

NATIONALISM AND PEACE

The Significance of Atatürk's Movement

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Atatürk is known throughout the world as a victorious commander and leader who fought both against the invading Greek forces and the Entente Powers and as an able statesman who initiated unprecedented reforms with the aim of transforming an underdeveloped, illiterate, and rural population into a developed, modern, and civilized people. However, Atatürk's thoughts and actions on peace, international understanding, and prerequisites for the ultimate success of anti-imperialist movements in general are not widely known, at least outside of Turkey. The principal aim of this short essay is to try to elucidate these aspects of Atatürk's thinking. It might then become possible to say that even today, more than sixty years after the Turkish struggle, Atatürk's example of national liberation and construction is unsurpassed.

Atatürk organized and brought to a successful conclusion the Turkish war of national liberation (1919-1923) at a time when European dominance and control of the Asian and African peoples continued unabated. The superior European guns were loded and directed against the weak, partly conscious, spontaneous, and unorganized outcries of resistance of the colonial or semi-colonial peoples. Despite these conditions, the Turkish people under Kemal Atatürk's leadership succeeded. *Roderic Davison* illustrates this point with utmost clarity :

Turkey alone of the nations defeated in 1918 was able to reverse the decision within a few years and to negotiate as an equal with the Allied Powers for a new peace treaty. She

was not, like Czechoslovakia, a beneficiary of the Allied victory, nor was she, like Germany or Russia, inherently a great power which could be expected to grow in strength. (Davison, 1972; 172)

If Turkey was not a beneficiary of the Allied victory and not inherently a great power, how then did she become the only country at the end of World War I to shake off foreign controls? The Turks had behind them a thousand years of independent existence which guided them through their difficult strife, and Atatürk, as an able diplomat, utilized every possible advantage presented by the divergence of policy among the Entente Powers. But an equally important explanation lies in Atatürk's broad and sound vision concerning the nature and significance of the Turkish struggle, something with which the European countries had to reckon. It was a struggle directed against European supremacy but not outside the framework of the European system, and it did not run counter to contemporary European values.

Since the achievement of Turkish independence and especially following World War II, all shades of wars of liberation have spread with astonishing frequency throughout Asia and Africa. But, even if evaluated from the wide perspectives and within the accumulated historical knowledge of the present, the Turkish example of national liberation and construction still is significant. *Davison* goes on to say that "the Turkish struggle to establish a favorable international position was unique also among Muslim peoples in successfully shaking off foreign controls." (Davison, 1972; 172) As a matter of fact, Turkey was not only the first country to successfully resist, through arms, European control; but also created a favorable international position and utilized it to become a powerful, stable, and modern state, ever since representing peace and stability in the region.

These aspects of the Turkish struggle also appear to be significant if evaluated against the internal political fragility of most newly independent states with their semi-feudal and totalitarian regimes governing disparate popu-

lations within the confines of boundaries all too often arbitrarily established by the 19th century European colonial powers. As a direct outcome of this internal fragility, these states were unable to establish favorable international positions but, rather, created regional and international problems, many of which still remain unsolved. These regional and international frictions in turn, leave such regmes vulnerable to subversion and to overthrow both by indigenous forces and foreign intervention.

E. H. Carr observes that "our sense of direction and our interpretation of the past are subject to constant modifications and evolution as we proceed." (*Carr*, 1961; 122) Such modifications and evolution reveal the significance of the Turkish national movement and the principal factors responsible for the success of its leader both against Europe and among the Afro-Asian peoples.

