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TURKEY TODAY

By LORD KINROSS

Lecture delivered to the Royal Central Asian Society on November 17, 1954, Admiral Sir Cecil Harcourt, G.B.E., K.C.B., in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Lord Kinross, who has kindly come to lecture to us today, is well known to many of those present as author, traveller and broadcaster. His most recent book is entitled *Within the Taurus** and deals with most of the subject about which he is now going to speak to us.

I FEEL that, before I start, I must say what a great honour and pleasure it is to me to address a society so renowned and so learned as the Royal Central Asian. I feel that I must also offer a word of apology for being here at all. I am here, really, under false pretences, as I have nothing to offer you, in the way of learning, about this Western outpost of Asia. My only excuse for being here is that I have during the past few years had the opportunity of travelling over parts of the Asia Minor Plateau which you know well enough already from the works of the historians and scholars and travellers, and very likely from personal experience—but which have been very little visited in modern times. Turkey—that is to say Turkey in Asia—was in a sense better known in the nineteenth century than it is today. From 1914 onwards it became more or less a closed country: firstly owing to the First World War, subsequently owing to Atatürk's period of internal reconstruction, when visitors were not encouraged, and thirdly owing to the Second World War. It is only today, after nearly a generation, that you have a régime in Turkey which is making things easy for the traveller. My journeys were relatively short ones, and my observations can only be superficial and somewhat at random. They won't add very much to what you must already know about modern Turkey. In fact all I can hope to do is to confirm or deny it from my own personal experience.

I referred just now to Turkey as the Western outpost of Asia. Well, today it might be more appropriate to describe her as the Eastern outpost of Europe. That is what she aspires to be, and what, at any rate in the military sense, she now is. In the days of the Ottoman Empire Turkey was essentially an Oriental power, centred, geographically, in Europe. Today, with her Empire liquidated, she is, paradoxically, a would-be Occidental power centred in Asia. In shifting his capital from Istanbul to Ankara, Atatürk confirmed the Turks in their natural habitat, which is Asia. In so doing he strengthened them, and gave them a new sense of nationhood, and began the process of modernizing them in the Western sense. What one wants to try to assess is just how far this process has gone—how far the Turks can really claim to be a European, and how far they are still an Asiatic nation.

In the political sense I think they can claim to have made a remarkable

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advance. There is no doubt that political democracy in Turkey does, in its own way, work. It works on quite a different plane—an infinitely superior plane—to democracy in the Arab and other Asiatic countries. It works quite as well as it does in, say, Greece—in fact sometimes better, as the Turks are a more stolid, less excitable people than the Greeks. It doesn't perhaps work as well as it does in some of the Western European countries—simply because the majority of the Turkish people is still illiterate. Over the greater part of the country the literate population is not more than 20 or 30 per cent., and in the eastern and south-eastern provinces it falls much lower. Until a few years ago the people in some of these remoter regions had very little idea of what was happening in the world, and even in Turkey itself. There is a story, told by a parliamentary candidate in eastern Turkey just after the war, that one of his constituents came up to him and asked after the health and welfare of the Padishah—the Sultan—in Constantinople.

Now I don't want to imply that this rate of illiteracy in Turkey means that elections aren't free. They are, in the legal sense, strictly free. The ballot is genuinely secret and the count is open. There is no intimidation. The elections are supervised by an independent legal authority. But it is obvious in elections that where you have a largely illiterate population it is bound to be subjected to certain pressures.

On the one hand there is pressure from the big man of the village—no longer a pasha, but a rich landowner perhaps, or a rich merchant, who exercises considerable local influence, and whose views are thus bound to carry weight with voters. On the other hand there is pressure from the administration itself. It is a highly centralized administration, as it has been in Asia Minor ever since Byzantine times, and though it is certainly the most independent executive of any country in the Middle East, it inevitably has a certain political tinge. When I was in Anatolia three years ago the Democrat Party had just been returned to power, for the first time, with an overwhelming majority over Atatürk's People's Party. The result was that here and there, at least in the more important vilayets, the *valis*—the governors—were being changed. The administration was making sure of having men in these posts who could be counted on to carry out the Democrat policy with conviction, and was transferring the People's Party men to less influential posts. Thus in elections you are likely to get a certain amount of pressure from the administration.

