

# A LOOK AT THE NEW AGE

Observations, Critiques, and Suggestions

**Dr. Devlet BAHÇELİ**

5 KASIM 2000  
ANKARA

**A LOOK AT THE NEW AGE**  
**Observations, Critiques, and Suggestions**

**Dr. Devlet Bahçeli**

President of the Nationalist Movement Party  
(MHP) And the Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey

Translated by Dr. Mustafa Özcan

Opening and Closing Speeches  
at the Nationalist Movement Party 6th Congress  
on November 5, 2000  
Ankara, Turkey

## **OPENING SPEECH**



**Mister Chairman and Members of the  
Presiding Board,  
Esteemed Members of the  
Cabinet and Parliament  
Respected Representatives of the Brother  
and Friend Countries,  
Highly Valued Guests,  
Dear Friends in Cause,  
Dear Young Idealists, Assurance of Our  
Future,**

As I begin my words, I would like to slate that I feel happiness and honor for being with and addressing to your distinguished group.

I greet with love and respect all of our esteemed guests, my dear friends in cause, and all of our dear citizens watching us on TV.

I welcome all of you to (he congress of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), which is not just a political party of today, but it is the party of the future.

With your presence, you have honored our congress. Which we hope will provide the Turkish nation and humanity with a fresh breath.

Thanks to Sublime God that has helped us to come together as we enter the first century of

the third millennium. I am also indebted to the Great Turkish [Nation, which has supported and carried us to our current position.

### **Significance of the Congress**

Today, we are all here to share a historical moment together. The Sixth General Congress of our party has meaning and significance beyond that of the regular meetings, which are, according to the laws, gathered once [n every three years. This congress is gathered at a historical turning point, in a time period in which one millennium ends and a new one begins.

Today, the Turkish nationalists are present, because the Turkish nation has a word to be told in this period of intensifying debate and discussion on the future

Ankara, the capital of Turkey, is hosting today the distinguished delegations of the Nationalist Movement Party coming from all over Turkey; it witnesses their meeting with the new century. May this congress be prosperous and auspicious to all of us and to everyone else.

With this occasion, and with the feelings of mercy and indebtedness, I would like to first

mention our ancestors Alparslan<sup>1</sup> and Ertugrul<sup>2</sup> Ghazis and all other great statesmen and leaders of the nation, who have sacrificed their lives in centuries past to make the Anatolia the home of the Turks forever. With the same feelings, I remember Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his friends in cause, who with the same spirit and resolution won the National Struggle<sup>3</sup>, writing an epic of heroism, and founding the Republic of Turkey. I also remember all of our other martyrs and ghazis.

Here also, with the same feelings of mercy and indebtedness, I remember the late leader of our movement, Alparslan Türkeş, who devoted

---

1 Alparslan Ghazi was the Sultan of the Turkish Seljuk Empire, who defeated the army of the Byzantium Empire in 1041 and opened the door of the Anatolia for the Turks. Translator's note.

2 Ertugrul Ghazi was the father of the Osman Ghazi, the founder of the Turkish Ottoman Empire (1299-1918). Translator's note.

3 At the end of the First World War the Ottoman Empire collapsed and the armies of the various European countries occupied Turkey. Over this development, the Turkish nation and army reorganized under the leadership of Atatürk, started the national Struggle, defeated the occupying armies and established the Republic of Turkey as a nation state in 1923. Translator's note.

his life to the ideal of a more powerful and respected Turkey. Similarly, I remember all of our late friends in cause.

Lastly, I wish mercy and grace for the late Ebulfez Elçibey<sup>4</sup>, a valuable politician and thinker, and a lover of the Turkish world, who died this year.

Esteemed Quests,

Respected Members of the Nationalist Movement,

Distinguished Members of Media,

The general congresses of the political parties of a cause are important political platforms where domestic and international problems are analyzed and evaluated. In addition, solutions for the problems, ideas, and goals on the future are stated. There is no doubt that the phase reached by the globalization process, makes this kind of a review and assessment both necessary and meaningful.

---

<sup>4</sup> Ebulfez Elçibey was the popularly elected President of Azerbaijan, a Turkish Republic, which gained its independence after the Soviets collapsed in 1991. Translator's note.



### **Toward a New Globalization Perspective**

We represent a historical generation, which has to deal with and solve all the problems, which are currently being experienced or would be experienced by the Turkish nation and also by the international community. In striving to solve these problems, we have to act within the framework of the basic principles and values of humanity.

