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Opening speech by the
General Director
Dr. Sadrettin Alpan

on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Turkish Republic and the 38th Anniversary of the MTA Institute when Commemorative Awards were presented to the employees who worked in the Institute for 25-30-35 consecutive years.



«My esteemed colleagues and dear guests,

This year the 50th Anniversary of our Republic coincides with the 38th Anniversary of the foundation of our Institute. So you are welcome to this meeting arranged to celebrate this happy event.

Since the proclamation of our republic a variety of progressive advancement activities, along with a number of innovations, followed one another, the subject of the country's mineral wealth holding an important place among them.

Mineral Research and Exploration Institute was founded on June 22, 1935, under the Law No. 2804, to shoulder the responsibility of scientifically conducting mineral surveys and studies and making appraisals of Turkey's natural resources which covered all kinds of mineral and industrial raw materials, using modern methods and systematic investigation methods. The Institute, in addition, was entrusted with the task of training sufficient number of technical men and workers to see through this commission.

In the beginning the M.T.A. Institute was but a comparatively small government outfit that comprised a Petroleum Drillings and Technical operations Group Directorate, and a Geological Studies and Prospections Directorate, which in turn included such subdivisions as Geology, Mineralogy, Paleontology, Topography, Coal and Geophysics sections and services together with Analysis and Test Laboratories. There was an administrative body as well.

In 1935, the year of its foundation, the Institute's personnel numbered only 38 men and women, of this 14 being technical and 24 administrative. That same year the budget was a mere

T. 642.591. Purchase of drilling machines did not start till 1938 when five «Bravo» drilling rigs came into the Institute's possession.

In the 38 years of its existence this outfit has grown manifold, so that at present it can undertake all kinds of geological, geophysical and geochemical studies, together with drilling, tunneling, shaft sinking plus a variety of lab tests.

Number of personnel went up to 2991 (1005 technical, 516 administrative and 1470 workers) while the budget reached TL 387.000.000. The Institute now owns 87 drilling rigs, 347 vehicles of various descriptions, 3 planes for airborne surveys, 4 bulldozers and 14 tank-trucks.

Existing facilities permit in a year's time carrying out analyses of some 60.000 samples, along with studies and tests conducted in ore beneficiation, ceramics, metallurgy and fuel technologies, on a nationwide scale.

While in 1938 only electro-magnetic and magnetometric studies were possible the Institute now has the necessary means to use all kinds of geophysical methods in search of mineral deposits.

We have complete repair shop facilities and skilled men to maintain and overhaul all kinds of motorcars (body and motor), as well as drilling machinery.

We run a sizeable printing shop of our own, equipped with modern devices, including Monotype type-setting and casting machines and an automatic cutter.

With its 65,000 volumes, the M.T.A. Library is the richest of its kind in the Middle East, while the Compilation Service has 4741 scientific reports properly filed away. Other auxiliary services handle photography, drafting, cartography, etc. to a high degree of perfection.

Within the Institute there is also a newly founded but fast expanding Natural History Museum.

The Institute, in order to keep in step with the speedy development that is taking place in the country, has changed a great deal. The present organization includes 12 technical and 5 administrative divisions in addition to a number of other services and an advisory body.

Since its foundation the M.T.A. Institute has been somewhat a forerunner to and lay the ground for many an industrial development or project of prime importance for Turkey. It has helped the setting up of the Raman Petroleum Refinery by first discovering the oil, the Karabük Iron and Steel works by investigating Divriği iron ore potential, the Konya-Seydişehir Aluminium and Konya-Magnesite-Fire Clay plants by finding the raw material for them in adequate quality and sufficient quantity.

In the period of time stretching from 1938 to 1972 total amount of money spent on various items by this organization added up to TL 1.394.500.000.

In return a 1:800.000 scale Geological Map of Turkey was prepared in 1946, a 1:100.000 scale Geological Map of Turkey in 444 map-sections was printed in 1954 and a 1:500.000 scale Geological Map of Turkey in 18 map-sections in 1961-65. From 1965 to date 1:250.000 scale geological maps prepared numbered 700 map-sheets, detailed geological studies coupled with geophysics and geochemistry were carried on for oil, coal, minerals and industrial raw materials in promising areas. A total of 526.543 m of well was drilled for coal, 534.091 m for minerals and oil, while the runnels and galleries pushed summed up to 33.041 m, shaft sinking aggregated 5563 m, in addition to 53.565 m³ of earth moved in trenching and other excavations, within this period of time. Many million tons of aluminium, antimony, copper, lead, zinc, mercury, iron, manganese, chrome, tungsten ore reserves were brought to light, along with those of lignite, petroleum, magnesite, marble, baryte, perlite, phosphates, sulphur, boron salts, etc. estimated to be worth several billions of Turkish liras.