All the same, in 1950 you reached in Turkey a very remarkable milestone in the history of democracy. You got men coming from the towns to the remote, primitive parts of the country: men with a modern education, with all sorts of new ideas, who talked to these peasants, and explained to them that for the first time they were to be free to vote as they wished. They were sceptical at first, knowing from past experience what to expect if they offended their *vali* or their *kaimakam*. But finally they realized that the ballot really was to be free, and they voted *en masse* against the party in power—the party of their *vali* or their *kaimakam*—and they let the Democrats in with a big majority. And no amount of pressure will prevent them from voting the other way, as soon as they feel like it. Meanwhile they are quite content with the Democrats, who are giving the peasants all

sorts of social and economic benefits, and have voted them back into power again with an even bigger majority, reducing the Opposition to proportions which are perhaps unhealthily small.

The effect of this is that, though you have in Turkey a two-party system, you have at the moment what in practice almost amounts to one-party rule. But the significant thing is that the people have voted for this party, instead of having it imposed on them, as in the days of Atatürk and İnönü. And this is healthy enough. The truth is that there is a genuine spirit of independence in the Turkish peasant. One senses this very strongly as one travels along the Russian frontier. These are a people who have never been oppressed to the same degree as the Slavs have oppressed their kinsmen opposite. Control from Constantinople was always rather remote control; the pashas who exercised it on the spot were sometimes good pashas and sometimes bad pashas, but as long as the people paid their taxes and did their military service they were left more or less alone and in possession of their own lands. There may have been officials, but there were few big landowners to oppress them, because the Sultans had always discouraged the growth of a large landed aristocracy, as a potential rival to their own power. By the standards of the time—and by comparison with the Russian peasantry—they were a reasonably independent, peasant population.

This spirit of independence, which has never been altogether crushed, is now released, and it is very interesting to notice it as one travels about the country. There is plenty of free speech in the coffee-shops. There is what one Turkish M.P. described to me as a Hyde Park atmosphere—an atmosphere in which anyone can say what he likes. I used to sit in them in the evenings, watching these hard-headed peasants as they listened to the radio from Ankara, or to the news from the local newspaper, read out to them probably by some literate member of the younger generation. And I couldn't help thinking that the Russians in their coffee-shops, just across the frontier, must have been listening to a very different story.

There are usually two coffee-shops in a Turkish village: a Democrat one on one side of the street and a People's Party one on the other, and you get a different party newspaper being read out in each coffee-shop. These are people who want to know what's going on, and, despite their lack of letters, are determined not to be put upon. They have considerable experience of war, usually with Russia, going back over several generations, and considerable political shrewdness. -Sitting in a coffee-shop one day, in a small village on the Black Sea coast, I became the centre of a circle of villagers who asked me the most searching questions about international affairs. They wanted to know all about the Atlantic Pact, to which Turkey was on the point of being admitted. They asked about America's policy in China—why she didn't help Chiang Kai-Shek, and so forth. They wanted to know whether there really was such a thing as the atom bomb, and if so why didn't the United Nations drop it on Moscow straight away, without more ado. They spoke with pride of the Turkish Army, and wanted to know whether it wasn't better than all the European armies except the British. A lot of these peasants had worked in Russia before the Communist régime obliged them to clear out, so they knew all about it.

And that is one of the reasons why Turkey is almost the only country in the world where Communism virtually doesn't exist.

