

"US Arms Embargo against Turkey - after 30 Years An Institutional Approach towards US Policy Making"

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Abstract

The paper aims to analyse a unique era in Turkish-American relations through discussion on the arms sales embargo imposed by the United States on Turkey as a consequence of Turkish military intervention in Cyprus in 1974. It tries to highlight the strife between the legislative and executive branches of US politics, where both have altered on the embargo case. The role of ethnic lobbies is another element that is questioned. An institutional explanation is used as a theoretical framework. In conclusion, the paper says that the embargo had negatively affected US-Turkish relations and paved the way for the weakening of the south-eastern flank of NATO.

Introduction

The arms sale embargo imposed by the United States against its close ally Turkey, as a reaction to the Turkish military intervention in Cyprus in Summer 1974 constitutes a turning point in the enhanced relationship between both countries. Today, there is little doubt among politicians and academicians alike that the nearly four-year long embargo period cast a dark shadow on the then already fragile alliance, and created, especially in the eyes of the Turkish public, a deep lack of confidence towards the United States.

The embargo on aid to Turkey went into effect on 5 February 1975. By way of response, Turkey closed all American military installations except one air base. Starting from the last days of President Nixon, this process involved two more administrations in the United States, those of Ford and Carter, as well as their Secretaries of State, Kissinger and Vance. The embargo was ultimately lifted in October 1978.

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For a political scientist, this case is worth considering from more than one perspective. Above all, an embargo is a coercive economic measure. What makes it unique in this case is its imposition as a punishment on an allied country. Secondly, it is an appropriate example to analyse the role of ethnic lobbies on foreign policy. My research concluded with a factual result, where most of the studies about this issue were focused on these two aspects. I chose, however, to deal with a different feature of this remarkable case. To this end, I tried to elaborate on the struggle between the legislative and executive branches of US politics while developing a domestic political approach.

I argue that although embargo may be better characterised as a foreign policy tool, the dominant dimension of and the fundamental reasoning behind the US military and economic embargo against Turkey was domestic. I believe it represents a turning point in the Presidency-congress relationship in the United States after the Second World War on a visible foreign policy issue, based on the assumption that the power of the former was weakened by two significant events, namely the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal.

This paper does not discuss the causes or consequences of the Turkish military intervention in Cyprus. With the exception of a brief reference in the concluding remarks, it does not elaborate on the adverse affects of the embargo on the economic development of Turkey.

The paper is based on an institutional explanation. It reflects a new institutional perspective in portraying the role played by Congress in a highly significant foreign policy issue, and builds an opposition to those analysts who claim that executive control over foreign policy has remained largely intact, even in the most partisan moments of the post-Vietnam era.

Against this background, the paper draws firstly a theoretical framework; followed by a brief history of the embargo episode; it then focuses on two different policy orientations of legislative and executive branches of US politics, taking into consideration other institutional factors; and ends with concluding remarks.

Dominancy in Foreign Policy Making: An Institutional Approach

Domestic politics and international relations are often somehow entangled, but several theories have not yet sorted out the puzzling tangle. It is fruitless to debate whether domestic politics determine international relations, or the reverse. For most scientists, the answer to that question is clearly "both, sometimes."

Recognising Stephen Haggard's enlightening discussions about domestic influences on international relations, Putnam says much of the existing literature on relations between domestic and international affairs consists either of ad hoc lists of countless "domestic influences" on foreign policy or of generic observations that national and international affairs are somehow "linked". In his article "Diplomacy and domestic politics: the logic of two level games" Putnam suggests a conceptual framework for understanding how diplomacy and domestic politics interact. He argues that a more adequate account of the domestic determinants of foreign policy and international relations must stress politics: parties, social classes, interest groups (both economic and non-economic), legislators, and even public opinion and elections, not simply executive officials and institutional arrangements.¹ Considering two-level games as a metaphor for domestic-international interactions and based upon a bargaining scenario, Putnam develops a theory of "win-sets" in two different levels, one international and one domestic, where he emphasises in Level II the significance of political institutions.² While highlighting several significant features of the links between diplomacy and domestic politics, he clearly favours the two-level approach and asserts that unlike state-centric theories, the two-level approach recognises the inevitability of domestic conflict about what the national interest requires.³ Yet he concludes that far-ranging empirical research is needed now to test and deepen the understanding of how such games are played.⁴

Who dominates foreign policy in the United States is a long-lasting debate. For many scholars, the Constitution makes - and the courts have delineated - no clear distinction between foreign and domestic issues. The only powers given exclusively to the president are the powers to receive foreign ambassadors, grant pardons, and "execute" the laws of Congress. Admittedly, the president is also assigned the responsibility of commander-in-chief, but no specific powers are granted along with this responsibility and the Constitution quite specifically grants to Congress the authority to declare war, raise an army, and prepare for the common defence. The presidential powers to appoint ambassadors and make treaties are shared with the Senate. The president can veto congressional legislation, but this negative power can be overridden by a two-thirds vote in both Houses. Finally and ultimately, Congress can remove a president from office, but the reverse is not true. Thus, there is little in the U.S. constitutional framework that encourages executive dominance of the foreign policy-making system.⁵

¹Robert Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics", *International Organization* 42 (Summer 1988),p.432

²Ibid., 435, 448

³Ibid., 460

⁴Ibid., 460.

⁵Paul E. Peterson, "The President's Dominance in Foreign Policy Making", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol.109, No.2, pp. 219-220

Having said that, however, Peterson argues that the executive control over foreign policy has remained largely intact, even in the most partisan moments of the post-Vietnam era, and he considers theoretically the conditions that make this likely.⁶ Peterson takes as a point of reference the classic essay entitled, "The Two Presidencies," by Aaron Wildavsky who argued that modern presidencies were fraternal - but hardly identical - twins. The one - the domestic policy president - was subject to the debate, pressure politics, and congressional infighting, that is a concomitant of the ordinary workings of democratic processes. The other - the foreign policy president - enjoyed an independence, respect, and prestige that enabled him to manage the external relations of the country quite autonomously.⁷ Peterson asserts that similar views were put forth by Dahl who claimed, "In foreign policy the President proposes, the Congress disposes"⁸ or Huntington who concluded, "strategic programmes are determined in the Executive rather than the Congress".⁹

Becoming the subject of steady criticism in subsequent decades Wildavsky's two-presidency theory, though accurate enough for the Eisenhower era, was found insufficient to explain the politics of foreign policy making in the years following the Vietnam War.¹⁰ Writing with Duane Oldfield, Wildavsky himself concluded, "As ideological and partisan divisions have come to reinforce each other . . . foreign policy has become more like domestic policy - a realm marked by serious partisan divisions in which the President cannot count on a free ride".¹¹

When generalisations are made about the making of foreign policy, they mainly chronicle changes that have occurred in the last quarter of a century. Congress is said to be more involved in foreign policy decisions, the process is more partisan than it used to be, the public is more attentive to and polarised by foreign policy questions, and interest groups with foreign policy concerns use the congressional channel more efficaciously than they once did.¹²

Guy Peters in his work "Institutional Theory in Political Science" where he

⁶Ibid., 225

⁷Aaron Wildavsky, "The Two Presidencies" in M. Fox Douglas., *The Politics of US Foreign Policy Making*, California: Goodyear Publishing Company Inc., 1971. SAYFA

⁸Robert Dahl, *Congress and American Foreign Policy*, New York. W. Norton, 1964, p.58.

