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February 16, 2010

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Letters to the Editor
The Washington Post
1150 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20071

Dear Editor:

The editorial "France's valentine to Russia" scrutinizing France's sale of a naval carrier to Russia is morally valid because Russia illegally occupies another sovereign nation.

A striking parallel comes to mind. The United States' steady flow of its weaponry to Turkey, which enabled Turkey to illegally invade and occupy the Republic of Cyprus for 36 years, does not receive the same scrutiny as France's sale of arms to Russia.

As a result of Turkey's 1974 invasion of Cyprus, the U.S. enacted a rule of law arms embargo upon Turkey. The violation of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, provided the basis. The Carter Administration lifted the embargo in 1978 contingent upon Turkey's promise to implement a set of conditions on Cyprus. Turkey never did. U.S. weaponry, provided to Turkey emboldens Turkey's resistance to find a diplomatic settlement to the Cyprus question.

In September, President Obama requested Congressional approval of a \$7.8 billion sale of PAC-3 missiles to Turkey. This is one of the biggest U.S. government-to-government arms sales in years and marks Turkey's return as a major U.S. arms buyer.

Given Turkey's history, this U.S. arms sale appears just as "ludicrous" and without "rationalization."

Sincerely,

Nick Larigakis
Executive Director



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March 5, 2010

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Letters to the Editor
The Washington Times
3600 New York Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002

The Cyprus 'incursion' was an invasion

Dear Editor:

We appreciate James Morrison's Feb. 23 item "Recall Demanded" (Embassy Row, Geopolitics), which reported on the American Hellenic Institute's response to comments made by U.S. Ambassador James Jeffrey to a Turkish newspaper. Journalism such as this is important in bringing to the forefront important issues that usually do not receive as much attention as other foreign policy issues.

However, the article contains several misstatements of fact about the background of the Cyprus issue. The Turkish military action against the Republic of Cyprus on July 20, 1974, was not an "incursion," but rather an illegal cross-border invasion of another sovereign nation, accomplished with the illegal use of U.S.-supplied arms. The right-wing perpetrators of the coup, who were sponsored by the Greek junta in Athens, lasted in power for just eight days. Whatever the intent of the perpetrators of the coup, they fell from power, and the legitimate government of Cyprus was restored on July 23, 1974.

Nevertheless, Turkey launched its second invasion, expelling the Greek Cypriot population and occupying nearly 40 percent of the territory of Cyprus. It was these "military moves" that resulted in "a division of the island." Turkey continues to illegally occupy Cyprus with more than 40,000 troops. It also has altered the demographics of the occupied area with the creation in 1983 of the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), in defiance of United Nations resolutions. The TRNC is recognized only by Turkey. Finally, Turkey continues to ship settlers from mainland Turkey to occupied Cyprus in violation of the Geneva Conventions and international law. The number of settlers now totals more than 180,000.

Sincerely,

Nick Larigakis
Executive Director

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