Not far away, up on the plateau, I travelled right along the Russian frontier, by the Araxes River, and it was impressive to see the dogged, impervious way in which these peasants cultivated their land right up to the frontier line. This caused occasional incidents, as when a Turkish cow or goat violated Soviet sovereignty, and was either shot or punctiliously returned with a protest. These people had been driven from their lands by the Russians once in every generation for a century or more, and were quite resigned to the fact that they would probably be driven from them again. But they were not in the least intimidated by the prospect. They would return to their lands, as they had always returned before. On the Russian side of the frontier, on the other hand, there was not a sign of life, except for a few military look-out posts. The Russians had moved all their villages five miles back from the frontier, and were urging the Turks to do the same, to avoid trouble. But the Turks refused, explaining: "We're a democracy! Our people's land is their own." The impression I got about the Russian frontier was that it was designed as much to prevent Russians from getting out as to prevent Turks from getting in. As the officer who was with me at the time remarked: "Do you know, when I look at Russia, barricaded behind that frontier, I begin to believe that she must really be afraid of us. I don't mean only afraid of our soldiers: I mean afraid of our democracy."

This brings us to the topic of the Turkish soldier, who is guarding the frontier so doggedly. The Turkish Army has been well trained, in the last few years, by the Americans and ourselves, and exceedingly well armed with the most up-to-date equipment. The Turks have never in the past been a race of mechanics. Indeed, I think I am right in saying that no word for maintenance exists in their language. But they are learning quickly. The Americans claim to have trained a force of 30,000 technicians, and certainly, as one travels about the country in lorries and buses, one sees that the Turks are beginning to develop a mechanical sense. Their drivers and mechanics are resourceful enough, and though there may be breakdowns, one does always get to one's destination in the end.

Certainly the Turkish Army is full of fighting spirit. The Turkish soldier is an intrepid fighter, as he always has been—especially against the Russians. His favourite type of story is of a frontier dispute over a water-point, in which a Turkish sentry killed five Russian soldiers single-handed. The Turks, of course, have not yet fought a modern war; but they have had some valuable experience in Korea. They now have a younger type of officer and a more flexible system of promotion from the ranks. The Turkish soldier is not, by Western standards, well paid. But he is well fed. He gets meat twice a day and he is not fed on black bread, like the Russian soldiers opposite. Above all he has a strong military tradition behind him, and he will fight to the last ditch for the defence of his country.

Atatürk's revolution was in the first place military and political. But it was also religious. As everyone here knows, he turned Turkey into a secular state, subjecting the Church to the state, whereas previously the

state had in effect been subjected to the Church. He broke the political power of Islam. On the other hand he did not eliminate Islam. The new Western-educated generation grew up as a largely secular generation, though still with the traditions of Islamic morality behind them. But the great mass of the people in the country as a whole continued to practise Islamic worship, whether openly or otherwise. Now they do so everywhere quite openly. The call to prayer is again recited in Arabic. There is religious instruction in the schools and there are religious broadcasts on the radio. You see framed religious texts, in Arabic, on sale on the pavements outside the mosques; and everywhere you see new mosques being built, often at the expense of the government. The war in Korea was fought in the name of Islam, the troops attended religious services before going into battle, and you saw war posters all over Turkey, showing an officer leading his men into the attack, carrying the Koran in his hand. This revival of Islam has extended to social customs. In the more primitive parts of the country the veil is returning. I saw veiled women in the streets of Erzurum—possibly in modest protection against the increasing number of foreigners—especially Americans—now in the city. In the streets of Trebizond I saw hardly any women at all: they seldom venture out from their homes. They provided a curious contrast to the streets of Ankara and Istanbul, where women are highly emancipated, just as in any European city, and follow the same professions as men.

Among the more primitive layers of the population the woman's position is still much as it has always been—though she has always, I think, been freer than in the Arab countries. Polygamy still prevails to some extent. A Turk whom I visited on the Black Sea coast told me the story of his servant, a peasant woman. She was, unfortunately, barren, so, very resourcefully, she found her husband another wife, who bore him children. But she remained his only legal wife, and enjoyed her position in the household as such, while the children were officially registered as hers. The three lived harmoniously together, and everyone was happy—especially the husband. Polygamy dies hard in a peasant country where wives are labour.

Along the Black Sea coast, where tea is grown, the labour is strictly divided: it is the job of the men to prepare the soil and plant the crop, and the job of the women to pick it and market it, besides looking after the vegetable garden and the cattle. And it is the job of the women to carry the loads: it is undignified for a man to be seen carrying anything. You see them trudging along the roads, carrying vast baskets of green tea, from the fields to the market, on their backs. But they look very cheerful, I must say—gay beasts of burden—and respected in their own sphere of life.