⁹Samuel Huntington, *The Common Defence*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1961, pp.127-128, 146.

¹⁰George III C. Edwards., "The Two Presidencies: A Reevaluation" pp.101-116; Lee Sigelman, "A Reassessment of the Two Presidencies Thesis" in *ibid.*, pp.63-72; Donald A. Peppers., "The Two Presidencies' Thesis: Eight Years Later", in *ibid.*, pp.26-35.

¹¹Duane. M. Oldfield and Aaron Wildavsky, "Reconsidering the Two Presidencies" in Shull, *The Two Presidencies*, pp.181-90.

¹²Barry M. Blechman, *The Politics of National Security: Congress and U.S. Defence Policy*, New York: Oxford, 1990; Thomas Franck and Edward Weisband, *Foreign Policy by Congress*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979; Thomas E. Mann, ed., *A Question of Balance*, Washington, DC: Brookings, 1990.

specifically elaborates on the 'new institutionalism' writes, the most important element of an institution is that the different approaches are in some way a structural feature of the society and/or polity. That structure may be formal (a legislature, an agency in the public bureaucracy, or a legal framework), or it may be informal (a network of interacting organisations, or a set of shared norms). A second feature would be the existence of some stability over time. The third feature of an institution for Peters is that it must affect individual behaviour. Finally, although this characteristic may be sung sotto voce in comparison to the others, there should be some sense of shared values and meaning among the members of the institution.¹³

For institutionalists, interactions among institutions, and between individuals and institutions, can be considered from the perspective of principal-agent models. This perspective can be applied within organisations as well as serving as a means of understanding interactions among groups of institutions within the public sector.¹⁴ The principal-agent model is widely used for certain groups of public institutions and organisations. For example, this has become perhaps the standard means of analysing regulatory policy, especially in the case of the United States, which has a number of independent regulatory commissions. The problem identified here is how to design these structures so that the principal (Congress) can ensure that the agent (the agency) fulfils the principal's wishes. Strategies have included using incentive structures so that the agents have some motivation to comply - especially by overcoming information asymmetry, and by using oversight as a means of ensuring compliance.¹⁵

New institutionalists argue that analysts are mistaken in separating process from policy in studying Congress's role in policy making. Rather, Congress changes the structure and procedures of decision making in the executive branch in order to influence the content of policy. Attempts to substantiate this claim have examined procedural changes in domestic affairs. The article "Congress, Foreign Policy, and the New Institutionalism" by James Lindsay extends the argument by assessing the impact of five procedural changes in the area of defence and foreign policy. One of these procedural changes is the legislative veto on arms sales.¹⁶ Cognisant of the fact that although all five¹⁷ case studies are not representative in a strict sense - it is by no means clear what a representative sample of procedural innovations would look

¹³Guy B. Peters, *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The 'New Institutionalism'*, London and New York: Continuum, 1999, p.18

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 50

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 51

¹⁶James M. Lindsay, "Congress, Foreign Policy, the New Institutionalism", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol.38, (1994), p. 281.

¹⁷Other areas are the following: Office of the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation in the Pentagon, congressional participation in trade negotiations, the conditions attached to U.S. security assistance, and the reporting requirements imposed on the intelligence community.

like - each case represents a different type of procedural innovation and involves a different set of policy issues and agencies. This diversity provides solid ground for speculating both about Congress's influence in foreign policy and about the claims made by new institutionalists.

Lindsay argues that all legislative veto share the same basic quid pro quo: Congress delegates authority to the executive branch to act but reserves the right to veto executive branch decisions by passing a simple (one-house) or concurrent (two-house) resolution, neither of which is subject to presidential veto. In the examples of the Supreme Court's 1983 ruling in *I.N.S. versus Chadha* and the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 he underlines the courses of action taken by Congress and the President, respectively.¹⁸ Going into detail of arms sales and the legislative veto, Lindsay writes that in the 1960s, U.S. weapon exports grew dramatically, and concerned that arms sales had become a major policy tool that lay beyond congressional control, Congress passed several laws designed to give itself a say in arms sales policy. He argues that although Congress has never vetoed an arms sale, it does have a say in U.S. arms sales policy. Without making any specific reference to the U.S. arms embargo against Turkey, he acknowledges that Ford and Carter modified several arms packages to blunt criticism on Capitol Hill. Among others, he reminds us that three times between 1983 and 1985 the Reagan Administration proposed selling arms to Jordan, and all three times it withdrew the proposal because it judged the package would not pass muster in Congress.¹⁹

To conclude his article, Lindsay says his findings suggest that the traditional literature on Congress and foreign policy understates the extent of congressional influence in foreign policy making. His case studies do show that procedural innovations can bring executive branch behaviour more closely into line with the preferences of Congress.²⁰

A History of Arms Embargo Legislation

Problems of power-sharing between Cypriots of Greek language and heritage, and Cypriots of Turkish background were historic and had long risked

¹⁸James M. Lindsay, "Congress, Foreign Policy, the New Institutionalism", p.286.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 290

²⁰*Ibid.*, 299

drawing the two mainland states into the island's politics. On several occasions after Cyprus gained its independence from Great Britain in 1960, U.S. diplomatic efforts had been instrumental in averting war on the island between the two communities and between the ancient rivals, Turkey and Greece. In the summer of 1974, a time of dramatic uncertainty in American national politics, the situation in the eastern Mediterranean exploded. The ruling military junta in Athens backed a coup attempt led by Greek officers against Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus. Acting under the provisos of a treaty of guarantee, Turkish troops intervened on the island to protect the Turkish community. While diplomatic efforts primarily under British auspices were initiated, the Government of Turkey launched a second invasion, and took control of nearly 40 percent of the island, seeking to resolve once and for all the security concerns of the Turkish community on the island.²¹

