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THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

American Embassy

No. 16

Ankara, January 13, 1948

SECRET

Subject: Note to the Turkish Ministry of  
Foreign Affairs on Looted Gold

DIVISION OF OCCUPIED AREAS

FIELD OFFICIALS

JAN 30 1948

The Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's telegram No. 708 of December 16, 1947, regarding the presentation to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Embassy of a note on looted gold and to the Embassy's telegram No. 24 of January 12, 1948, advising that on January 10, 1948, similar notes on this subject were presented to the Ministry by the American, British and French Embassies. A copy of the note presented by this Embassy is enclosed herewith, together with the unofficial French translation thereof.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador

*E. B. Lawson*  
Edward B. Lawson  
Counselor of Embassy  
for Economic Affairs

DIVISION OF FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

FEB 3 1948

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Enclosure:

1/ Copy of note of  
January 10 with  
translation

File No. 851.51

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S E C R E T

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Enclosure No. 1 to Despatch No. 16 dated January 13, 1948,  
subject: "Note to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on  
Looted Gold", Ankara, Turkey.

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No. 2131 Ankara, January 10, 1948

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and has the honour to refer to the Ministry's Note No. 97575-139 of August 15, 1947 and the Embassy's Note No. 1667 of August 12, 1947, delivered to the Ministry in concert with the Embassies of the United Kingdom and of France, in which reference was made to the restitution to its owners of looted property, including monetary gold.

The principle of restitution of looted property is set forth in Resolution VI of the Conference of Bretton Woods and the acceptance of that principle by the Government of Turkey rests upon the unity of Turkey with the United Nations and its membership in the World Bank as much as upon assurances given by the Ministry to the Embassy of the United States and the Embassies of the United Kingdom and France. The Embassy of the United States, therefore, upon instructions from the Department of State, has the honour to suggest that consideration should be given by the Government of Turkey as soon as possible to the carrying out of the spirit and terms of that Resolution in relation to the monetary gold which, according to information in the hands of the Government of the United States, came into the possession of the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey and is looted gold of which certain of the occupied countries in Europe were despoiled by Germany.

On behalf of Belgium, the primary victim of German spoliation in the matter of monetary gold, the Government of the United States in association with the Governments of the United Kingdom and France has evidence that there has come into the possession of the said Central Bank 249 bars of gold. They would wish also to see enquiries made into the nature, and subsequent history, of some 32,000 coins and 243 kilos of gold ingots (mainly monetary gold of the Latin Union or gold bars which demonstrably were minted from such coin) delivered to the Turkish authorities by Swiss officials who then had charge of German affairs.

The Ministry will recall that in July last, during the conversations which were held in Ankara between representatives of the Government of Turkey on one hand and of the Governments of the United Kingdom, United States of America and France on the other, the request was made that the Turkish Government exchange information with the other Governments on gold acquired by it from Germany from 1940 to February 1944.

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S E C R E T

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The Embassy wishes now to suggest, on behalf of the nations despoiled of monetary gold, that action should be taken to restore the 249 bars of gold (or the gold equivalent thereof) known from an examination of German records to have been looted from the Belgian National Bank and of any additional looted gold acquired by the Central Bank of the Republic.

The Government of the United States proposes therefore that there be a conference of representatives of Turkey, France, the United Kingdom and the United States for the purpose of determining the amount of additional looted monetary gold subject to restitution.