

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I am pleased to have signed H. R. 16243. Although not all Administration recommendations were accepted, I recognize and appreciate bipartisan efforts made by the House-Senate conference committee to produce a Defense Appropriations Bill acceptable to both Houses and sufficient for our national security needs.

The bill has, however, a major drawback. The \$700 million funding for South Vietnam is inadequate to provide for all of their critical needs, if South Vietnam's enemies continue to press their attacks. It may, therefore, be necessary to approach the Congress early next year to work out some solutions to meet critical needs which arise.

Each year the President of the United States must sign into law an appropriations bill for our defense. From my experience in Congress, I know all too well the conflicts this defense bill can produce in the name of economy and other national interests. Thus, as I sign such a bill for the first time as President, I want to renew my pledge to build a new partnership between the Executive and Legislative Branches of our Government, a partnership based on close consultation, compromise of differences and a high regard for the Constitutional duties and powers of both branches to work for the common good and security of our nation.

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