In the meantime there was an unprecedented crisis of Presidential leadership in the United States because of the Watergate investigation. As a result of this, Nixon resigned on 9th August and Ford took office. There was also an ongoing redefinition of Congress' authority in foreign policy making following the war in Vietnam.²²

On August 15, following the failure of the second Geneva Conference on Cyprus, a delegation of Greek-American congressmen, led by John Brademas (D-Indiana) visited Secretary Kissinger in his office, and a tense meeting which also exposed an accusation of Kissinger by visiting congressmen, Brademas injected the proposal that the United States cut off its military assistance to Turkey until its troops were withdrawn from the island. This course of action was to become the subject of a year-long struggle between Congress and the executive branch.²³

A provision of the Foreign Assistance Act prohibited the use of American weapons for purposes other than national self-defence, the aim being to preclude domestic repression or civil war being carried out with American assistance. But to Turkey, Cyprus involved key issues of international security.²⁴ Yet, Turkish actions on Cyprus were held by Congress not to constitute self-defence under the provisions of the Foreign Assistance Act. At the end of September, House and Senate bills were introduced cutting off aid to Turkey, in the words of the House bill, "until the President certifies to Congress that substantial progress towards agreement" had

²¹Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, Washington: US Government Printing House, June 1981, p.1

²² *ibid.*, 233.

²³Laurance Stern, *The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of the American Diplomacy*, New York: Times Books, 1977, p.141.

²⁴Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999, p.225.

been made.²⁵

In October 1974, Congress twice passed and President Ford twice vetoed joint resolutions to ban military aid to Turkey until substantial progress was made toward a Cyprus settlement. Then President Ford reluctantly agreed to a December 10 aid cutoff if there were still no movement. As negotiations foundered, the deadline was put back to February 5, 1975, by mutual White House-congressional agreement. Despite House and State Department efforts to further postpone the deadline and warnings that Turkey would close two dozen US military and intelligence facilities there, Congress stuck to February 5th date.²⁶ On February 5, 1975, the provisions of Section 620 (X) of the Foreign Assistance Act went into effect. Over 200 million US Dollars in arms purchases and grants went undelivered as a result,²⁷ shutting off the pipeline of grants, credits, and commercial military sales to Turkey, including aircraft deliveries that had already been paid for by the Turkish Government.²⁸

In 1975, with the arms embargo enacted, the Administration and its supporters assumed the offensive. Ford and Kissinger launched vigorous appeals for a lifting of the embargo legislation even before the February 5 implementation date. Those insisting on a continuation of the embargo as long as Turkish intransigence persisted were placed on the defensive.²⁹ The Foreign Relations Committee voted in late March to permit the President to lift the embargo in the absence of significant progress if he felt it would improve the prospects of a solution and if Turkey observed the same conditions that were contained in the original ban. On the floor of the Senate, the bill passed by a vote of 41 to 40 on May 19. Among its supporters were Senate leadership figures and key members of the Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees. Given the high ranking support and the fact that the White House had lobbied strenuously for the bill, the narrowness of the vote suggests that embargo advocates had not given up their cause.³⁰

Turkish Foreign Minister Caglayangil announced on June 17 that all US military and intelligence-gathering facilities in Turkey would be placed on "provisional status".³¹ The House thwarted the Senate's attempt to lift the embargo.

²⁵Ibid., 233.

²⁶Laurance Stern, *The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of the American Diplomacy*, p.147.

²⁷Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p.24.

²⁸Laurance Stern, *The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of the American Diplomacy*, p.154

²⁹Paul Y. Watanabe, *Ethnic Groups, Congress, and American Foreign Policy: The Politics of the Turkish Arms Embargo*, London: Greenwood Press, 1984, p.108.

³⁰Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p.24.

³¹Laurance Stern, *The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of the American Diplomacy*, p.155.

The Foreign Affairs Committee voted in July to continue to ban grants, but to permit commercial purchases and the shipment of goods contracted prior to February 5.³² The bill, described by House leadership as a true compromise, was defeated on the floor by a vote of 206 to 223 on July 24. Then, the US facilities in Turkey were closed on July 26 in response to the House's action.³³

For seven months after the Turkish intervention, US arms flowed freely to Ankara and there was no progress on Cyprus. For the next eight months, American military aid to Turkey was banned and there was still no progress. The deadlock persisted to the end of the Ford presidency, despite endless rounds of meetings between all parties to the dispute.

In the closing months of Ford's term, Kissinger, his manoeuvring time running out, was still counting on the sweet carrot of military aid to cajole concessions from Turkey. On March 26, 1976, President Ford signed a new defence agreement (Defence and Economic Cooperation Agreement-DECA) with Turkey and appealed to Congress for its speedy passage. It called for a programme of 1 billion US Dollars in new military aid over a four-year period and also provided for reopening the US intelligence stations closed down by Turkey after the 1975 arms embargo was adopted. At the time the Turkish treaty was signed, a companion aid programme for Greece was being negotiated to provide 700 million US Dollars over the same four-year period in exchange for renewal of the US leases on its Greek bases.³⁴ However, DECA was not approved by the Congress and was never implemented.³⁵

In the early weeks of the Carter Presidency, the new Secretary of State Vance pledged to try and break the impasse over Cyprus.³⁶ The first initiatives of President Carter and Secretary Vance were to raise the military ante for Turkey, increasing the annual ceiling for arms sales from the Ford-Kissinger limit of 125 million to 175 million US Dollars in fiscal 1978.³⁷

Carter's Eastern Mediterranean policy was generally well received on the Hill. Requests for increasing the ceiling on aid to Turkey met with success, and in

³²This totaled 184 million US Dollars, of which 114 million had already been paid by Turkey, and 52 million was ready for immediate delivery.

³³Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p.25.

³⁴Laurance Stern, *The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of the American Diplomacy*, pp.155-156.

³⁵Richard F. Grimmett, *Turkish-US Defence Relationship: The Arms Embargo Issue*, Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1978, pp.88-93.

³⁶Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p.26.

