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... to the Secretary

January 3, 1943—7 p. m.

Received 9:22 p. m.

, December 1, 8 p. m.

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3. When the Foreign Office makes the declaration public at 12 noon, local London time, January 5, it will make the following introductory statement:

"His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have today joined with 16 other Governments of the United Nations, and with the French National Committee, in making a formal declaration of their determination to combat and defeat the plundering by the enemy powers of the territories which have been overrun or brought under enemy control. The systematic spoliation of occupied or controlled territory has followed immediately upon each fresh aggression. This has taken every sort of form, from open looting to the most cunningly camouflaged financial penetration, and it has extended to every sort of property—from works of art to stocks of commodities, from bullion and bank notes to stocks and shares in business and financial undertakings. But the object is always the same—to seize everything of value that can be put to the aggressors' profit and then to bring the whole economy of the subjugated countries under control so that they must slave to enrich and strengthen their oppressors.

It has always been foreseen that when the tide of battle began to turn against the Axis, the campaign of plunder would be even further extended and accelerated, and that every effort would be made to stow away the stolen property in neutral countries and to persuade neutral citizens to act as fences or cloaks on behalf of the thieves.

There is evidence that this is now happening, under the pressure of events in Russia and North Africa, and that the ruthless and complete methods of plunder begun in Central Europe are now being extended on a vast and ever increasing scale in the occupied territories of Western Europe.

His Majesty's Government agree with the Allied Governments and the French National Committee that it is important to leave no doubt whatsoever of their resolution not to accept or tolerate the misdeeds of their enemies in the field of property, however these may be cloaked, just as they have recently emphasized their determination to exact retribution from war criminals for their outrages against persons in the occupied territories. Accordingly, they have made the following joint declaration, and issued the appended explanatory memorandum on its meaning, scope and application:"

MATTHEWS

740.00113 European War 1939/683a

Inter-Allied Declaration Against Acts of Dispossession Committed in Territories Under Enemy Occupation or Control^a

The Union of South Africa, the United States of America, Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, the Czechoslovak Republic, the

^aCopy transmitted to the President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines (Quezon) by the Secretary of State in his letter of January 12, 1943 (not printed). The text of the declaration was released to the press by the Department on January 5, 1943; presented by the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Parliament and printed (with covering statement and explanatory memorandum) as British Cmd. 6418, Misc. No. 1 (1943).

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Greece, India, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Yugoslavia, and the French National Committee:

Hereby issue a formal warning to all concerned, and in particular to persons in neutral countries, that they intend to do their utmost to defeat the methods of dispossession practiced by the governments with which they are at war against the countries and peoples who have been so wantonly assaulted and despoiled.

Accordingly the governments making this declaration and the French National Committee reserve all their rights to declare invalid any transfers of, or dealings with, property, rights and interests of any description whatsoever which are, or have been, situated in the territories which have come under the occupation or control, direct or indirect, of the governments with which they are at war or which belong or have belonged, to persons, including juridical persons, resident in such territories. This warning applies whether such transfers or dealings have taken the form of open looting or plunder, or of transactions apparently legal in form, even when they purport to be voluntarily effected.

The governments making this declaration and the French National Committee solemnly record their solidarity in this matter.

740.00113 European War 1939/812: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the United Kingdom
(Matthews)*

WASHINGTON, January 7, 1943—7 p. m.

155. Your 62, January 2.

1. Our missions in the American republics, other than Argentina and Chile, were instructed by circular telegram of January 4¹ to express to the governments to which they are accredited the earnest hope of this Government that they would associate themselves in some form with the declaration and that they will indicate publicly their refusal to recognize the looting by the Axis of territories which have come under its domination. Our missions in Santiago and Buenos Aires were instructed,¹⁰ unless they deemed it inappropriate, to express to the Argentine and Chilean governments the hope of this government that they would find it possible to issue some public statement indicating their sympathy with the declaration and the fact that they

¹ Not printed.

¹⁰ Instructions not printed.

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¹¹ Foreign Relat
¹² Ibid., pp. 87, 8