The women in Anatolia spend much of their time weaving carpets for the house. I was invited into a peasant's mud-built house near Kars, where not only the floor but the walls of the whitewashed living room were covered with carpets. They had been made by his womenfolk from the wool of his sheep, with the name of each one woven into the pattern. He told me that three women could weave a carpet in a month. I asked him how many children he had. He replied, "Two," and then, as an afterthought, "—and three girls"—a little ungracious, I thought, to the weavers.

In the neighbourhood of Mount Ararat the Kurdish women still wear picturesque costumes. I climbed up a part of the mountain—partly on foot, and partly on a cab-horse, the only horse which happened to be available. About halfway up I found an encampment of Kurdish shepherds with black tents. They invited me into a tent and gave me sour milk and glasses of tea. Their women wore a costume just like that of our Victorian grandmothers, only invented, I should imagine, a long time before them. They wore layers of flounced petticoats, with balloon sleeves, and bloomers, in gay, flowered cretonnes. Only the blue beads and cowrie-shells threaded into their pigtails struck a slightly outlandish note. The tent was strewn with rosebud cretonne cushions, and there was an old granny working away at her wool-work in the corner.

But I have strayed from the subject of religion—of the religious reaction which is said to be taking place in the country, and which some Turks view with disquiet. It was in the first place deliberately encouraged by the Democrat Party, for electoral reasons, and they continue to support it, thus giving back, at least to the local religious leaders, some of the power which they lost under Atatürk. It is, of course, a dangerous game, in a country with modern aspirations, to exploit religion for political motives. My personal feeling, however, is that these dangers can be exaggerated. Religious "reaction" is perhaps too strong a word for this process. All that is happening, I think, is that religious feeling and religious practices, which always prevailed to some extent underground, have now come up again into the open. The government of Turkey today is essentially a secular government and a sensible government, and it is certainly on guard against any form of fanaticism. A year or two ago one of the old Dervish orders, the Ticani, reared up its head again, and started to deface statues of Atatürk in the cities. But it was quickly and vigorously stamped out. As modern education percolates throughout the country—as it unquestionably is doing—the dangers of Islamic reaction will recede, and Islam itself may well remain a force in the ethical and social rather than in the purely religious sense. A new form of Islam—rather in Protestant terms—may easily emerge.

The main problems of Turkey today are, of course, social problems. I referred just now to education. It is extraordinary what an appetite there is for education today throughout the length and breadth of Asia Minor. Travelling across the Armenian plateau between Ardahan and Kars, I was struck by the villages strung out along the road. The houses were the round mud huts which have prevailed for centuries. They are hardly more than burrows, huddling close to the earth, often without windows and with grass growing over their roofs. But in the centre of almost every village was a modern white building with a red roof. This was the primary school—the goal of every Turkish child. Everywhere the boys were wearing peaked school caps with a laurel badge in front—the proud badge of literacy: and the young men were wearing old school badges in their buttonholes. Money, unfortunately, still has to be spent on guns before books, and it may be another generation before Turkey can claim to be wholly literate. But at least the effort is being made, and in the right direction. The young Turks are being educated not only to be clerks but

to be good peasants. Some time ago the government introduced a series of village institutes for the training of teachers. These are not only schools but farms as well—sort of lay monasteries—which give them instruction not merely in the normal secondary school curriculum but in the practice of agriculture and rural trades. When they are qualified the young men return to their villages as teachers and are in a position to give valuable advice to the peasants on the improvement of farming methods.

