

The Candy Bomber

Introduction During the Cold War Soviet forces blockaded Berlin. This blockade was broken by the Allies by airlifting all supplies (e.g. coal, cooking oil and food) into Berlin airport for nearly a year.



Arguably the first big crises of the Cold War, the Berlin Airlift lasted from June 24 1948 to May 12 1949.

Note the lack of vertical perforations.



On July 18, 1948, flying his DC4 Skymaster into Berlin, Lieutenant Gail Halvorsen saw many children watching him land ...



... and waving from the other side of the airfield fence in Berlin.



... he dropped them when he flew over the children, attached to a home-made parachute.

After talking to the children, he realised that they had no sweets. So, on his next flight Gail tied his candy rations together and ...



But Gail ran out of material to make parachutes, so others started to help him make them and by the end of the airlift many were even made in the USA and sent to Gail.



... and the children were very happy.



Lt Gail Halvorsen – the candy bomber.



Other pilots started to drop candy parachutes to the children ...

By the end of the Berlin Airlift in September 1949, American pilots dropped more than 250,000 parachutes and 23 tons of candy to Berlin children. When he returned to the USA he was awarded the **Cheney Award**, an aviation award presented by the United States Air Force for acts of self-sacrifice in a humanitarian interest.