

JFH

ops Subject re: Turkey
Turkey Aid: May 74



cc FEO
HMT
Cab. Off.

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

19 June 1979

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 30/79 F

My dear Chancellor,

Thank you for your message about Turkey, which I received via your Embassy on 29 May.

Let me first say how glad I am to hear that you have found your way to doubling your own contribution to the Turkish assistance operation to \$200 million. This will have contributed substantially to the success of the pledging meeting in Paris on 30 May.

As you had already heard, we had decided to double our own contribution, albeit to the more modest sum of £15 million. You are right to say that this was not an easy decision for us, in view of our determination to make stringent cuts in public expenditure. I agree with you that Turkey's position is serious. But I am afraid we can go no further. The total of our external commitments is already putting too great a strain on our economy. These commitments include our defence and aid efforts. And I explained to you when we met recently my very serious concern about our disproportionate net contribution to the EEC Budget. I want Britain to fulfil its proper role in the EEC and in the world. But I must first get the UK economy back to a sound footing.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Herr Helmut Schmidt.

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