

Bank for International Settlements

**Information held in the BIS Archive on gold looted by
Nazi Germany during World War II**

**Basle
September 1998**

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Archive

INFORMATION HELD IN THE BIS ARCHIVE ON GOLD LOOTED BY NAZI GERMANY DURING WORLD WAR II

The following overview lists, by classification number, a selection of files and records held in the BIS Archive which are most relevant to the study of international financial transactions during the Second World War in general and the issue of gold looted by Nazi Germany in particular:

Record Group 1: Organisation and Management of the BIS

- 1.3(4)** – Report on BIS Operations, 11.1939 – 11.1946.
- 1.3(5)** – Banking Policy of the BIS during the Second World War.
- 1.19b** – Banking Policy of the BIS: Gold Operations, 10.1930 – 12.1967.
- 1.19c** – Banking Policy of the BIS during the Second World War (Art. X of the Hague Agreement).
- 1.19d** – Central Banks of the Baltic States: Gold Deposits / Claims of Baltic nationals, 1940–67.

Record Group 2: Banking (BIS member central banks' customer files)

BIS Banking customer files usually consist of a so-called policy file and a routine file. The policy file contains all relevant correspondence exchanged with the customer in question as well as policy papers discussing business relations with that customer. These policy files are preserved permanently. The routine files contain all routine records documenting regular banking transactions undertaken between the BIS and the customer in question: banking slips, transaction confirmations, statements of account. In accordance with efficient archiving practice and with Swiss legal requirements, these routine documents are usually destroyed after ten years. An exception to this general rule has been made, however, in the case of the routine files of the Reichsbank and of the central banks of the three Baltic states.

The BIS's banking relationship with its main central bank counterparties during the period 1939-45 is documented in the following files:

- 2.1** – Federal Reserve Bank of New York, New York.
- 2.2** – Bank of England, London.
- 2.3** – Banque de France, Paris.
- 2.4** – Deutsche Reichsbank, Berlin.
- 2.5** – Banca d'Italia, Rome.
- 2.6** – Banque Nationale de Belgique / Nationale Bank van België, Brussels.
- 2.10** – National Bank of Yugoslavia, Belgrade.
- 2.11** – Sveriges Riksbank, Stockholm.
- 2.12** – Latvijas Banka, Riga.
- 2.14** – Schweizerische Nationalbank / Banque Nationale Suisse, Berne.

- 2.20 – Eesti Pank, Tallinn.
- 2.21 – De Nederlandsche Bank, Amsterdam.
- 2.22 – Narodni Banka Ceskoslovenska, Prague.
- 2.27 – Bank von Danzig, Danzig.
- 2.32 – Magyar Nemzeti Bank, Budapest.
- 2.37 – Danmarks Nationalbank, Copenhagen.
- 2.40 – National Bank of Rumania, Bucharest.
- 2.44 – Banco de Portugal, Lisbon.
- 2.45 – Deutsche Golddiskontbank, Berlin.
- 2.57 – Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, Istanbul.
- 2.76 – Norges Bank, Oslo.
- 2.77 – Lietuvos Bankas, Vilnius.
- 2.81 – Banco de España, Madrid.
- 2.87 – Bank of Albania, Tirana.
- 2.90 – Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, Ankara.
- 2.101 – Banco Central de la República Argentina, Buenos Aires.
- 2.120 – Banco Central do Brasil, Brasilia.

Record Group 7: BIS History

7.18(5) – *Personal papers Paul Hechler* (Assistant General Manager of the BIS, 1935-1945): contains i.a. Hechler's correspondence with the Reichsbank and thematic files on varied topics such as the Czech gold affair (March 1939), the Baltic states or the reimbursement of BIS investments in Italy.

7.18(6) – *Personal papers Roger Auboin* (General Manager of the BIS, 1938-1958): contains i.a. Auboin's correspondence with the Governor of the Bank of France, as well as tables showing the movement of gold held for the account of the BIS (December 1937 to December 1946), and a thematic file on the postwar investigation into the origin of gold received by the BIS from the Reichsbank.

7.18(7) – *Personal papers Thomas McKittrick* (President of the BIS, 1940-1946): these papers are preserved at Harvard University, Baker Library, Historical Collections, Boston, USA – a microfilm copy is available for consultation at the BIS, containing i.a. McKittrick's private and business correspondence, as well as thematic files on the BIS administration during the period 1940-1946.

7.18(8) – *Personal papers Georges Royot* (Assistant Manager in the BIS Banking Department, 1930-1966): contains chronological and thematic files on the administration and business activity of the BIS during the period 1930-1966.

7.19(4) – *Specific questions: Looted gold*: this is a postwar file – compiled mainly between 1945 and 1948 – documenting the investigation into the origin of gold received by the BIS from the Reichsbank during the war. This investigation, conducted in the name of the Tripartite Gold Commission, identified 3.7 tonnes of gold received by the BIS as forming part of the gold looted by the Germans from the Belgian and Netherlands central banks. These 3.7 tonnes were subsequently restituted in full by the BIS to the TGC under an agreement signed in Washington on 13th May 1948.

General Records: Banking Department and Accounting Section

- List of gold bars received from the Reichsbank during the Second World War.
- Banking Department, *Contract Books*, 1931-1949 (chronological register of all banking transactions undertaken by the BIS Banking Department).
- Banking Department, *Résumés Hebdomadaires*, 1938-1949 (weekly statements of banking transactions).
- Accounting, *Gold Register, Accounts closed* (gold held by the BIS, by depositor and location).
- Accounting, *Gold earmarked at central banks, Total accounts 1935-1950* (ledger).
- Accounting, *Monthly statements 1930-1950* (BIS balance sheet at month-end).

BIS/PC/September 1998
Revised BIS/EA/August 2001