But there are other ways in which the Turks are being educated. They are being educated by contact with each other. The backwardness of Anatolia, which prevailed until a few years ago—and of course still prevails to a decreasing extent—was due very largely to the extraordinary isolation of its villages. A terrifying picture of this isolation, and consequent primitiveness, has been drawn by a talented young Turkish schoolmaster, Mahmut Makal, in a Dickensian book called *Our Village*—called in English *A Village in Anatolia*.^{*} This book—in effect an exposure of existing social conditions—caused a great stir throughout Turkey, and was effectively used by the Democrats as a stick to beat the government with at the elections of 1950. Since then a very great deal has been done to improve the conditions of the villages of Turkey, in the way of better housing, and dispensaries and schools and so forth, but mainly in the way of communications. Thanks to a big programme of road-building, the villagers now have a contact with their neighbours and with other parts of Turkey which was formerly denied to them and are thus released from the isolation of centuries—an isolation which was as much mental as physical.

Travelling about Anatolia is still an arduous and not a very comfortable process, but at least it *is* possible to get about, on four wheels, in most parts of the country. Thanks to American aid and equipment, a network of roads is materializing. There are, of course, bad roads—but there is an increasing number of good roads. If anything, the Turks would appear to have been in too much of a hurry about their road-building. The Americans wanted them to take longer over the process: to make fewer roads but better ones. But they preferred to make as many roads as possible, as quickly as possible, and to re-make them in a few years' time if necessary. And they may well have been right.

It is extraordinary what a difference these roads make to the life of the average peasant. I drove up on one of the most precipitous, in a fruit lorry, from the Black Sea coast up through the Pontic "Taurus" to the plateau at Kars. It is some of the finest scenery I ever saw, in which forests of beech and chestnut give place to pine-woods and alpine pastures, and finally to the vast horizons of the sun-baked Asiatic tableland. Before the road was built the peasants on the coast had little market for their fruit, which simply rotted on the trees; and the peasants on the plateau led a fruitless existence. Now the peasants on the coast have money to spend, and the peasants on the plateau have fruit. It was extraordinary to see the enthusiasm with which they swarmed on board the lorry on our arrival at Kars, unloading the fruit and having it on sale in the market in a matter of minutes.

On the road to Lake Van I was given a lift in a lorry whose driver had

* See reviews.

until lately been a mason in a village in the Black Sea mountains. He had paid £1,000 for his lorry, and now carried cargoes of sugar in it to all parts of the country. His petrol cost him as much as £17 the trip, but all the same he made a clear profit of £750 a year, of which he spent only half. In a year or two he proposed to hand the lorry over to his mate and buy another. Thus are capitalists made. These are simply two instances of the way in which roads are changing the life of the countryside, a revolution which is not merely economic but social and psychological.

Economically, thanks largely to American aid, Turkey has made very great progress during the past few years. Money is being spent by the government on a very big scale, and it is being spent largely on the peasant, in the form of subsidies to his crops, and loans, and grants of machinery, and so forth. The process has been helped by a cotton boom in those valleys and plains which are enriched by the silt brought down from the Taurus. Here you see the peasants, at week-ends, joy-riding along the roads in tractors, with their wives and families in trailers behind. I have even heard of peasants who are doing so well that they buy refrigerators and, since they have no electric current, have them fitted with locks, to keep their banknotes in them! Turkey aims at becoming a big exporting country in foodstuffs, especially in wheat, and is concentrating all her efforts on agricultural production. The country has no deserts—or at least no natural ones. Its soil is fertile and it has plenty of water. The problem is to get the water to the soil, and this is being energetically tackled by the building of barrages and the boring of wells.

But there is another problem, and that is population. Asia Minor is underpopulated. One hears the frequent cry, "Adam Yok," meaning "No Adams"—or "No men." I travelled through regions which once were rich, but which are now very sparsely inhabited—owing partly, I suppose, to the drain on the Turkish population of a century of wars, and partly to the expulsion of the minorities. The region around Lake Van, described by the nineteenth-century travellers as a well-inhabited paradise, is now, relatively speaking, an empty desert. It was the country of the Armenians, and the Armenians have gone. The Mediterranean coast of Turkey, once well cultivated, has now reverted, in places, to tangled hillsides of scrub and wild olive. It was colonized by Greeks, and the Greeks have gone. A year or so ago the Communists, with the intention of doing the Turks an injury, started to push large numbers of Turkish Moslems across the frontier from Bulgaria. The Turks, on the contrary, welcomed the influx, and have profitably absorbed the Bulgarians, who are of excellent, healthy stock. There was some talk, at the time of my visit, of settling them around Lake Van, but an obstacle to this was the need for screening, so close to the Russian frontier. Now the influx has ceased. The Bulgarians have changed their policy, and are keeping the Turks at home and indoctrinating them as Communists instead.