³⁷Laurance Stern, *The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of the American Diplomacy*, p.157

February 1978, a majority of the House International Relations Committee wrote to the President that they would give sympathetic consideration to a request for aid to Greece and Turkey, provided the President gave his unequivocal support to such action. Even embargo activists recall a fresher and more cooperative spirit in their first dealings with the State Department and the White House on Cyprus policy.³⁸

But on April 2, 1978, the Carter Administration announced a major policy shift. Abandoning its campaign stance, it sought a total lifting of the arms embargo without a direct link to progress by Turkey in finding a solution to Cyprus. Embargo activists, nearly all Democrats and Carter supporters, reacted bitterly. In private and in public, they expressed how betrayed they felt, and accused the President of renegeing on his promises.³⁹

The pattern of support for the bill lifting the embargo (H.R. 12514) did not parallel that of the imposition: the House International Relations Committee voted on May 3 to lift, but a week later, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee rejected the proposal. In late June, the Senate Armed Services Committee convened a blue-ribbon panel of defence officials who presented the security and military reasons why the embargo was necessary for U.S. national interests. On July 26, 1978, the Senate voted to repeal the embargo. The full House acted on August 1, and in its bill language requiring the President to determine and certify that Turkey is acting in good faith to achieve a just and peaceful settlement of the Cyprus problem. After further legislative procedures during which time both administration and congressional figures described the embargo issue as one of the 10 most important items on the 95th Congress' agenda, the bill was presented to the President on September 26, 1978. On the same day, he made the certification required by section 13 (a) of public law 95-384 and the Turkish arms embargo was lifted.⁴⁰

It was quite remarkable that this significant decision was taken in a critical timeframe for the United States - which was about to lose Iran. Apparently, there was a risk of getting dangerously weak because it was deprived of military bases in the region.⁴¹ On 3 October 1978, Turkey agreed to end the "provisional status" despite the failure of the United States to formally approve the DECA.⁴²

³⁸Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p.26.

³⁹*Ibid.*,27

⁴⁰*Ibid.*,27.

⁴¹Theodore A. Coulombis, *The United States, Greece and Turkey: The Troubled Triangle*, New York: Praeger, 1983, p.106.

⁴²New York Times, 4 October 1978, 1.

A Struggle in a Least Conducive Domestic Environment

As mentioned earlier, this paper is designed to bring an institutional explanation to the arms embargo case. Usually, such an explanation focuses on the structure of the American state and identifies the nation's fragmented political system as an obstacle to coherent and purposeful statecraft.⁴³ The weakness of the American state, manifest in the sharing of foreign policy making powers between the White House and Congress, is considered to be, in Edwin Corwin's famous phrase, "an invitation to struggle" for control over the authority to make policy. The fact that the presidents and members of Congress face different electorates - one national, the other local - compounds the problem by providing additional incentives to disagree.⁴⁴ Presidents are held accountable for the broad effect of policy choices. Individual congressmen generally are not. As a result, presidents must make decisions based on a national interest while members of Congress can respond to the needs of narrower, more particularistic interests. In short, the American Constitution invites conflict by dividing the authority to make security policy between the branches of government and by giving self-interested politicians who occupy different positions in the national government reason to compete for control over foreign policy.⁴⁵

Beyond the multilateral negotiation process on Cyprus that inevitably involved Turkey and Greece, there are two essential elements in which the congressional-executive confrontation took place: The domestic presidential crisis in the United States and the resulting mood in Congress, and the history of congressional-executive differences over US policy toward Greece.

The US Presidential Crisis

Congress was the centre of public debate and formal investigations of the Watergate scandal throughout spring and summer of 1974. From February to May, the House Judiciary Committee staff led by former Assistant Attorney General John Doar, conducted an inquiry into President Nixon's involvement in the break-in and cover-up. In early May, the second phase of the inquiry began with the staff presentation of evidence. Throughout this period, the American public was presented with transcripts of Presidential conversations and with several

⁴³ Edwin Corwin, *The President's Control of Foreign Relations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1917. SAYFA

⁴⁴ On this distinction, and its impact on foreign policy making, see Stephen D. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and US Foreign Policy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978, pp. 63-64.

⁴⁵ Peter Trubowitz, Emily O. Goldman, and Edward Rhodes, ed. *The Politics of Strategic Adjustment- Ideas, Institutions, and Interests*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, p.106.

Presidential refusals to comply with subpoenas presented by the committee. In the first two weeks of July, five White House witnesses testified. The hearings were televised nationally, and the media were also inundated with volumes of evidence released daily by the Judiciary Committee. On July 18, the White House case was presented by defence attorney James St. Clair. The following day, Mr. Doar offered the Judiciary Committee's summation saying that "reasonable men acting reasonably would find the President guilty" of misusing the power of his Office.

On July 27, the Judiciary Committee approved an article of impeachment against the President on the charges of obstruction of justice, on July 29, abuse of power, and on July 30, contempt of Congress.

On that same day, article 4, alleging that the President had withheld from Congress facts relating to the American bombing of Cambodia from 1969 to 1973, was debated. In the debate over this article, several issues surfaced that were to reappear in the arms embargo debate.

On August 9, President Nixon resigned. Gerald Ford, a 25-year veteran of Congress, automatically became President. While the impeachment impetus thereby ended, the House voted on August 20 to approve the Committee's report and commend it for its action. The final official act of the Watergate chapter was the Nixon pardon that President Ford announced on September 8.⁴⁶

In the fall of 1974, Congress also became the major battleground for a number of major foreign policy controversies that had been brewing in the shadow of Vietnam. For one thing, the American end game in Indochina was dragging on inconclusively despite Kissinger's declarations in October 1973 that "peace is at hand in Vietnam". The souring of the public mood toward détente was also being expressed on Capitol Hill through rising criticism of normalisation of trade relationships with the Soviet Union. There also arose in Congress a chorus of criticism of the 1.1 billion US Dollars grain sale negotiated secretly by a consortium of American grain dealers with the Soviet Union, with the knowledge and approval of President Nixon and Secretary Kissinger. To this negative picture one could also add Kissinger's initial zigzag course in dealing with the consequences of the OPEC price increases. Last, but certainly not least, there were strong indications of heavy American intervention in the coup on September 11, 1973 in Chile, overthrowing the popularly elected coalition government of socialist Salvador Allende.⁴⁷

⁴⁶Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁷Laurance Stern, *The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of the American Diplomacy*, pp.138-139