Nationalism

The modern 19th century European nationalism which bestowed upon the peoples of the continent their independent nationhood was, according to Atatürk, the only type of nationalism which should be adopted as an ideal by all the Afro-Asian peoples :

If a nation does not become concerned about its existence and its rights with its entire strength, with all its spiritual and material powers, if a nation does not rely on its own strength to secure its existence and independence, then it cannot be rescued from becoming this person's or that person's puppet. Our national life, our history, and our system of administration in the last epoch are a perfect demonstration of this. Therefore, within our organization the principle has been adopted that the national forces are supreme and that the national will is paramount. Today, the nations of the whole world recognize only one sovereignty: national sovereignty.*

Born in the relatively liberal atmosphere of Salonica in 1881 and in his youth deeply influenced by the positivist philosophers of the 19th century, Atatürk clearly realized

* Rustow's translation from Atatürk's *Nutuk*, (Rustow, 1970; 222)

that the ultimate success of any struggle carried out in places outside the confines of the European continent and directed against the supremacy of the European powers must rest on nationalist claims. He also realized that nationalism, which would ultimately secure for the peoples of Asia and Africa their independent existence, must be inspired by the successful experiences of the European countries in the 19th century. Thus, he did not build his nationalism on religion or on strict application of race. Atatürk's nationalism was based, like that of Europe, on common citizenship within national borders and on national consensus. This was the general framework within which he exercised nationalism. But his understanding of Turkish nationalism in particular was also based on several other factors which combined together, gives us clues for explaining his success and the significance of his movement.

* Rustow's translation from Atatürk's *Nutuk*, (Rustow, 1970; 222)

According to Atatürk, *the nationalist struggle for independence had to be based on the support of the entire Turkish nation*. This distinguished his struggle from others against European dominance in the second half of the 19th century such as the Boxer insurgency in China and Arabi Pasha's nationalist rebellion in Egypt, both of which were supported only by a small minority of the population and which were ultimately defeated. His struggle may also be distinguished from those anti-European resistance movements of the 20th century which were carried out by the military alone without the active participation of the people as a whole and which, although appearing successful at the beginning, eventually resulted in their nations becoming, in the words of Atatürk, "the puppets of other nations." All through his struggle, Atatürk meticulously tried to draw a clear dividing line between the military and the civilian population and considered the former as the servant of the will which emanates from the unity of the entire nation. Speaking before the convention of the first congress in Erzurum in 1919, he stated :

National will controls the destiny of the state and the nation. The armed forces are in the service of this national will. The military should not participate in Congress. Furthermore, they

should not be in contact with Congress because in such a case it would be thought that Congress does not represent the national will. (Kansu, 1966; 76)

Atatürk also believed that *the struggle for independent existence should be carried out openly* and thus with the *active participation* of the great majority of the people :

Our only aim is to establish a totally independent Turkish state based on national sovereignty... We, without delay, have to precipitate and organize our national struggle on the active support of the great majority of the nation. The nation must struggle, fight, and be victorious by total spiritual and material mobilization. Such a gigantic mission cannot be carried out clandestinely. National mission can only be fulfilled with the nation. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary to rise, come forward, and work as citizens... Demonstrations can never realize great objectives. A struggle which depends on joint strength emanating from the bosom of the nation is the only salvation. (Kansu, 1966; 32 33, 143)

As to the active participation of the people, he stated :

I had to make the entire Turkish population, as much as the army at the front, willingly interested in this war as if it were its daily work. All individuals, not only those confronting the enemy but also those in their villages, homes, and fields, had to consider themselves responsible for the war. (Atatürk, 1938; 83)

With such a basic understanding, Atatürk never worked in secret organizations away from the people, nor was he content to have unorganized attacks on the occupying forces by regional irregular units. Instead, he organized the war of national liberation by convening national congresses in which delegates from all over Anatolia participated. His purpose in doing so was to make the struggle known throughout the entire world as well as in the country and to organize it with the support of the nation. Atatürk was confident from the start that with regular national units fighting the enemy and with the whole nation united behind these forces and actively participating in the war, Turkish national and independent existence would ultimately be accepted and respected by the Entente Powers :

There is no doubt that so long as the national organizations endure and have strength in the nation's united heart, so long

will our national existence be recognized and respected by the civilized world. (Simsir, I, 1973; 459)

Unless a nation effectively proves its existence, it will be in no position to expect respect from other nations. Only those nations having this quality can claim the requirements of humanity, justice and friendship. (Atatürk, 1960; 148)

Atatürk was convinced that the ultimate aim of the national struggle, if it were to succeed, should be *the creation of a homogenous and totally independent nation-state*. Atatürk never entertained the illusory ideas of maintaining the multi-national character of the Ottoman Empire along fundamentalist Islamic lines (Pan-Islamism) nor of forming a vast Turkish state including all the Turks living in far away Asia (Pan-Turanism). He stated :

History does not give us any proof of the success of such policies as Pan-Islamism or Pan-Turanism... We consider national policy as the only feasible one. For our nation's happiness, stability, and strength, the state must follow a strict national policy, which, in turn, should be in conformity with our internal organization.

