stages.

In the late 1950s, Nyta Dover relocated to the United States, where she was able to sell her art, charms, and ability to speak nine languages again. Although she did not make it to the film, she performed as a singer with the most famous artists such as Louis Armstrong or Frank Sinatra. It was then that she began to use the artistic nickname La Contessa, which ultimately led to some foreign sources associating the title of the countess with her own name. It is probable that Nyta Dover built the aristocratic identity herself, because blue blood was always an open door in America, but it could also have arisen from low American awareness of European realities and the slightly misguided theory that every foreign minister in Europe is a nobleman. Which, of course, was not the case with František Chvalkovsky or his daughter. In addition to a number of television appearances in America, she also worked as a cabaret artist in Argentina, where she eventually ended her career.

Nyta Dover has been married several times, her last husband since 1997 was singer David Scism. Nyta Dover died in Fort Lauderdale, USA on April 13, 1998 at the age of 70 as a result of cancer. During her ten-year career in Italian cinema, she has made almost forty films.

*Pavel "argenson" Vlach*

## **Nyta Dover version of 1945 events and biography**

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Chvalkovsky was in Berlin from 1939-44 when he was a prisoner in Germany from Blanche (most in French), plus a few others possibly from Blanche from Lausanne. Other papers include condolences sent to Blanche upon the death of Frantisek, including von Ribbentrop, Hacha, and a copy of Hitler's telegram. There are also a number of photos (over 50), passports, identity cards for Nyta in her adult career, many are publicity photos and biographies. Included in this group are publicity photos of other performers inscribed to Nyta and signed, many from foreigners who were not well-known in the US (for example, the bullfighter Enrique Vera), but Nyta was a world traveler.

**Condition:** Condition is variable, but generally very good, almost unexpectedly so considering the war they survived.

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“large lot including photographs, letters, copies of birth, death, and marriage certificates, and more related to the Chvalkovsky family. One section of this archive contains mementos of Anita's later career as an entertainer. There seems to be some controversy about whether this nearly six-foot tall beauty was indeed born a female. Her baby and early childhood pictures in this lot should dispel these rumors.

“Frantisek Chvalkovsky (1885-1945) was born to a respected family, and married Blanche Roussel, a French national, in the early 1920's. He served in the Czech National Assembly in the 1920's, and as Ambassador to Japan, Italy, Germany, U.S., before becoming Foreign Minister. In 1938, Hitler “negotiated” the Sudetenland's annexation to Germany, cutting Czechoslovakia's territory by a third and appropriating most of her defenses. President Benes fled the country after this fiasco, and the presidency was offered to Chvalkovsky, who declined. Emile Hacha, an elderly, but respected, lawyer became president. Hitler continued to make territorial requests, which Chvalkovsky and Hacha were able to fend off for a while, but in March 1939, Chvalkovsky and Hacha were summoned to Berlin, meeting with Hitler and Goering. They were ordered to turn over the country as the Protectorates of Bohemia and Moravia, or the German army and air force would wipe out Prague and 18 million Czechs, “leaving not one stone on top of another.” Hacha reportedly fainted during the meeting, but on the 14th he and Chvalkovsky surrendered the country and became prisoners in Berlin. The Foreign Minister agreed only because he thought he might be able to free other Czechs held prisoner in Germany working from the German capital. He in fact spent



years forging passports and papers in an attempt to free those held in concentration camps and prisons.

“Although her father was a prisoner, Anita was permitted to go to school in Switzerland, but had to return every 30 days. Blanche also seems to have been relatively free to travel, as a number of letters are from their summer home in Lausanne. In late 1944, Anita was sent a message not to return home, but she did and was caught in Germany. In 1945 Blanche made an attempt to escape, but was injured when her car was raked by an American plane. Her wounds were treated by nuns in their hospital. The Swiss learned where she was and took her to their country. When the Russians occupied the region a short time later, they raped, tortured and killed all the nuns and patients at the hospital.

“Meanwhile, Frantisek was helping prisoners escape the death camps, which he occasionally did disguised as a German or Austrian soldier. In one rescue attempt, he was captured by Russians, who assumed he was a German soldier. They hung him and blew his head off. Shortly after the Czech Embassy rescued his body, the SS arrived looking for him. When a butler told them he was already dead, they killed the butler. They then threatened to do the same to Anita, in whose arms the butler died. But realizing that the Russians were not far away, the SS decided to let the Russians do their dirty work and left.

“Anita told everyone to leave the embassy, taking as much food as they could carry. She then proceeded to the local hospital with as much food as she could manage, but the Russians were already approaching. She was shot in the leg by a tracer bullet, her life being saved by a doctor who fell on top of her, shielding her from other gunfire. The Russians then entered the hospital, killing and torturing all patients and staff (the patients were mostly women and children, since all males were serving in the army). Anita passed out, and later awoke to the slaughter around her. One humane soldier noticed that she was alive, gave her food and took her to a medical tent where the bullet was removed (no anesthesia) and she was tossed out the other side of the tent. She was later shipped to a gulag in Odessa (17 days in a cattle car with no food or water). By Christmas 1946 she was very ill with TB and could not work at the gulag. Some Russian guards asked if she were Christian, and when she replied in the affirmative, she was hung by her wrist and 17 nails driven into her skull since they could not find barbed wire for a crown of thorns. A kind doctor at the camp arranged for her transfer to a hospital to have the nails removed, and arranged her escape from there. Eventually she started a new life in Italy, taking the stage name of Nyta Dover / Doval, going on to appear in 38 films, and winning the European equivalent of the Oscar for Best Actress in 1957. Later she hosted a talk show in Argentina and performed on the club scene right up until her death in 1997(?) in Florida, where she was still occasionally working cruises. Since she spoke 9 languages, she was a “hit” in many countries around the world. Her mother, Blanche, married Theo Hofstra in Johannesburg (SA) in 1950, and lived there (hopefully in peace for a change) for the remainder of her life.