Turkey has another shortage besides that of population. She needs capital. When the Democrats came to power they reversed Atatürk's process of state control of industry, and a number of industries were offered to private enterprise. But there was too little capital available in private hands, and the Turks have not in the past had the habit of investment.

The banks are doing their best to stimulate it, and carry out advertising campaigns throughout the country with colourful posters portraying the benefits of investment. They have gay shop-windows, brilliantly lit and dressed by experts, displaying the lottery prizes which the Turk stands to win for each sum invested: radio sets and washing machines and models of houses, and so forth. I even heard, from a Turkish friend, that one bank had offered, as first prize, a bag of gold. Investment is thus increasing. But Turkey still needs foreign capital to develop her resources to the full. So far foreign capital has been a little slow to respond. It has been frightened off in the past by confiscatory methods, and, moreover, Turkey is just a little too close to the Russian frontier to be regarded as a safe investment today.

But at least there is, in Turkey today, a new attitude towards the foreigner. The People's Party, in the last elections, tried to appeal to the more Chauvinistic, xenophobic instincts of the Turkish people. But they met with little response. Turkey today is ripe for co-operation with the foreigner. As a mere traveller I found nothing but friendliness—of a rather gruff, blunt kind. It took a long time to get permits to visit the military areas, but once they came through no further obstacles were put in my way.

Turkey, of course, is still strongly nationalistic, and reluctant to allow foreign immigrants into the country. The ordinary Turk still tends to be suspicious of the Greeks, and there is still a curtain, commercial and otherwise, between the Turkish coast and the Greek islands of the Ægean and the Mediterranean, which lie just off it. But all this may gradually break down, as it has already broken down at the political level. The Turks have a strong international sense. After all, they were not an Empire for five hundred years for nothing. They worked hard to become members of N.A.T.O. and are among its strongest bulwarks; and they have since drawn Yugoslavia into their system of alliances. In this sense—in the external sense—they are certainly an outpost of Europe: and now they are turning their attention towards Asia, towards Pakistan, and Persia and Iraq, hoping to serve as a bridge between the two continents.

In the internal sense it is hard to assess just how far the process of Europeanization has gone. One is struck by the European manner and European aspect of the Turks, and by a sort of Scotch common sense in their character. One is struck by their honesty, by the relative lack of corruption in their administration, by the efficiency of their police. A small incident may illustrate this. On one occasion I was unfortunate enough to leave my wallet on a ship in the Dardanelles—through being left behind at Gallipoli when the ship sailed before its scheduled time. I hardly expected to see it again. But on arrival at Chanak I reported the loss to the Chief of Police. He immediately telephoned to Smyrna, where the boat was then arriving. Within a quarter of an hour a police officer came to me with a message that my wallet was in the hands of the Smyrna police, who wanted to know what they were to do with it. I reflected that there are not many European countries where I should have been so fortunate.

Another good sign is that there are plenty of young men in official

positions in Turkey, especially as *kaimakams*, or district governors. Youth is not excluded from public affairs, as it has been until recently in most Arab countries. Turkey is a young man's country.

One could go on speculating for ages as to how far modern Turkey belongs to Europe and how far to Asia. I think one may summarize it in this way: that Turkey is an Asiatic country governed by people with a European outlook. It is, in short, an increasingly successful blend of East and West—and it is an enchanting and absorbing country to visit.

Colonel ORLEBAR: Are there any signs of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey?

Lord KINROSS: It is difficult to judge. I imagine in parts of Kurdistan beyond Lake Van there is a fairly strong spirit of independence; otherwise I would say that gradually the Kurds are being absorbed into the Turkish nation. In the frontier areas, where they are in contact with the Iraqi and Persian Kurds on the other side of the frontier, there is a stronger form of nationalism.

