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GENERAL CLAY'S INTERVIEW BY FIGARO

- Q. General, have you come to preserve the liberties of Berliners or to make them swallow the pill of concessions?
- A. I am here to preserve the full liberty of West Berliners.
- Q. By your answer you erect a wall between the two parts of the town. Do you consider that this wall might be definitive?
- A. I think that we will obtain a reasonable liberty of traffic between West Berlin and East Berlin.
- Q. Do you admit that East Berlin rightly is the capital of the German Democratic Republic though Berlin was to constitute a whole?
- A. Of course not. But we omitted to protest when in 1956 Pankow proclaimed it such. Delayed actions have a less sure effect than those undertaken immediately.
- Q. General, you surely know that our Foreign Affairs Minister said that the wall should fall before opening discussions. What does Washington think?
- A. In any event, the wall will constitute one of the major points of discussion. I am pleased to know the point of view of Mr. Couve de Murville, an excellent expert in the Berlin problem. France's firmness in this matter is one of the most interesting contributions in the coordination of allied positions on the problem.
- Q. How will the free access of West Germans to West Berlin be settled ?
- A. Their access to West Berlin, by road or rail, depends since 1949 on their technical agreements with East Germany. These agreements have nothing to do with the quadripartite status. It is the West Germans' task to maintain them.

- Q And their transport by air ?
- A. Only the Allies have the right to use the airspace which permits access to Berlin. The liberty of transport they enjoy is limited only by the corridors. If they consider it advisable to carry Germans by air, nobody has the right to eppose it. This is an absolute axiom which involves our liberty and consequently constitutes one of the two points to maintain which we are ready to make war.
- Q. You say one of the two points, which is the other ?
- M. The other is our own free access to Berlin by air, read and rail.
- Q. General, is it true that you disagree with your government because it instructed you to stop the raids of armed men into the Eastern sector of Berlin?
- A. This is pure invention. Raids and deployment of our tanks have been ordered by myself, in agreement with Washington, to force the Soviets to assume their responsibilities, that is to say to face us. Thus the legend of the sovereignty of Eastern Germans is wiped out. Once the aim reached, it was not necessary to continue.
- Q. How do you explain the smoothing statements with which you were credited recently by journalists you received?
- A. Sentences arbitrarily picked up from a desultery conversation, and consequently out of their context, may always give rise to speculation.
- Q. Do you consider that the desire often expressed by Bonn to include West Berlin into the Federal Republic is legitimate?
- A. It is out of the question because this would weaken our legal position. However I consider that we must conclude nothing which might make this solution impossible in a more or less distant future.
- Q. In your opinion, would have war burst out on 13 August if allied tanks had come out and if our pioneers had taken up the barbed wires which have since been replaced by a wall?
- A. I do not believe that such an action, so long as it was ordered in the first 24 hours, would have caused a war. It would have obliged the Russians, as it was the case more recently in the Friedrichstrass, to assume their responsibilities. However I add that criticism is too easy afterwards, and that as I was not present, I cannot affirm it.

 What is sure is that since 1949 we have lived as if the agreements concluded that year were eternal. The Soviets have taken advantage of it.

Q. - Den't you fear that, in view of the advantage taken by the Russians and their incredible demands since, we are going straight to a new Munich?

This is the end of the meeting. The General stands up and smiles with a confident good humor: "No, step fearing. I consider that the wall has awakened us, and perhaps there will be no Munich thanks to the wall."