“One notebook contains over a dozen menus, many from state dinners the Count and his wife attended in Japan, Italy (Venice, Rome, Bologna), Sweden, Holland, Belgium, and France, and a few concert programs including Berlin. There are also birth announcements for Nyta (17 May 1927) [Angelique Antoinette Anita Henriette Chvalkovsky], Blanche's French passport, certificates for Blanche from charitable organizations for which she worked (Red Cross, American Hospital in Paris). There are numerous calling cards, most the European “in crowd” of the day (but not household names now). The lot contains a guest book, with over 1000 signatures, again, the “Who's Who” of European society and politics. Many are difficult to read (as with many signatures), but a quick scan does not reveal any “big name” Americans, British, etc. The pages are primarily dated 1928-1930, but there are a few from later years. Another photo album has a 15 x 11” photograph of the baptism of Victor Emmanuel, with the Count and Mrs. Chvalkovsky among other dignitaries at the event. There is a well-kept photo album that begins with Blanche's pregnancy through Christmas

1931 with nearly 450 small photos. One envelope is labeled "Documents reproduced during the war 1939-1945 to prove to the National Socialist Regime in Berlin that neither Frantisek Chvalkovsky, nor his wife born Blanche Roussel, had any Jewish blood whatsoever." The envelope no longer contains these documents, but there are numerous genealogies, birth and death certificates for both Blanche's and Frantisek's parents, plus birth and baptismal certificates for Blanche, Frantisek and their siblings, which may have been the original contents of the envelope. There is a packet of letters to Anita that includes at least 57 from Count Chvalkovsky (most in German from 1943-44 when he was a prisoner in Berlin), 4 from Blanche (most in French), plus a few others possibly from Blanche from Lausanne. Other papers include condolences sent to Blanche upon the death of Frantisek, including von Ribbentrop, Hacha, and a copy of Hitler's telegram. There are also a number of photos (over 50), passports, identity cards for Nyta in her adult career, many are publicity photos and biographies. Included in this group are publicity photos of other performers inscribed to Nyta and signed, many from foreigners who were not well-known in the US (for example, the bullfighter Enrique Vera), but Nyta was a world traveler."

**“Condition:** Condition is variable, but generally very good, almost unexpectedly so considering the war they survived.”

*Never a Shot in Anger* – excerpts covering the Berlin Press Club ....

In this manner we acquired and staffed simultaneously fifty-six individual residences in the afternoon and early evening of July 1, 1945. Problems are not completely solved with acquisitions, however, and are in fact only starting. Overseeing a section as widespread as this required a certain number of administrative buildings. The mess went into the small hotel, where it could be easily and quickly organized. Our search continued for something central for administrative purposes, and the quest brought me to a wooden gate nestled in a high, thick hedge fence.

"Reichsminister Walter Funk, he used to live here," the interpreter said. "Now, the Russian commandant." Reaching for the handle to open the gate, I was suddenly alone. The interpreter fled up the street and around the corner. It was early evening and completely quiet on the other side of the bushy growth. The gate swung in easily, and I stepped inside. There was a sudden thump in my back, accompanied

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by a curt order in a language then relatively new to me. Imperiousness of tone was unmistakable and there was a gun muzzle pressing my left kidney. As my hands went up, a quick glance to my left revealed a small Russian soldier. His eyes were aslant, his face typical of the Asiatic common in the Red Army. The eyes were cold, and he slammed the gate with his foot and prodded me with the gun in the direction of the house.

Entrance was up a flight of steps. Past the heavy door, a sharp right put me into a small room which was probably originally dedicated to the sun or could even have been a library once. It was now barren, having been converted into a combination office and guard room. A half dozen Russian soldiers, presumably sentries like my sponsor,

were lounging about. All of them began chiding my custodian and laughing at my discomfiture. His face never changed expression, and he kicked a chair into the middle of the room facing its only desk. Motioning me into it, he did not take my bolstered gun, but insisted and actually helped me place my hands in plain sight on top of the desk. His manner indicated that he expected they would stay there. His seriousness was emphasized by the other guards who moved from the line of fire on the other side of me.

Managing a half turn to speak to the whole group, I asked if anyone spoke English. Not a very funny line, standing alone, it nevertheless aroused a titter. Another try. Could they produce their commanding officer? This brought on a belly laugh, coupled with much slapping of thighs and backs. The clock on the wall, there probably because it was too big to be carried off in any Red Army pocket, ticked away loudly. Beckoning for my guard to watch, I reach into my pocket brought out my "diplomatic ration," a pack of cigarettes. There was fast action as the guards swarmed out from the walls, and the cigarettes disappeared into mouths and pockets. Everyone lit up and the impasse was restored.

A long, trying hour passed, and no other solutions presented themselves. It had become very dark outside when the door at my back swung open. Everyone in the room, judging from the stir and scraping of feet, jumped to attention. A Russian officer, barely five feet tall and almost half that width of shoulders, strode in. The reason for the delay was apparent. He was gouging his teeth with a small metal pick, and he belched comfortably twice before he showed himself aware of my presence by looking at me directly and silently.

Meeting the Russian "Friends" 215

"Do you speak English?" I asked him.

He raised his hand tiredly, seemingly in a gesture of boredom, and looked vacantly out the window. I realized it was never a good idea to lose one's temper, particularly when somebody else held the gun. Again, the door at my back broke the strain. It came crashing open this time and a body banged into me, then fell sprawling over the commandant's desk. A blonde, obviously German girl had been shoved with great force into the room. Her hair fell down over her face, and when she straightened up painfully and brushed her hair back there was so much terror in her eyes it hid her natural beauty. The Russian spoke to her in halting, Slavic-larded German. She had trouble understanding him. Finally, she turned to say, "I speak some English. I interpret."

"Tell him I'm an American Army officer, a lieutenant colonel." She repeated it in German, and he talked.

"He say, what you want?"

"Tell him, as of today, this has become the American sector of Berlin. This area is being taken over by the American Army. When can he clear out of this house and grounds?"