Analyses of several hundred thousands of samples coming in from a variety of sources were completed, with technological tests carried through on a number of them.

The following is a brief summary of the past 38 years' activities:

1. It was shown that Turkey has a good store of underground wealth.
2. An "army of specialists" were trained in sciences and technologies related to mineral subjects and mining, men capable of taking important assignments both at home and abroad, men devotedly at work in every far corner of this land, aiming to find out what is down deep in the earth.
3. By finding and exposing the mineral and industrial raw material reserves of the country, the Institute has laid the groundwork for subsequent industrial development so vitally important for the economic progress.
4. A variety of geological maps were prepared and printed before and better than in many other countries. Presently a 1:50.000 scale map is in the process of going under press.
5. Tests and assays on several types of ores, formerly sent away, are now easily taken up in our labs as we have the necessary men and equipment to do the job. Our Technology and Test Laboratories have constantly been reconditioned and modernized, while new ones are now being added.
6. For the realization of a speedier discovery of our mineral deposits, the Institute is brought up to a state where it can, whenever needed, apply special geophysical methods, the like of which may only be seen in some of the most advanced countries. We now can use our own planes and the latest geophysical methods and equipment to look for such mineral deposits as iron, copper, lead, zinc and uranium. The work will soon continue, using helicopters as well.

Having earnestly tackled the problem of power and fuel, hard work carried out by the Institute resulted in the first discoveries in Turkey of oil, natural steam and uranium. The Institute likewise discovered important lignite deposits and thus, by finding the raw material needed for the purpose, it has laid the foundation and lead the way to the future building of both geothermal power plants and atomic reactors.

Also to the credit of M.T.A. is the successful completion of lengthy tests conducted to make briquettes out of lignites, giving birth to a brand new smokeless fuel and a new weapon with which to fight air pollution.

8. Increased number of drilling rigs will afford further information on the subsurface.
9. Studies having been completed on the newly found phosphate deposits, erection of super-phosphate plants will follow as planned, meeting a major need in agriculture.
10. First of its kind in this country, a Natural History Museum is opened within the M.T.A. premises, primarily to bring our youth to love nature. There on exhibit is a tiny Turkish flag, which was taken to the Moon and back in Apollo 17.

Shortly to be added to this museum presenting the history and formation of our Earth, is a "training center" erected by the M.T.A. Institute, in venerated memory of the great Atatürk, founder of our Republic, which in turn will house a small planetarium to help know more about the boundless space around us.

All these unprecedented accomplishments were the result of a pertinacious and untiring work freely extended by the Institute personnel who (as in a single family) cooperated hand in hand for the last 38 years, displaying true patriotism and perfect collaboration. Work done and results obtained have been nation-wide importance and the M.T.A. Institute now enjoys a truly deserved international recognition.

Yet there still remains more to do. Ours is indeed a potentially rich country. To find the hidden treasures of the underground and bring them up on the earth we still need more qualified men, more drilling rigs, as well as more geophysical survey and lab equipment.

I urge the M.T.A. men and women never to look back but always ahead and work even harder than before to keep the old fire burning. For this Institute is indeed the foundation stone in the holy task of advancement of our country.

I have a warm memory for and take this opportunity respectfully to remember those who served this institution, and therefore this country, in the past but have since passed away and are no longer- with us.

I want to thank those who previously served in this Institute but have left for any reasons (retirement or other).

I also want to congratulate with my thanks and best wishes those among us who stayed put and perseverantly served the Institute for 30 years, without interruption and those among us who have just completed their 25 year uninterrupted service.

And, of course, I want to thank, here and now, the entire body of present M.T.A. personnel for their devotion to the cause and their continuing efforts and in particular those who made the necessary arrangements to help celebrate today the 38th foundation anniversary of our Institute.

Calling to all my M.T.A. colleagues and dear friends, I say, wherever you are I wish you success in your work and, together with your families, health, happiness, prosperity, in short the best of everything.

Your are all welcome to these festivities. I wish you all a good time. Thank you.

General Director
Dr. Sadrettin ALPAN