Among these principles and values, democracy, human rights, justice, solidarity, responsibility and tolerance are vitally important. Guidance by these principles, not only in the domestic affairs of the countries, but also in the relationship among them is vitally important.

The vigorousness of these principles and values, which are the "common property" of nearly all humanity, will also determine our "common future." Therefore, the problem of today is knotted on the degree of transferability of these principles and values to practice both at national and global levels. Today is not the day to be satisfied with the announcement and advertisement of these values. What is important and required today is the development of proposals for the solutions of the problems. Also, the assurance that this

process would be felt in all parts of the world and in all aspects of life should be provided.

Here, with a broad perspective formed by the chain of these kinds of sensibilities, I want to assess the main issues on the agenda of our country and the world, and share our views and proposals with you and with our dear nation.

As known, the year of 2000 symbolizes humanity's leave the old millennium and its entry into the first century of a new millennium. It is obvious that the dates determining the periods in calendars do not cause cuttings in political movements or in the flow of life. However, they are the symbolic turning points urging us, on one hand, to assess how much progress we have made and on the other hand to focus our attention on the future.

### **A New Culture of Responsibility in the New Century**

Called the age of "extremisms," "discoveries," or "transformations," among others the 20th century has certainly been a long and difficult period in the history of humanity. It is true that the 20<sup>th</sup> century is not identical with the century that it followed, yet it is also true that it is not too different from that

century. The history of humanity is a complex process including both change and continuity within. Social and mental features of human beings, as the common inheritance of humanity, are the significant determinants of the developments of societal and economic life, have reached our time without chaining all that much.

We should not forget that those who use nuclear energy, genetics, and biotechnology either to harm or benefit humanity are humans themselves. This fact will not change in the future as long as technological developments do not replace human motives and abilities. To the extent that they substitute human motives and abilities, it will be difficult to anticipate what kind of a future awaits us.

This is one of the most important points, which should not be overlooked in our debates and thoughts concerning today and the future. A second central point, which is implied by the first and follows it, is the existence and development of a multi-faceted consciousness of responsibility.

Today, we face a new "universal climate" in which almost in every area, competition and cooperation, hope and hopelessness, and chaos

and order are being separated from one another by a very thin line. The ultimate form to be taken by the dynamics of the New Age will certainly determine the fate of humanity.

Therefore, the existence and diffusion of a global understanding and an ethic of global responsibility has become important. There is no need to mention that the ethic of global responsibility has to be based on a trivet of national, regional, and global concerns. It should be remembered that in this kind of a chain of responsibility the location of the advanced industrial societies is it the very beginning the chain.

### **Globalization and Fairness**

Today, besides the spread of new technologies, the values and institutions, such as human rights, democracy, and market economy are being accepted at a global level and their respectability is increasing. The development of the democratic and humane dimensions of political regimes is being gradually more desired and demanded.

All of these developments promise, at least in appearance, a better future for human beings. The current wind of democracy and human rights brings the possibility to the world agenda that the new world order, which

is now experiencing the pain of being reshaped, can be equipped with these same values and sensibilities.

Realization of the circulation of these values in the veins of globalization process is not easily attainable. Still, these demands and expectations are being gradually welcomed in the world, which is a pleasing and important development. A serious progress in this direction will serve the common interests of entire humanity.

This ideal is one of the global level goals and assertions of the Turkish nationalists. The ideal of "equality and cooperation of nations," which was formulated and underscored by great thinker Ziya Gokalp<sup>5</sup> in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century should be taken as a starting point and has to be developed. One of the ways to make the world of the 21st century a better and more beautiful place to live is the enrichment of this understanding.

Dear Friends,

Distinguished Members of Media,

During recent years an increase in the number and power of international civil society

---

5 Ziya Gokalp (1876-1924), a renowned Turkish sociologist, is considered as the father of modern Turkish nationalism Translator's note.

and aid organizations and in the efforts of humanistic solidarity, though they mostly have served to heal the wounds of disasters, are pleasing developments.

### **Political Impasses of Globalization**

Political and social dimensions of this multi-faceted change and development process, which is briefly defined as globalization, are not limited by the issues mentioned above. The issues listed so far mostly reflect positive aspects of the globalization process.

