

## 'Chancellor Adenauer: we shall respond to this provocation in a calm and resolute manner', from Le Monde (15 August 1961)

**Caption:** On 15 August 1961, the French daily newspaper Le Monde publishes statements by Konrad Adenauer, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, criticising the closure of the East German border posts in Berlin.

**Source:** Le Monde. dir. de publ. BEUVE-MÉRY, Hubert. 15.08.1961, n° 5 155. Paris: Le Monde. "Le chancelier Adenauer: nous répondrons avec calme et fermeté à cette provocation", p. 2.

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## Chancellor Adenauer: we shall respond to this provocation in a calm and resolute manner

Bonn, 14 August (*Agence France-Presse*) — The measures to seal off West Berlin were taken by the East German authorities ‘because the regime imposed upon the population of central Germany by a foreign power is no longer able to resolve internal difficulties within its sphere of domination,’ according to Chancellor Adenauer in his statement.

‘The other powers of the Eastern bloc have urged the regime in the Soviet Zone to end this situation of weakness and insecurity. The massive exodus of refugees from the Soviet Zone has been a daily demonstration to the world of the pressures endured by the inhabitants of that country. Those people have not been granted the right to self-determination, although that right is recognised across the world,’ the Chancellor added.

‘A serious situation has arisen because of the arbitrary action taken by the Pankow regime. In cooperation with our allies, the necessary measures have been taken. The Federal Government asks the German people to have confidence in these measures. The situation requires us to respond to this provocation from the East with both resolution and calm and to ensure that we do nothing that might exacerbate the situation.

We continue to feel very closely linked with the Germans of the Soviet Zone and of East Berlin. They are, and remain, our German brothers and sisters. The Federal Government remains committed to the aim of achieving German unification in freedom. Given the importance of these events,’ concluded Chancellor Adenauer, ‘I have asked the Foreign Minister to inform foreign governments via the German embassies.’