He went on to define national policy as :

working for the happiness and prosperity of the nation by maintaining national identity based on self-reliance within national frontiers; not overexhausting the people, and inflicting damage on them by following all sorts of unrealistic policies, and thus expecting civilized, humanitarian treatment and mutual friendship from the civilized world. (Aksin, I, 1964; 52)

It becomes evident then that his was a struggle to create a Turkish nation-state in the European style within national and defensible frontiers. These frontiers were first drawn during the national congresses of 1919 and then incorporated into the "National Pact" proclaimed by the Istanbul parliament in 1920. The frontiers of the National Pact, as pinpointed by *Dunkward Rostow*, were of a three-fold nature. Firstly, they formed a military line which the Ottomans had defended even in their defeat. It was secondly a legal line recognized by the Armistice of Mudros. It was thirdly a political line because "the nationalist movement under Kemal's leadership, measuring ends and means, had

based its political program on that line, had staked its honor on that claim, and had redeemed that claim with the bayonet." (Rostow, 1970, 226)

It thus becomes clear that Atatürk's aim of creating a Turkish nation-state was realistic, farsighted, and prudent. In the political and military fields he never exceeded the limits of absolute necessity and did not consider the salvation of the country only in military terms. He was not content with defeating the invading enemy, but also wanted to transform the Turkish people into a united and civilized nation of the contemporary world, so that the new state would not again fall under the dominance of foreign powers. One way of securing this was by putting a special emphasis on *national education*.

Atatürk observed that over 300 million Moslems in the world, the great majority under the slavery of other nations, were educated only along religious lines and that such education did not bestow upon them a consciousness for breaking the chains of slavery. According to Atatürk, the lack of national and secular education was responsible for this miserable situation. He went on to define national education as that which, once adopted and pursued, would radically change a country's language, administration and spiritual and material resources into national resources. He deemed it necessary to refrain carefully from infusing into the developing and maturing minds of the youth aged, paralyzing, and absurd ideas and beliefs rather than the products of contemporary science. Only after such a national education was pursued could the great mass of Moslem peoples succeed in attaining their national and independent existences and sustain these in the long-run against imminent threats of internal decay and subsequent foreign domination.

Organization, Legitimacy and Legality

Atatürk was not a simple insurgent. He was not only a victorious commander but also a man of organization who respected, throughout his career, legitimacy and lega-

lity. His aptitude for and deep attachment to organization is amply demonstrated by the many congresses he convened prior to the opening of the National Assembly in Ankara, all with the purpose of administering national forces within the confines of a supreme organization. Commenting on the quality which separated Atatürk from other leaders of the time (and even, one might say, from most of the public figures of Asia and Africa today), Rostow observed :

What distinguished Kemal most clearly from other public figures of the period was his most uncharismatic trait: He envisaged a larger and more intensive effort at organization... These details suggest distinction among charismatic founders of new states in the twentieth century-between leaders like Sukarno and Nkrumah who had little organization to back them up and felt constrained by what little they had, and others like Atatürk and Nehru, who inherited or were able to construct a far-flung political network. (Rustow, 1970; 212)

Following the occupation of Izmir by Greek forces in May 1919, Atatürk came to Anatolia to organize the War of Independence in complete violation of the armistice terms of Mudros concluded between the Ottoman Empire and the Entente Powers. He immediately contacted the scattered regional resistance movements, the patriotic army commanders, and local officials. He considered his most important mission to organize them under a single command. This was totally necessary for transforming Anatolia into a new center of power to be directed against the invading enemy, the Sultan who collaborated with the enemy, and the Sultan's government. In this mission his greatest difficulties were the internal revolts instigated and directed by the Sultan's government and regional resistance movements which defied the authority of Ankara. Under the prevailing circumstances, Atatürk placed more importance on maintaining law and order in Anatolia than fighting the invading enemy. He stated :

