

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus November 7, 1997

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question. The previous submission covered progress through May 31, 1997. The current submission covers the period June 1, 1997, through July 31, 1997.

The reporting period was marked by two important developments. The first was my appointment on June 4 of Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke as the new Special Presidential Envoy for Cyprus. This appointment of one of our most capable negotiators demonstrates our commitment to help promote a final political settlement for Cyprus.

The second key development was U.N. Secretary General Annan's June 9 invitation to the leaders of the two communities in Cyprus, President Glafcos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash, to engage in direct talks under U.N. auspices. These were the first face-to-face meetings of the two leaders since October 1994. Two rounds of direct talks were held,

the first from July 9 to July 13 in Troutbeck, New York (which is treated in this report), and the second from August 11 to August 15 in Switzerland (which will be covered in the next report). United Nations Special Advisor for Cyprus Cordovez noted that the cordial atmosphere between the parties at Troutbeck was a good beginning for subsequent negotiating sessions. A U.S. diplomatic effort for the U.N. settlement process was led by Ambassador Holbrooke, who met with Messrs. Clerides and Denktash before and after the talks.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 7, 1997

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. The letter referred to United Nations Special Advisor for Cyprus Diego Cordovez.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Agreement Establishing the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme With Documentation November 7, 1997

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, the Agreement Establishing the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, done at Apia on June 16, 1993 ("the Agreement"). The report of the Department of State with respect to the Agreement is attached for the information of the Senate.

The South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) has existed for almost 15 years to promote cooperation in the South Pacific region, to protect and improve the South Pacific environment and to ensure sustainable development in that region. Prior to the Agreement, SPREP had the status of an informal institution housed within the South Pacific Commission. When this institutional arrangement

began to prove inefficient, the United States and the nations of the region negotiated the Agreement to allow SPREP to become an inter-governmental organization in its own right and enhance its ability to promote cooperation among its members.

The Agreement was concluded in June 1993 and entered into force in August 1995. Nearly every nation—except the United States—that has participated in SPREP and in the negotiation of the Agreement is now party to the Agreement. As a result, SPREP now enjoys a formal institutional status that allows it to deal more effectively with the pressing environmental concerns of the region. The United States and its territories can only participate in its activities as official observers.

The Agreement improves the ability of SPREP to serve the interests of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam. Its ratification is supported by our territories and will demonstrate continued United States commitment to, and concern for, the South Pacific region.

Under its terms, the Agreement entered into force on August 31, 1995. To date, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru,

New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Western Samoa have become parties to the Agreement.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Agreement and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 7, 1997.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Voluntary National Testing for Basic Education Skills *November 7, 1997*

Legislation passed by the House of Representatives this evening provides an impressive victory for American education. It moves us down the road to high national standards and voluntary national tests in the basic skills, and it invests in providing our country with better schools and increased educational opportunities.

I am very pleased that we have reached an agreement on one of my top priorities for this year and for my Presidency: making sure that America's schoolchildren can master the basics and achieve higher academic standards. America's parents, teachers, and principals can now be sure that we are going to hold children's educational skills up to the same high standard whether they live in Michigan, Maine, or Montana.

The educational agenda I have established for the Nation—from high standards and testing to making a college education possible for every young American—is designed to give our children the tools they need to succeed in a changing global economy. Today's agreement fulfills a critical part of that agenda, and I appreciate

that politics indeed stopped at the schoolhouse door.

The Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill, which includes the agreement on national standards and tests, also helps meet our national commitment to expand educational opportunities for all students. It provides a \$1.5 billion increase in Pell grants to help an additional 210,000 young people attend college, and increases the maximum Pell grant to \$3,000, the highest level in history. Special education funding is increased by \$800 million, funding for technology for our schools is almost doubled, and there is \$7.4 billion to help our most disadvantaged students master the basic skills. Goals 2000 is funded at \$491 million, to continue to support school reform in every State, and funding for after-school programs is increased from \$1 million to \$40 million.

I am also pleased to see the House pass bipartisan charter school legislation to promote choice and accountability in the public schools and help achieve my goal of 3,000 charter schools.

The President's Radio Address *November 8, 1997*

Good morning. This weekend the United States House of Representatives will decide whether America will continue to move forward

with confidence on the road to continued prosperity or give in to fear and fail to seize all