Outlook Is Bright for 1949

General Lucius D. Clay, US Military Governor, said in a radio interview broadcast late last month that the outlook was bright for western Germany in 1949. The interview, recorded in Berlin, was broadcast from New York.

The General also said substantial progress had been made in western Germany during 1948. He discussed the international situation, the airlift, the morale of the US Army in Germany, democratization, and other subjects.

The interview follows:

Do you look forward to a general peace settlement in the foreseeable future?

General Clay: I think that any expectation that a stable, peaceful world can result from a general peace settlement is oversimplification of the problem. While a general peace settlement has not been agreed in the broad sense of the word, we are at peace now or, at least, we are not engaged in war. We do not need to be plunged into war. The conditions of stability, both economic and political, which make for a long peace are returning to Europe. When the freedom-loving, democratic countries of western Europe are on their feet economically and able to protect their freedom, then we may expect a long peace.

How will winter affect the airlift? Is there any possibility of a crisis arising among the German population for want of food and heat?

General Clay: Of course, winter weather decreases the tonnage we can move by air. Nevertheless our worst air weather based on the record comes in November and December. We have met this challenge by carrying our minimum essential tonnage in both months. We now have 40 more C-54’s available with better weather prospects and we should, henceforth, exceed the minimum, which means some coal for domestic heating and for industrial use. Our record during the very bad weather in November and December was due to an efficiently-run operation which permitted transfer of airplanes from airports in a bad weather area to airports in a better-weather area.

Since we will meet minimum tonnages, we can have no food crisis in Berlin. If the winter is unduly severe, there will be suffering from extreme cold. However, I am convinced that the people of Berlin have learned from their experience under one totalitarian government to withstand almost any hardship rather than to accept another totalitarian regime.

What are the prospects of allied cooperation on western Germany, i.e., the Ruhr, Trizonia, and western German government?

General Clay: The representatives of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States met in London last spring and there reached agreement in principle on Ruhr control, the setting up of western German government and the establishment of tri-partite supervision of their three zones of occupation through the western German government. We are now working out the details.

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