The CHAIRMAN: You have, Lord Kinross, said a good deal in regard to Army maintenance. When I was in the Mediterranean just after the last war the question of the Turkish Air Force came up and with it the problem of maintenance, on which an air force so greatly depends. I wonder whether there has been much progress in that regard so far as the Turkish Air Force is concerned?

Lord KINROSS: The Turkish Air Force is not large, but it is efficient as far as it goes. Their civil aviation has been run extremely efficiently with a very low accident rate. True, the planes are now getting a little out of date and there is a certain amount of alarm, but they are being replaced. Turkey certainly has a very good record in civil aviation and I believe that applies to the military side also, which shows that the Turks are mastering the problem of maintenance in that field.

Mr. LANGE: I should also like to put a Service question. It is evident from the interesting remarks we have heard from the lecturer that Turkey looks forward to support from the United States of America in regard to the Army and, I believe, also the Air Force? I wonder whether that also holds good with respect to the Turkish Navy?

Great Britain had an important Naval Mission, just before World War I, at Constantinople, the Mission being headed by Admiral Limpus. A second Naval Mission was sent to Turkey between the two wars—I believe in the 1930's—and of course it is well remembered that we had a distinguished naval officer at Ankara during the last World War in the person of the late Chairman of the Royal Central Asian Society, Admiral Sir Howard Kelly. Might I, therefore, in view of the continued interest by Great Britain in the Turkish Navy, ask whether this is still maintained and whether Turkey looks to Britain for advice on service along British naval principles and naval traditions?

Lord KINROSS: I would say that the contact is maintained. We have a Naval Mission in Turkey with our Naval Attachés and so on, who preserve a very close contact with the Turkish Navy. There certainly is close co-operation in that respect. Whether from the strategic point of view it

is accepted that the Turkish Navy can do a very great deal with regard to the defence of the country, I would not be able to say. That is a complicated strategic question. Turkey, being a member of N.A.T.O., is undoubtedly entitled to military and naval assistance from the other Atlantic powers, and the Turkish Navy would be regarded within that framework as part of the general N.A.T.O. naval organization. Quite a lot has been done in the way of improvement to the ports. A new purely naval harbour is being created in Iskenderon, and all such work is being done as a result of the closest possible co-operation between the Turks, the British and the Americans.

Group-Captain H. St. C. SMALLWOOD: I do not know whether I am taking Lord Kinross rather outside his terms of reference, but I would be grateful if he could add a word or two as to the relations obtaining today between Turkey and Iraq. Iraq is most important to us in England. Are there pleasant relations between the two countries?

Lord KINROSS: When talking about Turkish foreign policy generally, one has in mind that the Turks have followed two stages. Their primary concern was to come to an agreement with the West and to become incorporated into the Western system. Until that was done they were not particularly interested in building up relations with Arab countries. Now the Turks are turning very much more towards Arab countries, and I believe they see in Iraq the most likely and the most profitable ally for Turkey, because undoubtedly during the last few months there has been greatly increased co-operation between the Turks and the Iraqis. The Iraqi Prime Minister has recently visited Turkey, and there is great hope on the part of the Turks that they will persuade the Iraqis to come into the Turko-Pakistan pact and so strengthen their international defence position—their frontiers on the Eastern side as well as on the Western side. It seems that they hope that if this happens, then ultimately it may be possible to bring the other Arab countries into some such agreement. But it is Iraq the Turks are now concentrating on, as far as their Eastern defence is concerned.

Judge AMEER ALI: There is one rider I would like to add, with all respect to Lord Kinross. He referred to Turkey as being an Asiatic power in Europe. We must not underestimate the effect that Europe has had upon the Turks, because the old Ottoman Empire inherited from the Byzantine Empire a great many European institutions. The backbone of the Turkish higher ranks in administration, or a great part of it, was recruited from European Moslems in the past and until quite recently in the shape of Balkan, Albanian and even Greek Moslems. Only recently a former Yugoslav diplomat, a Croatian, spoke to me of "our Grand Vizier," and when I asked who he was he replied, "Muhammad Sokolli." That was in the time of Suleiman the Magnificent. So that there was a strong European influence brought to bear upon the Osmaili Turks from very early days. One has to bear that in mind.