It would be a futile endeavour to fight the enemy before suppressing the internal revolts. It is possible to fight the enemy once internal unity and order is established. The enemy, at worst, could occupy certain regions of the country. The establishment of internal order would make it easier for

us to throw out the enemy from the occupied regions. In short, the suppression of internal revolt is more important than holding the Greek aggression. (Kansu, 1966; 593)

Atatürk put what he called a clear dividing line between the external and internal fronts. The real front, solid and unbreakable in the long-run, was the one formed by the unity of the people. The external front was only a line formed by the armed forces confronting the enemy. It was military in nature. Atatürk stated that the destruction of the latter did not necessarily entail the destruction of the nation or the country and, therefore it was not vitally important. The destruction, however, of the internal front was of vital importance. That would enslave the people and shatter the foundations of the country. Having this in mind and with the realization that the enemy was desperately trying to weaken the internal front, Atatürk's first mission was to strengthen the cohesion of the country by way of a powerful organization. (*Borak*, 1977; 338-9)

Throughout his struggle, Atatürk respected all forms of legality. He did not openly defy the authority of Istanbul before the National Assembly convened in Ankara in April 1920. At the Sivas Congress in September 1920, he said :

We are not an organization which has the intention of changing the laws, administration, and the political system of the country. Our only aim is to save the country and the nation. We want an independent country. The National Assembly is the only institution which can change the laws, the system of government, and establish a new order. We, that is the Sivas Congress, are not a representative assembly. (Kansu, I, 1966; 235).

Only after the occupation of Istanbul by the Allied Powers (March 1920), which rendered impossible the proper functioning of parliament and the government, did he challenge Istanbul and convene the Turkish Grand National Assembly in Ankara. The Assembly then became the only legitimate authority in the country. Following all forms of legality, step by step, the National Assembly prepared a new constitution which laid down the general framework in which the new administration functioned. Atatürk stated:

Once again we have to announce vigorously to the entire world that we are a civilized society whose only desire is to live in conformity with international law and organizations... Therefore, we have to fill the vacuum left by the annulment of the previous constitution. (Atatürk, 1968; 22)

Only after the establishment of law and order in Anatolia, after the consolidation of a central authority, and after observing all forms of legality, did Atatürk intensify his war effort, having an unshakeable conviction that these were the prerequisites for victory in the battlefields and for securing a respectful place within the civilized community of nations. Atatürk had the following to say on this subject :

We have a very important national duty: we must be in a position to prove that with our accomplishments we would be an effective society within civilized nations by securing a healthy order in our internal affairs. In order to reach this aim we have to place more importance on social than on political endeavors. (Atatürk, 1968; 21)

Only with this background of such careful efforts to establish a powerful and cohesive organization for unity of purpose and respect for legality and legitimacy can we understand and evaluate their righteousness and self-confidence of the following despatch sent by Atatürk in 1920 to the Allied Powers who were determined to dismember Turkey :

We protest with all our energy against the illegal proceedings of the Entente Powers to date, and we hope that they will of their own accord return to more humane and equitable sentiments towards our country and our nation, which will resolutely continue to defend its existence and its lawful rights with all the material and moral forces at its command, rather than consent to dismemberment and slavery.

We wish to advise the Powers of the Entente that our whole nation, in the widest sense of the word, is united in this legitimate and sublime decision, (that) a continuation of this inhuman policy which the Entente Powers, deaf to the legitimate voice of our nation, are following may entail fatal consequences, not only for a few countries but also, possibly, for the two hemispheres.

The responsibility before Providence and humanity of such a disaster lies naturally with the Entente Powers. We are here

acting as interpreters of the desire for unity cherished by our nation, whose only object is the defense of its right to exist. We wish our legitimate cries to reach the nations of Europe and America, and we are convinced that they will not give their sanction to all this injustice. (Simsir, I, 1973; 224-5)

Legitimate means should be utilized for rightful ends. By utilizing legitimate means, maintaining law and order within the country, and organizing a unified national movement, Atatürk believed that the Turkish nation, with full knowledge of its right to independent existence, would ultimately succeed.