The fear returned to her eyes. "You want I tell Russki get out?" When assured she had heard correctly, she began phrasing it in less abrupt terms because it took her a long time to make the main points. The Russian's actions were mercurial. First he swept his hand the length of his desk, and at the edge it collided with his hat, knocking it into the corner of the room. Then he clapped both hands to his head, took one down, and pointed it at me as he loosed a barrage in his own tongue.

"Tell him to speak German, so you can tell me what he says."

As suddenly as it had begun, he quieted his tirade and addressed her again. "He says: He commandant Red Army here. Has no instructions about Americans. Likes house, lives here, won't go."

Tired by now of Russian intransigence, and thinking there would be no better time to bull it through, I rose to my feet in a gesture of departure. "Tell him the Americans are coming into this part of Berlin in great numbers. The American Second Armored Division, with 16,000 men, will be in this sector day after tomorrow. Tell him I am going to report his conduct to my highest authorities who will take it up with Marshal Zhukov. Ask him for his name for my report."

At the mention of Zhukov, everyone in the room started up and

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the officer was apprehensive. He questioned the girl closely about the Zhukov portion of my ultimatum, then waved us hastily out of the room, after which we walked unmolested to the street.

In the moonlight, the number 11 on the gate glinted. "My name . . . Irmegard Schmidt," the girl said to me, extending her hand timidly. "I . . . walking Argentinische Alice . . . soldier took my arm . . . asked 'Speak English?' . . . I say . . . Little' and he bring me here. . . . Was very frightened . . . danke" She half ran down the street, as if unbelieving that she had been in the clutches of the Red Army and had come off unscathed.

So did number 11 Sven-Hedin Strasse come to be discovered. The next day the Russian commandant and his stag were gone. By accident, we had found the "open-sesame" in dealing with recalcitrant Red Army members of the lower levels. Nobody ever wanted to be brought to the attention of Marshal Zhukov, and what was more any Russian would give ground rather than risk the threat of a report.

The radio stations went in, one by one, on July 2 and established their contacts with Paris, New York and London. Germans sidled up to Cocking in the jeep, and to me to ask, now that word had spread about the coming of the journalists to the district, whether the ones they knew would be among them Sigrid Schultz, Louis Lochner, Pierre Huss? One wanted to know whether BBC's Richard Dimbleby or Edward R. Murrow of CBS would soon be there. "I'm anxious to see Dimbleby, or Murrow," he said in faultless English. "I have

listened to both of them broadcast. When the bombs came to Berlin, we used to know how much flak went up. We wanted to know what it was like up there, so when Murrow and Dimpleby came on raids, we would tune in BBC and a station in Boston to hear them give their impressions. Very, very good, too."

The real show of the American occupation of Berlin was to take place on July 3, when the Second Armored Division was set to roll up the highway to the German capital. The hope was for an entrance in full military pomp, and the correspondents accompanying the column were instructed to stay in line.

*Trouble with Russian bridges....*

...training to hold their tempers. "You go with General Collier," said Parks firmly, helping usher him to the car, "and issue the orders in person." The Russian, not too happy, went along. His orders permitted the Second Armored to come on, but it had to make a 90-mile detour to get to the alternate bridge.

This broke the entry into Berlin into bits and pieces, not at all the formidable display desired, nor an entrance worthy of this great organization which had hammer-and-tonged its way through Africa and Europe. The correspondents forsook the column finally and came roaring in, following the markings of the press camp. They ran hither and yon, looking for the pick of houses and beds. The press wanted to know immediately if the U. S. and Great Britain had actually taken over their sectors from the Russians. Colonel Howley said they had, then had to take it back, because a ceremony for that very purpose was scheduled at the old Kaiser Wilhelm Kadettenschule, renamed the Adolf Hitler Barracks, on the Fourth of July. The Red flag was to come down, the U. S. flag go up. General Bradley would be there to make the acknowledgment to this gesture in which Marshal Zhukov was to participate. The military formation was to be a square U, the Russian Berlin Guards battalion, led by Major Vassily Demchenko, (1) on the left, and an honor battery of Second Armored's 90-mm. guns on the right, with a reviewing stand of notables at the bottom of the U-

(1) Major Demchenko was no casual choice to head this unit, nor were his men carelessly selected. The soldiers had to be six feet tall, had to have fought from Stalingrad to Berlin. Major Demchenko was the first man to cross the Dnieper River as the Germans were driven over it in retreat.

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As the troops lined up that day, there was a busy Russian colonel on hand, with an interpreter constantly at his elbow. Five minutes before the ceremony, he called a council. He wanted to talk order of the ritual. Troops would be first called to attention. The reviewing party would take its place. The Russians would render honors to the Americans. It would be returned by the Americans in kind. The Russian representative would make a speech, which would be interpreted. The American commander would make his, which would be translated. Then

the Russian national anthem, the American national anthem, and the salvo from the 90-mm. guns.

"But one thing we insist on," said the Russian colonel, "and that is the matter of the flag. The flag of the Soviet Union will not be lowered."

"It was our understanding," said the American interpreter, "that the Soviet flag comes down when the American flag goes up signaling the American assumption of occupation of this sector "

The Russian shook his head. "This ceremony has nothing to do with the occupation," he said blandly. "We Russians are only joining the celebration of the American holiday of Independence."

"You must lower the Russian flag," insisted the interpreter, "so it is known that this is the American zone,"

"We will not lower the Russian flag while the Germans watch," the colonel said firmly.

"We took down our flag in Halle and in Magdeburg and many other places to make way for our Allies in the war according to the terms of our agreements on occupation boundaries "

"The flag of the Soviet Union stays up," said the colonel, and walked away.

Zhukov had sent in the Berlin Guards battalion as a gesture to General Bradley, but he sent only a brigadier general to represent him. The American members of the reviewing stand went through the ceremony with set faces, and the bulk of the press had filed the story in advance. To the world, then, it appeared that the American possession of its corner of Berlin was complete, but it was twelve full argumentative days before that statement was really true.

