

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OCTOBER 14, 1974

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
ON HIS VETO
OF THE CONTINUING RESOLUTION
H. J. RES. 1131

THE OVAL OFFICE

2:23 P.M. EDT

Today, in the interest of preserving the ability of the United States to assist the governments of Greece, Turkey and Cyprus to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the Cyprus dispute, I am returning to the Congress without my approval the Continuing Resolution which the Congress has amended to cut off military aid to Turkey.

In so doing, I want to clear the air of a number of misunderstandings concerning the U.S. position toward the Cyprus crisis.

Since the outbreak of the crisis, our objectives have been to establish a ceasefire, to provide humanitarian aid to the refugees, to assist the parties toward a negotiation and a settlement and to strengthen and to improve our historically friendly ties with Greece, Turkey and Cyprus.

I have discussed these goals with the bipartisan leadership of the Congress and have received their unanimous and vigorous support. Our ability to pursue these goals depends, however, on being able to maintain a constructive relationship with the parties involved. The cut-off of assistance to Turkey is destructive of that relationship.

Further, it in no way helps the Greek people or the people of Cyprus who have suffered so much in the past months. In fact, by dashing hopes for negotiations, it prolongs their suffering.

We recognize clearly the need to ensure that the honor and integrity of the Greek people be maintained. We seek a settlement which ensures that fundamental requirement. United States friendship with Greece has been established through generations of cooperation and mutual respect, based on shared values and common goals. I intend firmly to carry on and strengthen that relationship.

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I cannot, however, carry out this pledge if my ability to act in the current crisis is undercut by restrictions imposed by the Congress. We all seek a peaceful resolution of this problem. We all seek justice for the people of Cyprus. We all seek to maintain the strength and cooperation in our relationship that is a cornerstone to Western security in the Mediterranean.

It is for these reasons that I return this resolution to the Congress and ask that it thoughtfully reconsider its position.

I pledge to continue working closely in partnership with the Congress to enable the United States to play a useful role in helping the parties toward a peaceful resolution of the Cyprus dispute.

I am now signing my veto message, which will be delivered today to the Congress.

Thank you very much.

END

(2:27 P.M. EDT)