There certainly is a right, and right is above force, except that the world must be persuaded that the nation knows its rights and is prepared to defend and retain them. (Rustow, 1970; 214)

Peace and International Understanding

War should be inevitable and vital. But, unless the life of the nation is concerned, war is a crime.

Atatürk started the national struggle on three main principles: total independence, equality, and the establishment of national frontiers. In order to fulfill these principles, an armed struggle against the invading Greek forces and those European countries which supported the Greek adventure was inevitable. But, even during the war, his ultimate purpose was the establishment of peace and stability in the region and the creation of a favorable international position for the future Turkish state. He thus kept the door open to negotiations for a peaceful solution. He said:

We follow a foreign policy which would secure our national interests and enable us to live independently and freely. Our national assembly and its government is highly reluctant to use force and is cautious of adventurism. It prefers peace and welfare and with extraordinary vigour is an adamant pursuer of civilized and humanitarian principles. Within the framework of these principles it desires and attempts to establish good relations and conclude fruitful agreements both with the Eastern and Western worlds... As to the Western world, negotiations have been started with some of the Entente Powers and proposals put forward which not only secure our

high national interests but also contribute to world peace as a whole. (Atatürk, 1968; 74)

Atatürk was not a sentimentalist. he was a statesman who knew how to follow a policy which he thought would be in the overall interests of the country. He did this by evaluating very carefully the realities and contingencies of the international situation. For this reason, despite the painful and deplorable events of the past, he always desired to find ways of *rapprochement* with the European powers. Until the occupation of Istanbul, he refrained from showing open hostility towards the British, and with the purpose of gaining the confidence of the West, he handed the visiting American General Harbord a note stating that the aim of the national movement was nothing more than to secure Turkey's national frontiers and sovereign rights. But the British did not show the expected goodwill.

Both during and after the War of Independence, Atatürk did not hesitate to give concessions on points which did not fall within the confines of "absolute necessity," a concept which he constantly used as a point of departure for his actions. The mission was overwhelmingly great; it was a matter of "to be or not to be" for the Turkish nation. When the Mudania cease-fire negotiations started in 1922, certain extremists in both Europe and Turkey wanted to continue with the military campaign to the end, ridiculing diplomacy and negotiations. But it was evident to Atatürk, who was eager to start the more difficult mission of national reconstruction, that military campaigns had to stop somewhere. It was with such an understanding that the Mudania cease-fire agreement was reached and hostilities came to an end. Atatürk's closest associate, Ismet İnönü, observed that nearly all the territories that could have been won by military action were regained later by diplomacy without further loss of life and material. (*Akşin*, II, 1964; 3)

At the Lausanne Conference, convened in 1922 for the conclusion of a peace treaty, the Western world realized that the Turkish delegation was not a handful of insurgents talking only with their guns, but representatives of a nation

which did not demand more than what it was fighting for and of a leader who had a realistic ideal and program. Turkey was regarded shortly afterwards as a country which had no objective other than living peacefully with its neighbors. Ismet İnönü, commenting on why they made certain territorial concessions such as Mousul, Sanjak of Alexandretta, and some of the Aegean islands, said :

Our only consolation over the loss of certain territories is that with the Lausanne Treaty we have gained a long-standing peace. (Aksin, II, 1964; 3)

Such was the attachment of the national government to the cause of international peace.

After the formation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, Atatürk, who was inextricably attached to the principle "peace at home and peace abroad," followed an entirely peaceful foreign policy. The persistent pursuit of such a policy established for the young Republic a favorable international position, a rare event following wars of independence. *George Lenczowski* has this evaluation of Turkish foreign policy of the time :

The new Turkey, however, was only a medium-sized country with a population of sixteen million bordering on giant Russia with her two hundred million people and exposed to the influence of the naval powers which dominated the Mediterranean. Thus, no matter how perfect Turkey's political and military machine was her strength had obvious limitations. Perhaps the greatest merit of Kemal and his followers was their sober realization of these limitations and their moderate, realistic foreign policy, which corresponded to the strength of their country. There was nothing romantic or adventurous in Kemal's foreign policy. (Lenczowski, 1980; 121)