Global political and social processes have some other features, which are also important like the ones mentioned above. The current state of the world simultaneously include the localization, regionalization, and globalization processes. Regardless of what is called, "big game" or "natural evolution," humanity is experiencing this kind of a reality.

For us, social trends for localization and separation create the danger of crumbling and weakening of protection, which opens the door for the exploitation at the global level. On the other hand, regional alliances are based on the concept of further benefiting from the globalization process and of better protection of the global strategic balances.

Advancing global economic relations and

technological developments, and political effects of globalization complete one another. The economic relations and technological developments, particularly, high-level progress in the area of communication, prepare a convenient ground for the development of global structures.

The unbelievable speed reached by the industries producing and transmitting knowledge has reduced to the minimum the time and place differences among the regions of the world. The arguments regarding the disappearance of the borders are stemming from these developments.

As a matter of fact, the regional organizations mean in a sense the addition of new economic, political, and cultural borders to the existing ones. The applications such as "visa" and "quota" which have spread during the recent years are the new arrangements applied in the international relations. In other words, these are the new limitations implemented in this field.

All of these remind us some other realities: In the transmission of knowledge and capital, the limitations and borders are gradually disappearing. However, the transfer of people, specifically labor force, and many productions do not have the same and privilege.

This fact is one of the indicators showing the obstructions in the arteries of globalization, that is, the classic economic logic still keeps its appeal as a valid and general principle.

### **Social and Economic Problems of Globalization**

A significant dimension in the social effects of globalization can be stated as follows: As knowledge and capital have rapidly become two main factors determining the global economic dynamism, the problem of inequality, unfairness, and poverty have also gained a global dimension. The countries with high capacity to produce technology and knowledge have naturally increased their economic advantage and strength as proportional to their sources, and the gap between these countries and the poor ones has grown larger.

It is a fact that globalization accelerates development and increases its benefits. However, another fact as true as the first one, is that together with the benefits, burdens and unfairness are also increasing. For example, in the 1970s the ratio of income difference between wealthy and poor countries was 1/35, in the following two decades this gap increased two times and became 1/70.



The population of the world is more than six billion and today, 1/3 of this, that is, approximately two billion people live under the poverty line. Most of these poor people face the danger of starvation and illness. Fifteen years ago, the number of poor people was around one billion. The unfairness in the distribution of the increased prosperity of the world is clear.

Also, under the heavy conditions of competition of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, firms around the world come together first to survive and then to gain power, so that, the reality of "global firms" has emerged. These firms with their gigantic organizations and resources have taken shape as the "unrivalled emperors" of the New Age.

The issue of how the conduct of these global firms will be compatible with the values of human rights and democracy is an important question, which must be answered. How these new "economic empires," which are richer and more powerful than many countries, will be supervised is not yet clear. Some people in our country and around the world do not even share these concerns. Rather, they have already started an intellectual campaign of destruction toward the national state and culture. There is not behavior.

**Globalization, Democracy, and Nationalism**

In the context of globalization, I conclude that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to conserve and maintain the common accumulations and values of humanity in a world, in which global poverty and conflicts prevail, and technological and economic gaps among countries increase. If the leading countries of the world and international organizations really desire to establish a more fair and humane world order, then seeking solutions to these and similar issues must be given a priority.

Otherwise, the old forms of international relations, such as hostilities and conflict of interests will further increase and continue under an umbrella of new concepts and institutions. Such developments will inevitably lead to global conflicts and polarizations, creating cruel and deadly competition in the world. This kind of a chaotic situation will, willingly or unwillingly, prevent the establishment of a harmonious and balanced international order, which reflects the common expectation of humanity. This is one of the main universal problems in the 2000 s.

Threat to national cultures and languages

stemming from one-sided transmission of cultures and values, which is extraordinarily facilitated by technological resources and economic domination, poses a second problem. In the future, the current universal tension observed between the progress in technological and economic realms, and the pluralism of cultures and civilizations will further increase.

Especially in this context, the strategic significance and value of nationalism and democracy becomes very visible. In the 21st century, democracy and nationalism will be two key concepts of human pluralism and solidarity. Therefore, those who consider nationalism as an idea that completed its mission are acting with ideological prejudice. In the new century, nationalism and democracy will continue to be the source of ideas and sensibilities and their importance will further increase.

