

Letter from Marshal Sokolovsky to General Clay (22 June 1948)

Caption: On 22 June 1948, Marshal Vassili Sokolovski, commander-in-chief of the Soviet zone of occupation in Germany, informs his US counterpart, General Lucius Clay, of the negative reaction of the Soviet Government towards the monetary reform introduced in the Western zone of occupation in Germany.

Source: Soviet news. 23.06.1948, n° 1966. London: Press Department of the Soviet Embassy in London. "Currency reform in Soviet zone and Greater Berlin", p. 2.

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Last updated: 02/07/2015

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THE actions of the American, British and French occupation authorities, who have promulgated a separate currency reform in the Western occupation zone in Germany, have placed the occupation zone under my charge in a difficult position. This has compelled me to take the decision to protect the interest of the German population and of the economy of the Soviet occupation zone and of the Greater Berlin area from economic chaos and the disorganisation of currency circulation following from the influx of immobilised currency from Western Germany.

In view of the above, I have decided to carry out currency reform in the Soviet zone and in the Greater Berlin area.

The Soviet military administration in Germany advocated a country-wide German currency reform, the preparation for which was being conducted within the framework of the Control Council. From considerations of a political and moral nature, the Soviet military administration in Germany did not deem it possible to engage in preparations for a separate currency reform in its zone. Consequently we have not at present available new currency notes and are compelled to carry out reform on the basis of Reichsmarks and Rentenmarks of old designs, with special adhesive coupons attached to them.

I hope you will not put up barriers to the implementation in the American sector in Berlin of this currency reform forced by your own separate action and will not create unnecessary difficulties in regard to securing normal currency circulation and economic life, both in the Soviet occupation zone and in the Greater Berlin area.

The conditions and order of the currency reform in the Soviet zone and in the Greater Berlin area are described in the Order, herewith attached, No. 111 of the Soviet military administration, and in the regulations, adopted by the German Economic Commission and approved by me, in regard to currency reform in the Soviet occupation zone in Germany and in the Greater Berlin area.