Atatürk formed close relations with Turkey's southern and eastern neighbors, attached great importance to good-neighborly policy with the Soviet Union, based Turkey's relations with Greece on eternal friendship, thinking that her historic "megalo idea" was at least buried under the Anatolian soil (Aksin, II, 1964; 45), and strengthened already existing bonds with the Balkan countries. He even maintained well-organized relations with Italy, a country which threatened Turkey from the west, normalized affairs

with England by facilitating a settlement on Mousul, and succeeded in creating an atmosphere of cordiality with France, despite the fact that, as a mandatory power in Syria, it had some occasional disputes with Turkey.

Atatürk kept Turkey outside the League of Nations for some time; membership was contrary to his policy of not entering into alliances. But when Hitler came to power and when the threatening effects of the Axis were felt in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, he did not hesitate to have Turkey become a member of the league. Turkey was one of the first countries which pledged to adhere to the Briand-Kellogg Treaty on the renunciation of war. Speaking on this subject in 1928, Atatürk stated :

What is easier than understanding and explaining a developing country's desire to establish order and harmony, in a few words, peace at home and in neighboring countries? In conducting our foreign policy inspired by this righteous and realistic desire, we are not neglecting the need that we should be strong enough to defend our country and the freedom of our people against any aggression... The Republican government is making a special effort with the coming into force of international security agreements. We have sincerely announced our desire to participate in the Kellogg Treaty. (Atatürk, 1968; 178)

The origin of all these efforts was Atatürk's motto, "Peace at home and peace abroad." In short, Atatürk's Turkey participated in all the efforts directed to the observance of international peace and stability, and Turkey, as an element of that stability, has earned the respect of all members of the international system.

In an overall evaluation of Atatürk's foreign policy, one important aspect becomes clear: it can be distinguished from those of military regimes which usually precede independence. These totalitarian regimes tend to follow adventurous policies bent on ostentatious and reckless initiatives because, facing overwhelmingly difficult internal socio-economic problems, it becomes necessary to draw people's attention to external successes to alleviate internal pressure.

A closer examination of Atatürk's motto "peace at

home and peace abroad" reveals a firm interdependence between the two parts. His endeavours to establish "peace at home" by initiating necessary socio-economic reforms and by elevating Turkish society to the level of contemporary civilization directly affected his policy of "peace abroad," which was free from adventurism, ideological differences among states, and past feuds and based on the realization of such concepts as "friendship," "peace" and "cooperation." His policy of "peace abroad," in turn, secured a "breathing space" for the new Republic, allowing it to dwell on internal reconstruction and reforms which laid the foundation upon which internal peace and stability was based.

Contemporary Civilization

A very important factor distinguishing Atatürk's movement for national liberation from most others in the 20th century is his concept of "contemporary civilization" and his attempts to elevate Turkey to its level. His well-known reforms such as the abolition of the Caliphate, secularization of all levels of administration, judicial changes, adoption of the Latin alphabet and the European calendar, and a new dress code must be evaluated within this framework. In short, Atatürk believed in the supremacy of contemporary civilization. *George Lenczowski* has the following apt observation on the subject:

Kemal and his new Turkey represented a basically different trend than did the contemporary totalitarian machines. Instead of scorning and rejecting the Western heritage (which the totalitarians did with particular gusto), the new Turkish Republic considered it an ideal worth struggling for... The major objective of Turkish reform was, in a general sense, to separate Turkey from the ancient Asiatic-Arabic sphere of culture and tradition and to transform her into a modern, Westernized nation. (Lenczowski, 1980; 114-6)

Despite the fact that, as a nationalist, he fought against the European powers to shake off their control over Turkey: he, nevertheless, was not opposed to the European system of values. One of his basic views was that the collapse of the Ottoman Empire began when the ties bet-

ween the Empire and Europe were cut. Atatürk was determined never to see the same mistake repeated. Therefore, he considered it his most important mission to ensure that the Turkish nation benefited from the products of contemporary science and that new thoughts, in place of age-old behaviors and traditions, flourished within Turkish society. He stated :