TAKE 20

The Press Club of Berlin

Number 11 Sven-Hedin Strasse was a fairly spacious house set in equally roomy grounds on a shady byway of fashionable, suburban Zehlendorf. After my memorable clash with the Soviet Commandant, it had sentimental as well as practical value for me, if I could only hold on to it. When the Russians gave it up, and the Second Armored Division swarmed into Berlin, the most dangerous threats came from friendly quarters. High-ranking officers were coming to Berlin in droves, all of them looking for suitable places to live. Zehlendorf and Wannsee, the homes of the rich, were the most attractive hunting grounds, and the fact that number 11 Sven-Hedin Strasse had been good enough to attract the Russian Commandant had me worried. Steps would have to be taken to keep it squirreled away. Quietly, a crew of German laborers was recruited. Working behind the hedges

and after hours, they were able to produce excellent and effective camouflage. Whole panes of glass were removed from the windows leaving only the jagged and broken ones and the debris of shattered glass on the floors. All of the cracked wallpaper" was pulled loose to hang in tatters. Plumbing connections in bathtubs and sinks were tampered with to provide leaks and drips. Broken furniture was left on the bare floors, while good household appurtenances were carted off to storage. The sorriest of the draperies were left dangling askew, giving the whole house a haunted look.

This protective activity was well-timed. In all, eighteen generals drove up to the gate, ready to grab it for a Berlin home. Upon being

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introduced to its plumbing horrors, its stench, and its repair problems, each of them shook his head and went on. Finally, when there was a chance to talk about it after more serious business had been dealt with. General Parks approved my plans for use of the property and put his own freeze on it.

A message came from Paris that Marlene Dietrich had orders permitting her to come to Berlin and that she would be landing around noon one day. Hastily rounding up two military photographers (1) and a jeep, we went to pick up Frau von Loesch and take her to Templehof field. The old lady was beside herself with excitement, mostly because Marlene was coming, but partly from the scene in her neighborhood when the American jeep and soldiers came to get her. Making arrangements with the soldier who would park the plane, I placed Frau von Loesch alone on the vast concrete apron, a slight, tired, expectant figure who could hardly believe her famous daughter was in the aircraft slowly taxiing up. When the door swung open, Marlene, in her famous USD uniform, looked out and waved, then dashed down the steps, transformed from glamour girl extraordinary to long-lost daughter. The hundreds of USO shows along the fronts of the world, and the hundreds of times that Marlene had said, ". . . if you get to Berlin, ask for Frau von Loesch," had produced this reunion at last.

(1) I had already assigned these two Army cameramen to Billy Wilder, the Paramount director-writer, who was shooting Berlin scenes for reconstruction in Hollywood. Forming up in his mind then was A Foreign Affair (Paramount) to star Jean Arthur, John Lund and Marlene Dietrich.

*Preparations for the Potsdam conference...*

This was the mood of the more than 100 correspondents of many nations on hand. They were all restricted to Berlin as Redding and I drew our own passes, okayed by the Big Three powers, allowing us to be on Gatow airfield for the welcoming ceremonies. Redding had the primary task of getting to Charles Ross, while I was assigned to pick up names, color, anecdotes and incidents which could be relayed to the press.

...each day to see the press either, as he did not want any charges of spoon-feeding leveled at the U.S. delegation. The final agreement was that he would give a daily diary to Redding and keep him posted in advance on all scheduled movements of the President. This was a gesture to the Zehlendorf press corps, but nobody was foolish enough to believe it would be received with complete satisfaction. As Redding set off to wrestle with this one, I had my office working hard on stories and pictures for the home-town newspapers and radio stations of the U. S. This material was not big enough for the attention of the correspondents-, but it was important to the 4,000 soldiers involved in the housekeeping for the American Big Three delegation. We did not want them to go unmentioned, and our mill ground out 4,737 stories and 1,421 pictures during the period of the talks. Back in America, judging from the play these received, not only were the potentates important at Potsdam, so were those who shaved a face, drove a truck, ran a switchboard, acted as a military policeman or guard, and, yes, even the man who burned rubbish and handled the garbage disposal.

President Truman made two important forays from the compound, one to inspect the Second Armored Division and have a look at the destruction of Berlin, and the other to raise the Pearl Harbor flag.

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.....The conference was on at last, and the arrangements between Ross and Redding provided at least a limited pipeline to it.

Nobody knew for sure when he got there, or how he came, but Stalin was always first each day at the Cecilienhof table. This caused a bit of unrecorded drama. President Truman had included in his Secret Service retinue his old first sergeant, Fred Canfil, then the U.S. Marshal in Kansas City, Missouri. Canfil always led the Truman procession, charging into the room like the first sergeant he never got over being. At first sight of him each day, Stalin would rise and give him a flourishing salute, which Canfil never failed to return with equal flair. Several days had gone by before Canfil tumbled to the reason. Stalin's henchmen, of course, had gone over the U.S. delegation list to identify each of the Americans. Canfil was noted as "a U.S. Marshal." Seeing that Canfil was a trusted Truman companion with a front-running position in the President's protective arsenal, Stalin fixed Canfil in his mind as a prairie-land equivalent of his own Lavrenti P. Beria, who also ranked as a marshal. As such Stalin gave Canfil full marks and honors. "This was probably the first time Stalin ever saluted a sergeant," said Canfil, "and about time, too, considering all the Communist gab about the common people."

The ultimatum to Japan and the final Potsdam communique put an end to the discussions and the press ordeal in Berlin. Lieutenant George Fuller read the communique for all four of the American radio networks, after which he was followed by the individual commentators for those networks Roy Porter, NBC; Richard Hotellet, CBS; Donald Coe, ABC; and Arthur Mann, Mutual. The affairs of the press in



Berlin now moved swiftly back to normal. The last of the wartime evidences of alliance, the integrated press facilities, began to vanish. British correspondents dropped out of the Zehlendorf area and trooped

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over into the British zone, taking up quarters in the Hotel Am Zoo. The French press found housing in its own section, a sliver of land between the British and Russian sectors along the northern perimeter. Zehlendorf became a truly American quarter.