Lord KINROSS: I possibly understressed that aspect. There is no doubt that there has been a strong international European tradition always among the Turks. Really the Ottoman Empire was a remarkable functioning international organization which derived a great deal from Europe, and

incorporated quite strong European elements which had a great deal of influence on the development of the country. We are simply seeing a continuation, in some sense, of a process which was already operating.

Colonel ROUTH: To what extent have the Turkish business men made up for the deficiency in commerce caused by the expulsion of the Greeks in 1922?

Lord KINROSS: I would say they have not yet altogether made it up; they are, however, making great efforts to do so and I think they may eventually succeed. There is no doubt that the Turks have learned a great deal about commerce and so on. For instance, in Smyrna there are big firms run by Turks which formerly were run by Greeks.

A QUESTIONER: The lecturer spoke of the education of the boys and the training of male teachers. What about the women? Surely it is more important for the mothers in the homes to be educated?

Lord KINROSS: The education of women is exactly on the same terms as the education of men. The whole of education in Turkey is for both sexes and there is a good deal of emphasis on the education of women. I do not wish to create the impression that the education is purely education of the male. The female element is regarded as exceedingly important and their education is taken very seriously.

A QUESTIONER: Are there now any survivors of the Armenians in Turkey?

Lord KINROSS: There are practically none in the countryside in Turkey, but a certain number in Istanbul; there may also be some in Smyrna. In these big cities there are a number of Armenians and some in quite powerful positions. Istanbul has a rich but small community of Armenians. At Konia I was shown round by an Armenian who said he was the last there and that he would not be remaining there very much longer.

Mr. ALI ASQHAR: Would the lecturer like to add a word or two in regard to freedom of the Press in Turkey?

Lord KINROSS: On the whole, there is freedom of the Press in Turkey to a very considerable degree; in fact, I would say that there is complete freedom of the Press in Turkey. Recently the issue has been slightly confused by the whole question of the law of libel and so on. There have been certain prosecutions, about which I do not know much because they have happened since I left Turkey. I believe the prosecutions of editors and so on who have received fairly substantial sentences have been prosecutions under what in Great Britain would be the normal civil law of libel. They are less political than civil prosecutions. It is a question as to what one may or may not say about an individual. It seems that certain sections of the Press in Turkey have overstepped the limits in that direction, probably owing to the law not being properly defined. It is only within recent months that there has arisen this question of the freedom of the Turkish Press being, to some extent, called into question. That is probably part of the answer—ill-defined law. As I have said, the Turkish Press is essentially a free Press.

A QUESTIONER: What about the Halkevis? Are they flourishing or were they set back owing to the Democrats?

Lord KINROSS: There was a rumpus going on in that regard; there is a feeling that the Democrats want to make them into state concerns as opposed to party concerns. I do not know what has happened. Of course, being party concerns there were not nearly so flourishing under the Democrats as previously under the People's Party.

Major NEISH: The lecturer spoke of fruit being carried to the Central Plateau from the Black Sea coast. Could he say if anything has been done in regard to fish, because those waters contain some of the finest fish in the world? The methods of catching them were, however, elementary in the extreme. I wonder if there are now improved methods of fishing and whether it is possible to get fish into the interior?

Lord KINROSS: Probably not. It is extraordinary how little fish one gets in Turkey; even in places such as Trebizond, on the Black Sea, one does not get much fish. I believe the fishing used to be in the hands of the Greeks. That is one respect in which there has been a failure: the Turks have not been able to fill the gap there. In the Bosphorus and round Istanbul the situation is different. There is a flourishing fishing industry. Certainly so far as the fishing industry is concerned there is room for development and improvement, but I do not think it would be possible at the moment to get fresh fish up on to the plateau from the Black Sea.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks.