In order to achieve this, the entire technical cadre and scientists should consider it a debt of honor to work in this direction. Our teachers, poets and writers will relate to our nation the reasons for the collapse (of the Ottoman Empire) and feel themselves obliged to introduce Turkey to those (nations) which refuse to recognize her existence on earth as a civilized and contemporary country. (Atatürk, 1938; 87)

Limiting oneself to one's borders and thus living with a marginal interest in the contemporary world and civilization was anathema to Atatürk's thinking :

As an advanced and civilized nation, we will live in the midst of contemporary civilization... Those nations which insist on the maintenance of irrational traditions and beliefs do not progress. (Atatürk, 1938; 87)

It was Atatürk's firm conviction that, even if successful in their struggle for independence, nations which failed to clear the way to advancement and modernization from obstacles and bondages of darkness and reaction could not live in harmony with contemporary age and thought, and thus would fall hostage to other advanced nations. Therefore, his main attack was on traditions and institutions which proved to be strongholds of the ancient order :

As is already known, the existence, ability, freedom and independence of a nation are proportional to its civilized achievements in the past and in the future. Nations lacking the capacity for civilized achievements are in a position to lose, sooner or later, their freedom and independence... Those who stop on the path (to civilization) and those who are ignorant and careless enough to look backward with admiration, instead of forward, will someday drown under the rising flood of civilization... It is not possible to maintain our independent existence by age-old behavior and thoughts at a time when discoveries and extraordinary technical achievements of civilization are continuously changing the face of the earth. (Atatürk, 1963; 138-9)

Atatürk's farsighted vision for achieving and maintaining independence by not rejecting the "Western heritage" is evident when evaluated from the perspectives of today's adverse developments in many parts of the world, developments which beset newly independent countries with insurmountable difficulties.

Atatürk was neither an atheist nor anti-religion. He was, as the above statement clearly shows, against religious fanaticism, which he thought would pull back or delay the country from achievements on the road to contemporary civilization. His interest in and respect for Europe can be explained not by superficial accusations of atheism nor by fanatic admiration resulting in strict imitation of European values by him and his associates, but by the fact that 20th century Europe had become a symbol for what he called contemporary civilization. Actually, he always emphasized that humanity had "only one, universal and indivisible civilization." The real logic which lies at the bottom of his reforms was that they were in conformity with the needs and requirements of the century, not with certain "modernization recipes" imposed or suggested by European countries. He believed that with the implementation of reforms, Turkey would take her rightful place within the family of international civilization.

Atatürk also believed that the success of national struggles for independence ultimately depended on the way they evaluated themselves and their causes :

(Europeans) will realize that the Turks, having the consciousness of a civilized nation and state, are struggling for independence and freedom; that they do not have the intention of attacking anyone; and that rather than being a colonial people, they possess the qualities of a great nation, only struggling for their national existence. (Kansu, I, 1963; 66)

Conclusion

Atatürk's accomplishment consists of a peaceful foreign policy and a stable internal policy-the former securing Turkey a favorable international position, and the latter giving prospects of rapid modernization based on radical

reforms. These have today resulted in two significant and maybe even unique characteristics which distinguish Turkey from other Afro-Asian countries. *Firstly*, Turkey shows continuous efforts towards socio-political and economic development within a parliamentary democratic system. *Secondly*, the Turkish armed forces are perhaps alone among the military of developing countries in their willingness, after taking over the administration of the country for brief periods solely to restore democracy, to return, following the attainment of their objectives, to their principal mission of defending the country. The Turks today fully realize that they owe the significance of their movement and state to the solid foundation laid down by Atatürk sixty years ago.

In addition to the fact that the Turkish War of Independence was the first successful armed resistance against European supremacy, it might safely be stated that its leader's thoughts and actions on nationalism, legitimacy, peace, and contemporary civilization, which he considered as the prerequisites of any successful independence movement, can even today enlighten the difficult road from pre-independence to the realization of a stable, civilized, and strong state.

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