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While all these bigger things were going on, my German labor crew had been reassembled and the nightmare interior of number 11 Sven-Hedin Strasse was being repaired. Wallpaper was replaced or repasted, the plumbing came under the clank of tools, and the broken furniture was burned in the back yard. Walther Funk's old sideboard buffet was pulled from the wall and relocated in what was to become the most popular part of the house the bar. Requisitioning more furniture had been going on at the expense of Nazis who had lived richly in Zehlendorf. After our trucks had gone the rounds, number 11 Sven-Hedin Strasse even included a complete billiard room with a genuine Corot painting on the wall.

On the night of August 10, 1945, number 11 became the Press Club of Berlin. As it opened, the radio was crackling with bulletins from the other side of the world telling of Japan's inexorable movement toward capitulation. My membership card was number 1 in this unique establishment, which no one complained about too much, since the first entry into the place had been made by me with a gun in my back. Some of the joiners thought this latter factor symbolic, because the membership was \$25 a head and it was extracted from every war correspondent lured there just as he entered the door and before he had a chance to wet his palate or to look the prospects over. The Press Club of Berlin evolved from wartime experience of the military with correspondents. There were charges thrown at it of "highway robbery," "high-handedness" and "chicanery," but its intentions were entirely straightforward.

While a press camp had been the answer for an Army on the move, it was clear that it would now be wise to have a club-like arrangement, and General Parks had had this in mind when he put the real-estate freeze on the place. In a club of his own, the war correspondent could live fairly well at small fee.

But mere comfort of surroundings was never enough to keep the press happy. Any equivalent of their town pump, or popular meeting place to swap gossip, must have a bar, and the better it is kept stocked, the more popular the place. Mother Hubbard's cupboard was well-equipped by comparison to number 11 after two months of the

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Russian commandant's residence, and the supply roads had been carrying only high-priority items for the Big Three. Berlin's alcoholic stores were scarce at best, and even to think of opening the Club without ample drink was to doom the enterprise to disaster. As the Big Three conference packed up, it seemed to us a good time to open the Press Club. The press corps needed some distraction, with all the news emphasis swinging to the Far East and leaving them marooned. The solution of our most acute problem came unexpectedly, when a friend who knew our plight called to say he had the task of disposing of all conference supplies in excess of requirements. "I've got lots of liquor," he said, "all first-class stuff. I either have to turn it over to the Berlin District supply office, or show withdrawal slips and money to cover. I have until August 17 to clear the accounts."

"How much money to take the liquor off your hands?"

He consulted his records. "If you take it all, it will cost about \$3,200."

"What kind of names have to be on the vouchers?"

"High rank," he said, "and from the Big Three roster of Americans, but don't let that worry you. They'll all be gone when we settle up. The important thing is that I have \$3,200 in hand August 17."

"You'll have it."

A covered truck was sent to Babelsberg immediately. It returned just as rapidly with a cellarful of aged, bonded and vintage liquors which would have gladdened the heart of the most finicky.

"What names did you draw this with?"

"He wanted rank," said the driver, Staff Sergeant George Trapper, an enterprising Californian who made the statement offhandedly, "so I drew half of this on a voucher signed George C. Marshall and for the rest of it I signed Harry S. Truman." There was a gasp at this announcement. It was now extremely imperative that we have the \$3,200 on August 17.

Exactly forty-one days (to the hour) after the Russian had prodded me into number 11, the Press Club of Berlin opened its doors, with music, names, a basement of booze and promise of an interesting future. Jack Benny, Ingrid Bergman, Martha Tilton and Larry Adler, in Berlin with their USO show, were the best-known guests at the premiere. General Parks and General Gavin were cosigners on all the membership cards. Louis Lochner sat talking in a corner with Quentin Reynolds. The president of the Hearst Corporation, R. E.

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"Dick" Berlin, and his associate, John W. Hanes, were there taking a break from their chase after the story of the Russian "acquisition" of

the occupation money plates. Before detection the Russians had flooded the currency controls of the Western Allies in excess of agreed quotas, running up a potential \$165,000,000 loss on the American taxpayer, had it all come up for redemption at Army finance offices. (5)

A German band (6) played one song over and over, a sunny tune called "Symphony," and it almost became the theme song of the Press Club. The piano player was Norbert Schultz, but his most famous composition went unplayed and unsung. Schultz had written the music to Hans Liep's lyrics of "Lili Marlene." He sold it originally for \$65 to Apollo- Verlag, a music-publishing firm in Berlin, and a recording of it lay among the cobwebs of a Belgrade radio station until, after Yugoslavia's invasion by the Germans, the station was beamed to Rommel's Afrika Corps. Played as a filler one night, it attained phenomenal popularity. Montgomery's desert troops became even fonder of it than the Germans. From there, it went the rounds of the nations, and "Lili," who had first waited for Fritz at the barracks gate, was soon taking up with Tommy and GI Joe and then some. By the time Schultz put his fingers on the keyboard that night "Lili Marlene" was a money-making captive of the U. S. Alien Property Custodian and performance fees had credited \$13,000 against Germany's war debts. (7)

(5) Says General Parks: "Actually the taxpayers did not lose anything because we took all the Russian marks which we had to redeem, bought German products with them and sold them in the PX to the soldiers of the American Occupation so that we could get our money back. This plate deal was a highly controversial one. I discovered it when my finance officer in Berlin came to me and told me he had sent back (to the U. S.) about \$200,000 more than he had paid out to troops in the past month, the reason being that our men were selling the Russians watches, cameras, cigarettes and fountain pens for Russian-made marks. I immediately put an embargo on the amounts they could send home and reported the matter to SHAEF for correction because every plane coming into Berlin at the time was bringing watches, etc., to sell.