Congressional-Executive Differences over US Policy in Greece and Turkey

The history of congressional-executive differences over US policy towards Turkey, Greece and Cyprus was another layer of tension. The fall of the military junta in Greece and the restoration of democracy were greeted by most Americans interested in Greece with great relief. This included professionals at the State Department, many Greek Americans, and a vocal group of Congressmen who had long deplored US support for the military government in Greece.⁴⁸ Stern writes, "There was a sense of relief at having muddled through another East Mediterranean crisis with Kissinger's telephonic persuasion and a little bit luck."⁴⁹ For many people, the return of Caramanlis to power permitted them to vent long pent-up feelings of frustration and anger at the official policy condoning the junta. In 1972, Congress had succeeded in passing legislative language to cut off aid to Greece, but it granted the President authority to waive the prohibition for national security reasons. Similar legislation passed the Senate in early 1974.⁵⁰ Yet, Kissinger writes in his memoirs that he had rejected a policy of isolating and humiliating Greece- whatever his reservations about its government - because he considered it to be an essential pillar of American's NATO strategy.⁵¹

Historically, U.S. policies toward Greece and Turkey have been linked since the formal aid relationships were established in 1947 under the Truman Doctrine. Greece, then in the midst of a civil war, was viewed as relatively more vulnerable to the Soviet threat, and was deemed more urgent,⁵² but both nations were in need of post-war assistance. The two countries joined NATO in 1952 and were viewed in concert as the south eastern flank of the Western Alliance. Over the years, their fortunes in economic and political terms have waxed and waned; both have had periods of impressive economic growth and relative political stability, and both have experienced their shares of economic woes and civil strife. U.S. aid flowed continuously from 1947 to 1974, with Greece receiving approximately \$4 billion, and Turkey receiving \$5.6 billion.⁵³

At annual debates between Congress and the executive over aid to the two historic rivals, there emerged a perception that Congress, reflecting in part the

⁴⁸ Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p 10.

⁴⁹ Laurence Stern, "Bitter Lessons: How We Failed in Cyprus?", *Foreign Policy*, (1975), p. 71.

⁵⁰ Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p 10.

⁵¹ Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, p.225.

⁵² Harris S. George writes in *Troubled Alliance, Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945-1971*, "Recognizing that the Turkish case paled by comparison with the crisis facing Greece, Truman made only the barest mention of Turkey in his historic message to Congress on March 12, 1947. Nor did testimony before congressional committees reflect greater emphasis."

⁵³ Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p 10.

interests of Greek-American constituents, was relatively more interested in Greece than the administration. Executive branch officials were considered by many to be more enthusiastic advocates for Turkey. Kissinger says, "From the geopolitical point of view, Turkey was, if anything, even more important [than Greece]. Bordering the Middle East, Central Asia, the Soviet Union, and Europe, Turkey was indispensable for American policy in each of these areas. Turkey had been a staunch and loyal ally in the entire Cold War period. Turkish troops had fought with distinction at our side in Korea. Twenty six electronic stations were monitoring Soviet missile and space activities from Turkish territory."⁵⁴ This was considered true not only for State Department officials, but perhaps even more for the Pentagon. Defence experts saw Turkey as strategically important not only within NATO, to which it contributes the largest army after the United States and has the longest border on the Soviet Union, but within the CENTO alliance in the Middle East as well. There was a tacit, underlying friction between the more globally oriented and security-minded executive branch and Congress, which was more likely to balance American public opinion and domestic politics into its foreign policy preferences. This institutional gap was dramatically exposed and was expanded in the course of the fall 1974 debate over the arms embargo.

Arguments of Congress on the Arms Embargo

In the eyes of the American Congress, the second phase of the Turkish intervention in Cyprus was an aggressive action, and was therefore unacceptable, although the members of Congress found generally the first intervention, aimed at protecting the innocent lives of Turkish Cypriots, justifiable, and even endorsed it.⁵⁵ Representative Donald Riegle was one of those who said:

To this point [after the first Turkish invasion] the Turks had achieved the goals intended by their military intervention: they stopped the illegal coup on Cyprus, restoring that island's legitimate government. The intervention also caused indirectly, the fall of the 7-year Athens dictatorship. Turkey had a right, under the London accords of 1959, to intervene in Cyprus if the other guarantor powers [Greece and Britain] failed to act jointly but only for the purpose of restoring the state of affairs under the treaty. If Turkey had moved militarily for that purpose and had ended its actions when such restoration occurred, the tragedy of Cyprus would not exist today.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Kissinger Henry, *Years of Renewal*, p.225.

⁵⁵Nasuh Uslu, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs (Turkish-American Relations on Cyprus)*, Ankara: 21. Yüzyıl Yayınları, 2000, p.323.

⁵⁶Paul Watanabe, *Ethnic Groups, Congress, and American Foreign Policy: The Politics of the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p.100.

For Hackett too, this Turkish military action fitted every definition of aggression. There was no military danger to the Turkish troops beyond their capability of self-defence. They had secure lines of supply and communication with Turkey. Their limited political goal authorised under London- Zurich accords - to restore order - was attainable. Yet Turkish domestic political considerations caused Turkey to abandon its prudence by forcing a military solution.⁵⁷

The basic argument of most congressmen who asked for an arms embargo against Turkey was the claim that Turkey used US imported arms and military material during the military operation on Cyprus. This meant a violation of a set of laws and bilateral agreements, including the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, Act of Foreign Military Sales dated 1968, along with the Aid to Turkey Agreements of 1947 and 1959.⁵⁸ In this case, Congress concluded that Turkey used American weapons illegally, and defended the imposition of the arms embargo until considerable progress was achieved.

For those congressmen who argued for an embargo, such a foreign policy option was required in order to enforce Turkey to give concessions to Greek/Greek Cypriot party, and thus to accelerate the peaceful efforts to find a solution to the crisis. For them, if the US did not cut off military aid to Turkey, Turkey would be rewarded for its action in Cyprus. They believed the Administration was not able to conceive that illegal Turkish action in Cyprus constituted the greatest obstacle to achieve progress towards a solution.⁵⁹

Even George Ball and Cyrus Vance who served as mediator on the Cyprus issue established a link between the military assistance and considerable progress towards solution.⁶⁰ Benjamin Rosenthal who advocated the embargo idea believed that if the decision passed in Congress it would be a clear message for Turkey that it could not continue to receive foreign aid while pursuing a hostile attitude in Cyprus.⁶¹

Congressmen who were at the forefront of the pro-embargo forces asserted also that remaining silent about the Turkish military intervention in

⁵⁷Clifford Hackett, "Ethnic Politics in Congress: Turkish Embargo Experience", in Abdul Aziz Said (ed.), *Ethnicity and US Foreign Policy* ed., New York: Praeger, 1977, p. 26.

⁵⁸Nasuh Uslu, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs*, p. 325.

⁵⁹Richard F. Grimmett, *Turkish-US Defence Relationship: The Arms Embargo Issue*, Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1978, p. 4.

