

Directive from Harry S. Truman to the Commander of US Forces in Germany (27 July 1945)

Caption: On 27 July 1945, US President Harry S. Truman issues a directive to the Commander of US forces in Germany detailing the measures to be taken to avoid a shortage of raw materials in Europe before the onset of winter.

Source: STALIN, Y. Correspondence Between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Presidents of the USA and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain During the Great Patriotic War of 1941 - 1945. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR (Ed.). Volume II: Correspondence with Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman. Moscou: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1957. 302 p.

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Directive to Commander of U.S. Forces in Germany

Unless large quantities of coal are made available to liberated Europe in forthcoming months, there is grave danger of such political and economic chaos as to prejudice the redeployment of Allied troops and to jeopardize the achievement of the restoration of economic stability which is the necessary basis for a firm and just peace. Adequate quantities of coal for the greater part of Europe cannot, as a practical matter, be obtained from any source other than Germany. It is a matter of great urgency that Germany be made to produce for export to other European nations the coal which they must have to support economic life on at least a minimum basis.

You are therefore directed in your capacity of Commanding General of United States Forces in Germany and as United States member of the Allied Control Council, to take all steps necessary to achieve the following objectives:

1. To make available for export out of the production of the coal mines in Western Germany a minimum of 10 million tons of coal during 1945, and a further 15 million tons by the end of April 1946.
 2. To the extent necessary to accomplish the export of 25 million tons of coal at the rate directed, to assign the highest priority to all matters pertaining to maximizing the production and transportation of German coal, in particular the provisioning of mining supplies, transportation facilities, and food supplies adequate to maintain mining labor at the requisite level of efficiency. This requirement should be subordinate only to the civil and military requirements necessary to insure the safety, security, health, maintenance, and operation of the occupying forces and to insure the speedy redeployment of Allied forces from Germany.
 3. To recommend to the Control Council (a) an assignment to the production and export of coal from Eastern Germany of an urgency as great as that implied in the required export of 25 million tons of coal from Western Germany by the end of April 1946, and (b) the formulation of a coordinated program for Germany as a whole covering the production, distribution, and export of coal.
 4. To assist in every reasonable way, efforts to maximize the production of coal in other zones of occupation than your own.
 5. To recommend to the Control Council, and to follow in your zone of occupation, the principle that in allocating coal within Germany, the export of coal is to take precedence over the use of coal for industrial production and civilian purposes within Germany to the extent necessary to accomplish the export of 25 million tons of coal from Western Germany at the rate suggested and to comply with paragraph 3, above, subject only to the requirements set out in paragraph 2, above.
- It is recognized that the following of this policy during the period of critical coal shortage will delay the resumption of industrial activity in Germany. It is also recognized that the carrying out of the above policies with respect to German coal may cause unemployment, unrest, and dissatisfaction among Germans of a magnitude which may necessitate firm and rigorous action. Any action required to control the situation will be fully supported.
6. To make available to the European Coal Organization full and complete details of coal production and coal allocations within Germany, in order that the member nations of the European Coal Organization may know the relationship that prevails between the level of coal consumption in Germany and the level of coal consumption in liberated Europe.
 7. To assign a high priority to the production and export of brown coal briquettes and of additional quantities of other coal in excess of the 25 million tons specified in paragraph 1.
 8. A similar directive is being issued to the United Kingdom and French zonal commanders by their respective Governments.