It came out that the plates had been given to the Russians over the protest of the Army, decision being made on a very high level." The Soviets piled tubs of this money on billet tables and allowed each Red Army soldier 4,000 marks when going on pass, each officer, 8,000. The exchange rate was pegged at ten cents to the mark.

(6) An American band jazzed it up on other nights, a crew from the Eighty-second's 505th Parachute Infantry which called itself "The Five Malfunctions," a combo which would have made Louis Armstrong lay back his ears and put down his horn.

(7) Ten years later, "Lili Marlene" had brought in a total of \$40,000.

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The head of the German civilian staff at the club was a prominent actor, with some American experience, Werner Flitterer. As Werner Bateman, he had played opposite Helen Hayes in her New York run of

Victoria Regina. Returning home to Germany in 1939, Futterer made propaganda movies for Dr. Josef Goebbels, because of which he did not remain long at the Press Club, but he was very much there at the opening. Two German film actresses came that night hoping for employment connections, Wini Markus and Use Werner. Ilse professed not to have been in the propaganda mill, but she was later trapped by an old German newsreel which showed her signing autographs for Wehrmacht troops in Paris. Throughout the evening, a hopeful strain was injected by the radio. The Japanese were seemingly responding rapidly to the Big Three ultimatum. But, in spite of all the festivity, there was a small, persistent undercurrent of uneasiness, with money as the root of it.

The membership tariff and the arbitrary rule of 100 per cent profit on all drinks raised first a hubbub and then a roar. All this was dictated by the August 17 day of reckoning, a week away, but to admit this in public might well have brought down the roof, as it certainly would have made a good story. We could only plead for patience and understanding without offering any explanation. The black market was in full flower. The cigarette economy was being born with a flourish and at \$100 a carton. A Mickey Mouse watch would bring \$700 in Russian-printed occupation scrip. In this atmosphere of high finance, of barter and trade, nobody wanted to be taken for top bar prices, even if the drinks were good. But the first night's operation netted from all sources \$1,817.00, and that \$3,200 looked less far away.

Misgivings born of the complaints caused me early on that second day to requisition a lieutenant with some business experience, and Second Lieutenant Raymond Baile, who had once managed a chicken hatchery in Wichita, Kansas, joined us to get some quick, concise instructions. "There'll be all kinds of experts around here on how to mix a drink and run a floor show," I told him, "but you're here for one thing only. We are operating without an officers' club constitution and may have to do this for some time. We are not a legally constituted military club, but I want those records kept in such a way that they are unchallengeable. You tag every incoming nickel and every outgoing one."

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This act later saved the necks of all of us. When Baile was told that we were backed only by a nod of approval from the Berlin District commander, had nothing in writing because of our haste in getting under way, and had further compounded this by the long gamble of signing vouchers with the names of the President of the United States and the Chief of Staff of its Army, he shuddered a little, but he took up the task as directed. On the morning of August 15, \$3,200 was turned over to the Big Three accounting officer and those damning tabs were torn up like a fraternity-house mortgage. The books were clear, the cellar still held half the liquor, and we now had a quota system to stretch it out. Nightly we set out a bottle of each variety. Everyone drank his favorite early in the evening, then moved down the row until the supply for the night was exhausted. The liquors

went first, the liqueurs last, a reverse order which occasionally produced stunning results. It is highly unlikely that former President Truman or General Marshall will ever be accused, but this is to set the records straight: They did not consume \$3,200 worth of liquor at the Big Three talks, but the Berlin press did in their names! The 100 per cent markup stayed on, in order to produce a revolving fund with which we could operate in the future. Moaning about money clouded the fact that the Press Club of Berlin was maturing into the candle flame of Zehlendorf night life. It had music, lights and a natural, unrestrained gaiety in bold relief to the morbid atmosphere of the shattered metropolis. The people who frequented it were close to the day's news, and their talk was always lively and interesting.

The first meeting of the Allied Control Council took place in Berlin, and General Eisenhower chose to hold his press conference afterward at number 11. He came with Lt. Gen. Lucius Clay, military governor for the U. S. zone of Germany, and his wartime chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Walter B. Smith. The meeting had finished on a jocular note, at Montgomery's expense, when General Eisenhower, who had presided and had seen every motion passed by unanimous vote, said it was too bad that the whole meeting could not proceed along co-operative lines. He had wanted to propose before adjournment something which he felt would be heartily approved by everyone but the British member of the Council. Eisenhower's expression was bleak, French General Pierre Koenig's quizzical, Marshal Georgi Zhukov's puzzled, and Field Marshal Montgomery appeared almost to bridle. Pausing a moment,

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General Eisenhower then said, "Let's go into the next room and have a drink."

With a smile still on his face when he drove up to the gate at number 11, Eisenhower looked over the grounds appraisingly. "Some foxhole, this," he remarked, then went in and faced the press. Afterwards he stayed around for a short ceremony in which I gave him a life membership in the club, saying, "Any time you come in the future, it's a signal that the drinks are on the house."

"Judging from what they normally cost us," Hank Wales remarked later, "the joint can sure as hell afford it."

The Press Club had a way of attracting, even manufacturing news. When Rudolph Dunbar, long-time correspondent of the Associated Negro Press, was announced as guest conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, it threw officers of OMGUS into a tizzy. They wanted desperately to cancel it, while most of us regarded it merely as an interesting expression of versatility among the correspondents. If

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Dunbar's appearance were canceled by the military, on the other hand, it could quickly become something else and could provoke a minor

political disaster. In the middle of the week before the concert, General Parks's driver came into the club and asked me outside. The General was parked in the shadows along the street and beckoned me into the back seat. He could not understand the reasoning behind the move to cancel when Berlin was in such a bright glare of the propaganda spotlight, and the Soviet Union was always set to make capital of any and every U. S. slip. As the boss of Berlin, he was going to let the concert go on and take the blame, if there was any. The program went ahead as scheduled, and there was no reverberation of any sort, other than favorable.