⁶⁰Nasuh Uslu, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs*, p.326.

⁶¹S. Bölükbaşı, *Superpowers and the Third World: Turkish-American Relations and Cyprus*, New York: University Press of America, 1988, pp. 216-217.

Cyprus and not giving any reaction to this hostile act might push away Greece from the United States, who is strategically an important ally. As to this view, this would harm American interests in the region.⁶² Some members of that group went on to argue that the United States would not need Turkey anymore while emphasising the importance of Greece for Turkey.⁶³

Despite all these arguments, one can easily claim that the main reason behind the opposing approaches between Congress and Administration, and the formers insistence on this punitive measure against an ally of the United States was the already tense relationship between legislative and executive, and the deep competition on foreign policy issues. Some of them have been dealt in previous sections of this paper.

Campany writes that in the aftermath of Vietnam, Congress attempted to reassert its role in foreign policy through such measures as the 1973 War Powers Act. These and other steps were taken after over a decade of executive dominance and congressional subordination in foreign policy (the Vietnam War). Congress was attempting to restore its role, and the role of public law, in the conduct of US foreign policy to the extent that any infringement of the executive on congressional authority was the target of strong reaction. The attempt by Kissinger to downplay the legal aspects of the Turkish situation, and his attempts to convince Congress that the administration was in the best position to evaluate US national interests in the Turkish situation, backfired. To an unquantifiable but certainly significant extent, this rejection of administration dominance played a role in the congressional decision.⁶⁴

To put it simply, in the summer of 1974 and in the first half of 1975, Congress was ready to reject any executive direction or to disagree with any reasonable explanation of the administration. Indeed, Congress viewed virtually any act of the administration with suspicion, with the many recent discoveries of lies and misstatements made by the administration to the Congress to justify various foreign and domestic issues fresh in its memory.⁶⁵ As Laipson puts, many members of Congress felt that American credibility and self-respect had been badly tarnished by Watergate, and thought the Nixon Administration's lack of concern for possible violations of US law by Turkey was another manifestation of the "corrupt"

⁶²Ibid, 217.

⁶³Nasuh Uslu, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs*, p. 326., George Gruen, "Ambivalence in the Alliance: US Interests in the Middle East and the Evolution of the Turkish Foreign Policy", *ORBIS*, Vol.24, No.2, (Summer 1980), p. 372.

⁶⁴Richard J. Campany, *Turkey and the United States: the Arms Embargo Period*, New York: Praeger, 1986, p.78.

⁶⁵Ibid, 78

and "lawless" character of the administration.⁶⁶

Undoubtedly, anti-Kissinger sentiment was one of the primary motivations for congressional action. Kissinger's words and actions throughout the fall of 1974 reinforced the perception that he had little regard for Congress, for the role of consultation in making American foreign policy, and for the legal questions raised by the lawmakers. For some members of Congress, Kissinger was at once both impressive and irritating. His highly visible profile in the final days of the Nixon Administration triggered in many minds an association between Kissinger and what was considered the arrogance of power demonstrated by the discredited President.⁶⁷

Finally, the arms embargo was also a good opportunity for some congressmen who were not pleased with the decision of the new Turkish Government to resume poppy cultivation to display their discomfort. They asked for punitive measures against Turkey and attempted several times in Congress to adopt a bill to cut off aid to Turkey.⁶⁸

Arguments of the US Administration on Arms Embargo

The US Administration expressed its opposition to the embargo quite clearly through various statements and declarations. There should be no doubt that the administration, at least at the official level, was against this measure. President Ford in his autobiography "A Time to Heal" writes, "I considered this, the single most irresponsible, short-sighted foreign policy decision Congress had made in all the years I'd been in Washington...I urged Congress to reverse it."⁶⁹

President Ford on several occasions indicated his opposition to the arms embargo amendments:

It is my conviction that approval of the continuing resolution, containing the Eagleton Amendment or similar language, would destroy any hope for the success of the initiatives the United States has already taken or may take in the future to contribute to just settlement of the Cyprus dispute. This view is shared by Secretary of State Kissinger....If the Eagleton Amendment or similar language is adopted by the Congress, the United States will have lost its negotiating flexibility and influence.⁷⁰

⁶⁶Ellen B. Laipson, Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo, p. 30.

⁶⁷Ibid., 29

⁶⁸Richard J. Company, Turkey and the United States: the Arms Embargo Period, pp. 25-26.

⁶⁹Gerald R. Ford, A Time to Heal, New York: Harper and Row, 1979, p.302.

⁷⁰Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report 32 (October 5, 1974), p.2687

While explaining to House and Senate on October 15, 1974, why he vetoed the Turkish arms ban provision, President Ford argued that cutting off aid to Turkey would undermine the US efforts on Cyprus peace negotiations. For him, an aid ban would also affect adversely US-Turkey relations and weaken the crucial position of the United States in the East Mediterranean.⁷¹

Another statement issued by the White House pointed out that halting military aid to Turkey would not only delay efforts to find a just solution to the Cyprus crisis but also would have a long-term negative impact on the security and political stability of all regional states. The statement went on to say that the ban would also impair deeply efforts aimed at finding a strategic solution to the Middle East conflict and jeopardise the system which the relationship of the US with the East Mediterranean is based on.⁷²

Kissinger writes in the "Years of Upheaval", "While Ford struggled to restore executive authority over the next months, a freewheeling Congress destroyed the equilibrium between the parties we had precariously maintained; it legislated a heavy-handed arms embargo against Turkey that destroyed all possibility of American mediation- at a cost from which we have not recovered to this day."⁷³ Kissinger also said on 7 December 1974 that the military aid provided by the United States to Turkey was never given as a gift, and since 1947 Turkey played a crucial role for the security of East Mediterranean, NATO and the Euro-Atlantic community.⁷⁴

Senate Majority Leader Mansfield, who was firmly allied with the administration on the issue of the Turkish embargo, recited that prospect to his colleagues in a speech. He said:

If we adopt an amendment aimed directly and specifically against Turkey,...for one thing, we might see a tilt on the part of Turkey toward the Soviet Union. They have a thousand-mile frontier, and within that area they have nuclear warheads and US installations.....The Turks are a Muslim people. Perhaps there might be a tilt on the part of Turkey toward what we call the Middle East.⁷⁵

President Ford issued a statement on 5 February 1975, and said that the cut-off would come into effect as of February 5, 1975, and the Administration

⁷¹Nasuh Uslu, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs*, p.331.

⁷²Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, p. 1192.

⁷⁴Uslu Nasuh, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs*, p. 332.