*Transferred into 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and sent to march in NYC on January 12, 1946.*

But in the midst of tins rousing success story, the price of whiskey caught up with us. The blow fell just before I left Berlin. A letter addressed to the Commanding General, Berlin District, and signed by Ray Daniel, New York Times, requested an investigation of "the so-called Press Club of Berlin." Without warning, a board of six officers descended on the club, demanding "the books, if any," for an audit. Lieutenant Raymond Baile, who had worked unobtrusively but well in his hole-in-the-wall office, became the star of the show. The books were painstakingly checked, and, covering an operation of many weeks' duration, were found to be six cents off in favor of the club. Shortly afterward, now that officers' clubs were being organized in Berlin, it became legitimate at last by Army order.

Commenting on the investigation, one of the correspondents said: "Don't feel too badly about it. You know, if the press had been covering the incident of the adulterous woman brought before the Lord for stoning, it would have been the same. When He invited the sinless one to cast the first stone, had there been a guy there from the Times, he would have thrown one just to establish character." Into my records as a parting souvenir of the press when I left Berlin went an administrative reprimand for the manner of operation and financing, but into history and unquenchable memories of many went that unique institution born, in the twilight of World War II the Press Club of Berlin.

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The House of Representatives wants to decide:

1. The Senate is called upon to ensure that all former members of the Soviet armed forces and deserters from the successor states of the former Soviet Union who fled to the Federal Republic and who had contact with local secret services in the course of their asylum procedure are granted a residence permit in accordance with Section 32 AuslG receive.

2. Until the final settlement, measures to terminate the stay are to be suspended after the negative conclusion of the asylum procedure against this group of people.

Reason:

The regulation on the right to stay proposed by the German government may only apply to deserters of Russian nationality. The justification for the regulation is the fact that the deserters of the western group of the Soviet army were regularly contacted by local secret services and are therefore at risk if they are forced to return. This assessment is correct.

However, in the course of their asylum procedure, all deserters from the successor states of the former Soviet Union and all former members of the Soviet army were and are subjected to detailed questioning by Western secret services. The regulation of the right to stay must therefore not be restricted to former members of the western group of the Soviet Army with Russian citizenship. For example, Article 56 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine provides for "military secrecy" to be imprisoned for 10 to 15 years.

Furthermore, on the basis of an extradition agreement with Russia, Ukraine can extradite deserters of Ukrainian nationality to Russia if it has no interest in prosecuting itself.

In Berlin, the "Main Office for Questioning", the Berlin branch at **Sven-Hedin-Strasse 11**, has summoned all former members of the Soviet Union to "information talks". The summoned persons were not informed that the "main office for questioning" was an agency of the secret service whose task it was to research military secrets.

The "main office for questioning" received knowledge from the Federal Office for the Recognition of Foreign Refugees of the presence of former army members who had fled, and employees of this questioning center stayed temporarily in the premises of the Federal Office for the Recognition of Foreign Refugees, where the hearing of asylum seekers was carried out. In this way, the armed forces who had fled were given the impression that these employees were members of the Federal Office, and the refugees could not see that they were different departments.

Those affected were involved in intensive talks by employees of the "Main Office for Questioning", in the course of which they specifically asked about military details, the response of which is punished by all armies as "betrayal of military secrets" and in Russia and other successor states of the Soviet Union as high treason up to the maximum to the death penalty.

For this reason, it is urgently necessary and justified to include all former members of the Soviet army and deserters from the successor states of the former USSR who have applied for asylum in the Federal Republic of Germany in the intended regulation of the right to stay.

Berlin, April 16, 1997

Dr. Klotz Wieland Kos, to Baran and the other members of the Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen parliamentary group.

**2004** Interviews of selected refugees are continuing at Sven-Hedin-Str. 11.



HAUPTSTELLE FÜR BEFRAGUNGSWESEN

Gesch.Z.: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Bei Antwort bitte angeben)

Hauptstelle für Befragungswesen - Sven-Hedin-Straße 11 - 14163 Berlin

Herrn  
Farad HEYRANI

10555 BERLIN-TIERGARTEN

Ihr Zeichen, Ihre Nachricht vom

Unser Zeichen, unsere Nachricht vom  
Fr. HANSEN

Telefon, Name  
(0 30) 8 01 60 40 - 0

Berlin  
05. November 2004

Sehr geehrter Herr HEYRANI !

Die HBW (Hauptstelle für Befragungswesen) ist eine obere, deutsche Bundesbehörde, die allgemeine Gespräche mit Asylbewerbern und Flüchtlingen über die Situation in ihren Heimatländern führt.

Unsere Mitarbeiterin **Frau HANSEN** möchte mit Ihnen am

**Dienstag, den 09. November gegen 10.00 Uhr.**

ein einstündiges Gespräch führen.

Da sie einen **Dolmetscher** mit sich führen wird, der für den Einsatz bezahlt werden muss, möchten wir Sie bitten, sich **am Dienstag** unter **ihrer Wohnanschrift bereitzuhalten**. Andernfalls rufen Sie uns bitte unter der **Telefonnummer (030) 801 60 40** an, um ggf. eine neue Terminvereinbarung zu treffen.

Wir verbleiben bis zu unserem Treffen

mit freundlichen Grüßen

gez. Cramer

Seite 1 von 1

Anschrift:  
Sven-Hedin-Straße 11  
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**2015** [https://www.focus.de/politik/deutschland/tid-25749/report-mehr-mut-zum-risiko\\_aid\\_737431.html](https://www.focus.de/politik/deutschland/tid-25749/report-mehr-mut-zum-risiko_aid_737431.html) BND to dispose of villa.