⁷⁵Laurance Stern, *The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of the American Diplomacy*, p. 152

would certainly act accordingly. One thing, however, should be made clear, aid to Turkey was not given within the context of the Cyprus problem. Neither was it a favour. It was based on the common perception that Turkey had a crucial importance for the security of the East Mediterranean, the United States and its allies. To halt military aid to Turkey might set an obstacle for efforts to find a just and lasting solution in Cyprus. The US Administration concluded that to halt military aid to Turkey would create many adverse effects, and asked Congress to review its decision and authorise the Government to restart the aid relationship.⁷⁶

Moreover, President Ford stated in his address before a Joint Session of Congress on US foreign policy on April 10, 1975, the following:

I earnestly ask Congress to weigh the broader considerations and consequences of its past actions on the complex Greek-Turkish dispute over Cyprus...United States military assistance to an old and faithful ally, Turkey, has been cut off by action of Congress. This has imposed an embargo on military purchases by Turkey, extending even to items already paid for - an unprecedented act against a friend... We are continuing our earnest efforts to find equitable solutions to the problems, which exist between Greece and Turkey. But the result of the Congressional action has been to block progress towards reconciliation, thereby prolonging the suffering on Cyprus, to complicate our ability to promote successful negotiations, to increase the danger of a broader conflict.... Our longstanding relationship with Turkey is not simply a favour to Turkey; it is a clear and essential mutual interest. Turkey lies on the rim of the Soviet Union and at the gates of the Middle East. It is vital to the security of the eastern Mediterranean, the southern flank of Western Europe, and the collective security of the Western alliance. Our U.S. military bases in Turkey are as critical to our own security as they are to the defence of NATO.⁷⁷

Ford addressed an appeal to Congressman Thomas Morgan, Chairman of the House Committee on International Relations, urging the House of Representatives to suspend the prohibitions against military aid to Turkey. Ford's letter incorporated the following lines:

I am convinced that immediate congressional action is needed to relax the embargo on arms shipments to Turkey if US security interests in the Eastern Mediterranean are not to be jeopardised beyond repair...The affected facilities are vital to US and Western security...It [embargo] is a major impediment to

⁷⁶Nasuh Uslu, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs*, p.333.

⁷⁷<http://www.ford.utexas.edu/library/speeches/750179.htm>

negotiations toward a constructive settlement of the tragic Cyprus problem.⁷⁸

Having highlighted the anti-embargo rhetoric of the US Administration and some congressmen, we can summarise their views as follows: Firstly, it was not possible to contribute to solving a complex problem by imposing pressure only on one party. As Couloumbis puts it, Turkey could be influenced not by the means of sanctions or punitive measures, but through persuasive methods.⁷⁹ As a matter of fact, the arms embargo did not force the Turks to compromise, but caused the US to lose its influence on Turkey.

Secondly, an arms embargo against Turkey would cause great harm to the security interests of the United States. An embargo would encourage Turkey to distance itself from the West despite its great strategic weight for the Soviet Union, Middle East, NATO and Western defence arrangements.⁸⁰ At the end of the embargo episode, the Western alliance was severely jeopardised, the United States lost its strategic military installations and communication facilities, and the US position in the Eastern Mediterranean was considerably weakened.

Thirdly, preventing the United States from using military installations and facilities on Turkish soil would mean the cessation of intelligence gathering about space, missile and other military programmes, as well as the operational and training activities of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the embargo would adversely impact on the strength and soundness of the south-eastern flank of NATO. The combat capability, deterrence capacity and the combat readiness of the Turkish armed forces would also be affected.⁸¹

Fourthly, the arms embargo proved how Congress misused its authority in the field of foreign policy and violated the fundamental principle of separation of powers in the American state, because, foreign policy structuring and its daily tactical performance lies within the authority and mandate of the administration. Laipson writes, for the administration, the embargo triggered more traditional and longstanding attitudes about congressional "incompetence" in foreign affairs. The role of the Greek lobby was just further proof to some in the foreign policy bureaucracy that Congress is easily manipulated by domestic pressures and cannot take a detached, statesman-like posture when there are vocal constituents to respond to. They saw Congress trapped by its parochial concerns, responding first and

⁷⁸ Paul Watanabe, *Ethnic Groups, Congress, and American Foreign Policy: The Politics of the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p.109. ⁷⁹Theodore A. Couloumbis, *The United States, Greece and Turkey: The Troubled Triangle*, p. 105.

⁸⁰ Nasuh Uslu, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs*, pp. 334-335.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 335.

foremost to Greek sensitivities, and only secondly to the major national interest of the strategic balance in the eastern Mediterranean.⁸²

That some Members of Congress who were outspoken in their support for the embargo did not know very much about the situation in Cyprus is a point that even congressional sources concede. In public debate, one member spoke of the "Greek island of Cyprus." One participant suggested that a majority of members of Congress failed to grasp that Cyprus is an independent republic and not a province of Greece.⁸³

Lastly, apparently some circles close to the administration mobilised the Jewish lobby to impose pressure on congressmen not to take the embargo decision, because Israel also might be caught in a strict interpretation of the nondefensive use provisions of the law, and because the US bases in Turkey, now threatened by the arms embargo, were important for Israel's defence.⁸⁴

Other Institutional Factors

There were several other institutional factors that impeded effective communication within and between the branches of the Government during consideration of the embargo legislation. These include chronic problems and others more specific to the Cyprus crisis.

At the State Department, one major Cyprus-specific problem was the decision to move the Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus desk functions from the Near East Bureau to the Europe Bureau. The move, regardless of its substantive merit, caused some dislocation in working relationships in spring 1974, when things in Cyprus were growing uncertain. The desk officers assigned to the three countries had previous experience, by and large, in European affairs, so they were unlikely to be familiar with the past episodes of 1964 and 1967.

Another structural aspect that made the issue difficult from a staff perspective was Kissinger's heavy reliance on his personal lawyer for legal and substantive advice on the Cyprus crisis.

On an operational level, once more active consultation became more commonplace; there was the traditional problem of Foreign Service officers not

⁸² Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p.30.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁸⁴ Hackett Clifford, "Ethnic Politics in Congress: Turkish Embargo Experience", p.26.

knowing how to deal with Members of Congress and not being familiar with Congress as an institution. Laipson says, sources in both branches concur that in Washington, State Department staff at the working level do not know how to treat members of Congress.