**2019 Sales Policy of the Federal Agency for Real Estate Disposal in Berlin.**

Deutscher Bundestag Drucksache 19/7235

19. Wahlperiode 22.01.2019

Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Kleine Anfrage der Abgeordneten Lisa Paus, Sven-Christian Kindler, Daniela Wagner, weiterer Abgeordneter und der Fraktion BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN  
- Drucksache 19/6842 -  
Verkaufspolitik der Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben in Berlin

**2020 Sold to State of Berlin**

(This is a Google translation of the Federal Agency for Real Estate Disposal document.)

2. the assignment of the property in the Zehlendorf district, corridor 5, parcel 247 – building and open space at Karl-Hofer-Straße 31 with a size of 2,348 m<sup>2</sup> to the special fund Real estate of the State of Berlin (SILB) for the purpose of establishing and maintaining facilities for advice, care and nursing in old age, in the event of illness, disability, disability and for other social and charitable purposes at the time of benefit/change of mortgage is approved."



18. Wahlperiode

Der Vorsitzende  
des Hauptausschusses

einstimmig mit allen Fraktionen
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An Plen
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### Beschlussempfehlung

des Hauptausschusses  
vom 12. August 2020

zur Vorlage – zur Beschlussfassung –  
gemäß § 38 der Geschäftsordnung des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin

Nr. 6/2020 des Verzeichnisses über Vermögensgeschäfte

Das Abgeordnetenhaus wolle beschließen:

„1. Dem Ankauf des Grundstücks Karl-Hofer-Str. 31 in Berlin-Steglitz-Zehlendorf zu den im Kaufvertrag vom 14. Januar 2020 zur UR-Nr. 12/2020 des Notars Reinhard Arf in Berlin vereinbarten Bedingungen und

2. der Zuweisung des Grundstücks Gemarkung Zehlendorf, Flur 5, Flurstück 247 – Gebäude- und Freifläche Karl-Hofer-Straße 31 mit einer Größe von 2.348 m<sup>2</sup> zum Sondervermögen Immobilien des Landes Berlin (SILB) zum Zweck der Errichtung und Unterhaltung von Einrichtungen für die Beratung, Betreuung und Pflege im Alter, bei Krankheit, Behinderung, Invalidität sowie für andere soziale und karitative Zwecke zum Zeitpunkt des Nutzen-/Lastenwechsels wird zugestimmt.“

Berlin, den 12. August 2020

Der Vorsitzende  
des Hauptausschusses

Daniel Wesener  
(amtierender Vorsitzender)

**2022** Plan “moved” Sven-Hedin Strasse 11 villa around the corner to be redeveloped as Karl-Hofer-Str. 31. Vacant land to be built on for apartments.

<https://leute.tagesspiegel.de/steglitz-zehlendorf/macher/2022/12/15/252858/sven-hedin-strasse-11-neben-der-spionage-villa-werden-nun-wohnungen-gebaut>

(This is a Google translation of the *Tagesspiegel* neighborhood edition article above of 2022 12 15.)

# Sven-Hedin-Straße 11: Apartments are now being built next to the spy villa

Posted on 15-12-2022 by Boris Buchholz

At first glance, the property Sven-Hedin-Straße 11 is a wasteland like so many in the city. But behind the address there is a lot of history and many stories. It was the residence of the upper middle class and Nazis, became the address of the press club of the Americans. Then spies gave each other the handle. But first things first.

**Currently, the approximately 4100 square meter site** with the house number eleven belongs to the Federal Institute for Real Estate (Bima). For two years now, the federal company has been planning to build two apartment buildings, each with three storeys; 22 apartments for federal employees are to be built. "According to the present preliminary building permit, the buildings are expected to be 11.60 meters high with a floor area of about 1800 square meters," wrote the press office of the Bima the *Tagesspiegel*.

**In December, Bima applied to the district office for the extension of the preliminary building permit.** The press office explains why construction has not yet begun with "necessary planning adjustments with regard to energy parameters", with construction cost increases "with simultaneously capped rents" and an elaborate award procedure. But now it says: "The preparations for housing construction are in full swing." Presumably in the first quarter of 2023, the building application should be submitted. Whether the construction can be completed in 2024 as planned in January ([read here](#)) seems questionable due to the delay.

**Those who are historically knowledgeable will wonder:** Shouldn't there be a villa at Sven-Hedin-Straße 11? If you are looking for it today, you have to go around the corner: A few years ago, the property was divided. The undeveloped part remained the Sven-Hedin-Straße 11 and owned by the Bima, the historic and 107-year-old villa can be found today at the address Karl-Hofer-Straße 31. The state of Berlin bought the building in the summer of 2020, and the Senate Department for Science, Health, Care and Equality is currently examining the structural condition of the building. After renovation work, a social project will find a new home in the old house.

**The old property and the villa on it have an eventful history:** In 1915, the forwarding agent **Robert Haberling** had the representative home built in country house style with 14 rooms on two floors. The local historian **Klaus-Peter Laschinsky** has written down the history of the house in the [Zehlendorf Yearbook for the year 2023](#): First the owners changed frequently, then from 1935 the head of the Reich Press Office and later Reich Minister of Economics **Walther Funk** lived at Sven-Hedin-Straße 11. In 1939, the villa became the residence of the representative of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

**After the war**, the Soviet district commander used the house for a short time. When the Americans took over the Southwest sector later in 1945, the country house villa became the American Press Club and a meeting place for international press people: the journalists had



to pay an annual fee of 25 dollars. This was followed by several other uses by the Americans – and then after 1994 the vacancy.

**After reunification** and the withdrawal of the Allies from Berlin, the villa became the property of the Federal Republic of Germany: In August 1999, **August Hanning**, the President of the Federal Intelligence Service, moved into his new official villa. From then on, the top spies met in Zehlendorf: the ground floor was converted into the BND representative office. The following German intelligence chiefs also resided in Sven-Hedin-Straße – until the house was in need of renovation and no longer met the requirements of the supreme floppy hats. Years of standstill followed. The Federal Agency for Real Estate took over – and began planning for housing construction.

**2024** A plan for housing on the former garden – tennis court – office site was prepared.