Initially, the two chambers approached the matter of U.S. policy toward Cyprus from distinctly different perspectives, the Senate concentrating on the rule of law and anti-Kissinger issues, and the House on deploring Turkish action and focusing more on human deprivation and suffering on the island. Because this once again made the identity and clout of the opposition elusive to its adversaries, it provided, inadvertently, a tactical advantage to embargo advocates. It also meant that when the House and Senate activists began to meet regularly in September 1974, they were able to mobilise support on a broad range of issues and to appeal to a widely disparate population of Congress.

Laipson writes, in general, the protracted and public legislative process is viewed as an obstacle in foreign policy situations where speed, subtlety and discretion are of premium value. This is a widely held perception of why the role of Congress in foreign policy was limited by the Founding Fathers, and it seems particularly relevant to the arms embargo case. At certain points in the congressional action, administration officials pointed to new floor procedures that made lifting the embargo more difficult. In the past, Congress, according to this view, could reverse decisions more rapidly on an issue that had lost its popularity. This proved to be particularly critical in the July 1975 effort to lift the embargo.⁸⁵

Conclusion

This research paper has tried to formulate an institutional explanation to the US arms embargo against Turkey, which was effective between February 1975 and September 1978. Among other domestic factors, it dealt particularly with the legislative-executive power struggle, and the primary motivations of the main institutions of Congress, the Presidency and the State Department.

The course of events and the arguments of the main actors on embargo testify to the fact that the embargo episode occurred in a dramatic and disturbing domestic context. The embargo legislation succeeded in part because of the domestic environment. As argued by Laipson, for both Congress and the executive, there were links between domestic and foreign policy that merit consideration. For Congress, the association is directly related to Nixon and Watergate; for the

⁸⁵ Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, pp. 31-32.

executive, the link is a more chronic matter.⁸⁶

Congressional activism on foreign policy is a fact of life, not only in the 1970s but even today. But activism should not be confused with influence. One consequence of congressional activism on foreign policy is conflict with the White House.⁸⁷ The embargo case is a typical example. As a matter of fact, we are not witnessing an era of "foreign policy by Congress". The president (and by extension his advisers and the foreign policy bureaucracy) remain the dominant actors on foreign policy. To argue otherwise is to miss the tremendous formal and informal powers of the presidency. On the other hand, Congress has an effect on US diplomacy. Although Congress functions as a secondary actor on foreign policy, it is an actor nonetheless. What makes the Turkish embargo case unique is the shared feeling of the scholars that in imposing this punitive measure against Turkey and opposing its lifting, Congress clearly hurt the US national interest.

Though the congressional point of view to the embargo as a foreign policy tool was entirely different to that of the executive, one has to distinguish to a certain extent between the two Chambers. In general, the House tended to go further than the Senate in its legislative proscriptions. The House called for a cut-off until significant progress was made, whereas the Senate measures called for a cut-off unless the President was able to certify that Turkey was making good faith efforts to find a solution. Again for Laipson, these differences reflected the traditional Senate inclination to support the foreign policy prerogative of the executive. The House has generally been viewed as less sympathetic to the exigencies of diplomacy, and proved to be more critical of the State Department's handling of the situation.⁸⁸

As Legg writes, Congress was not successful in resolving the Cyprus dilemma, but the administration had not been particularly successful prior to congressional intervention either. In this case, congressional involvement clearly prolonged the problem, and in prolonging, seemed to worsen it. Perhaps most serious from the analyst's point of view is the fact that many congressional participants, in detailed yet crucial decisions, were uninformed and uninterested in the problem.⁸⁹

Ethnic interests and the Greek lobby undoubtedly played a major role in this

⁸⁶ Ibid, 30.

⁸⁷ James M. Lindsay, "Congress and Diplomacy", *Congress Resurgent: Foreign and Defence Policy on Capitol Hill*, in Ripley B. Randall and Lindsay M. James (eds.), Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1993, pp. 280-281.

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 21.

⁸⁹ Keith R. Legg, "Congress as Trojan Horse? The Turkish Embargo Problem, 1974-1978", *Congress, the Presidency and American Foreign Policy*, in John Spaniger and Joseph Noguee (eds.), New York: Pergamon Press, 1981, p. 129.

process. Laipson suggests that the interaction between supporters of the embargo legislation and Greek-American groups went both ways; members of Congress expressed support for and worked to achieve the goals of so-called Greek lobby, but also "used" the "lobby" as an outside network of political support for legislative action, the purposes of which went beyond the specific interests of the ethnic community.⁹⁰ Hackett says that Greek Americans are a relatively cohesive ethnic group. Two national organisations, the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) and the American Hellenic Institute (AHI) exemplify the efforts of many organisations that were active in keeping their members informed of actions in Congress concerning Cyprus and Turkey, and vice versa. The Greek Orthodox Church in North America was also an extremely effective means of communication among Greek Americans. Also the Greek-language newspapers played an important part in this communication process. Finally, but importantly, Greek Americans were politically active in the United States.⁹¹ For Legg, Greek Americans were found in both parties, and often were significant campaign contributors. The embargo was the one issue on which they were likely to press for a congressman's vote.⁹²

To conclude, I believe that pursuing a rational foreign policy in the years of 1974 and 1975 was tantamount to walking in a minefield. It was not only due to the complex foreign policy issues in a post-Vietnam and post-Watergate era, but also because of the continuing antagonistic stance of Congress towards the Administration. More dramatically, there was a deep lack of confidence between the two main pillars of the state institution, which, eventually, caused great harm to American interests.

The arms embargo against Turkey hurt Turkey economically, weakened its defence capacity, and fed anti-American sentiment in that country. It inevitably jeopardised the southern flank of NATO, as well. What is, however, more important is that, it did not contribute to the solution of the 40-year long Cyprus issue. I agree with Gruen that there is a broader lesson here. In disputes between its friends, whether in the Middle East or elsewhere, the United States should be sensitive to the legitimate concerns of both sides. Offers of American mediation and positive inducements to accord are more likely to be effective than punitive measures, which result in alienation from the United States without promoting a genuine solution to the dispute.⁹³

⁹⁰ Ellen B. Laipson, *Congressional-Executive Relations and the Turkish Arms Embargo*, p. 5.

⁹¹ Clifford Hackett, "Ethnic Politics in Congress: Turkish Embargo Experience", p. 29.

⁹² Keith R. Legg, "Congress as Trojan Horse? The Turkish Embargo Problem, 1974-1978", p. 118.

⁹³ George E. Gruen, "Ambivalence in the Alliance: US Interests in the Middle East and the Evolution of Turkish Foreign Policy", *Foreign Policy*, (Summer 1980), p. 378.