### **For a More Humane and Democratic Age**

As it will be remembered, the United Nations Millennium Summit, which was held at the beginning of last September, became a universal platform for the expression of good-intentional views and proposals. However, concrete decisions and solutions supporting the optimistic expectations and messages regarding

the future have not been put forth. For us, the most noticeable success of the summit was the first hand, direct expression of the developments and problems created by the two-faces of globalization to the world public opinion.

Mr. Kofi Annan, the General Secretary of the United Nations, stated in this summit that 21st century would be the "century of human rights." We share this wish wholeheartedly. However, we cannot help but indicate that the 21st century can never be a century of human rights by itself.

For the realization of this goal, there are three avenues to be pursued, which complete one another. The first is directing the globalization process to a more humane and fair route. For this, it is necessary to make healthy analyses of the dimensions of globalization and its current and possible effects. The second is the use of technological resources by considering the benefits of not only their owners, but the common benefits to all humanity. The third is not to limit human rights and policies with individual rights and freedoms. The secondary and third-level rights, such as environmental, developmental, and social rights should also be considered.

Briefly, in the new century, the theory and implementation of the universal human rights and freedoms should not regress behind the point reached and the rights earned in the 20th century. Also, the concepts of human rights and policies should not be exploited in the international conflicts of interests and political maneuvers.

Naturally, all of these are only possible by the development of realistic human rights policies based on the foundations of global responsibility and fairness. As the Turkish nationalists, we want this kind of a new human rights approach to form the backbone of a "global order" that will serve the common interests of all humanity. It is very likely that any effort excluding this kind of an understanding will remain at best as the initiatives of big states and international organizations to "comfort their conscience."

In this globalization process, religions, and religious leaders and scholars can make significant contributions to the development of humanity. Therefore, there is no need for the religious rivalry but for the guidance of religions to lead the efforts to transform global solidarity and tolerance from theory into practice. Humanity has to completely condemn

and renounce racist and separatist activities and the mentality of Crusade.

The result of decisions and efforts of contemporary humanity should not serve to the formation of a new "Middle Age." In other words, the "New Age" should not be a new Middle Age reminiscent of religious wars, ethnic conflicts and injustice.

On this issue, we do not want the future prove that we are right. On the contrary, we want to be wrong on behalf of humanity.

### **Two Proposals for a Humane Future**

In your presence, I present two concrete proposals to complete the views and assessments regarding the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this context, I draw your attention again to the issue of the development and institutionalization of a new consciousness of global responsibility and a new understanding of global morality focusing solely on the common interests of humanity and the future generations.

This is necessary, because the amazing progress made in the science of genetic brings, together with many other things, the possibility of leaving human life in the hollow of new uncertainties. There is a growing need for a supervising institution, such as, "International Science and Technology Supervisor" to serve in

this area. To build and maintain this kind of an organization might be very difficult, but it is worth the try.

Likewise, if we consider the level of development reached in economic activities, we can see that to protect individuals, communities, and all humanity, we need also to take some measures. From this perspective, the realization of the protection of consumer rights is very important. Today, one of the basic duties before humanity is the provision of international assurances and institutions for the protection of the consumer rights.

The ways to make humankind, not a slave to but the master of the globalization process should be discovered through the common efforts and sensibilities of humanity.

Esteemed Friends, Dear Grey-wolfs.<sup>6</sup>

---

6 According to a Turkish epic, Grey-wolf guided the Turkish nation when it was in trouble. A Turkish-English dictionary (V. Moran, 5th ed., 1999) defines it as "the symbol of the Turkish race." In the current Turkish politics, the idealist (ülkiicü) youth supporting the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) is unofficially called Grey-wolfs (Bozkurtlar). Translator's note.

Distinguished Members of Media,

This is more or less a realistic description of the tableau of the world before us. This kind of a view of the world should not be considered as a foggy appearance seen only when it is looked at from a pessimistic perspective. On the contrary, it reflects an assessment made from a democratic and humane perspective. Calling the ongoing globalization process "universal truth," "end of history," or "global chaos" does not cover the realities.

### **Place and Importance of Turkey in the World**

Turkey, as a part of the family of humanity will live in this kind of a world in the new century. This global reality forms the largest circle in which we take our place as a nation and country. The second largest circle encircling us is regional, which is the geopolitics of Eurasia, and which has become a new focus of attention of the international politics and strategies.

The most important feature of the Eurasia surrounding our country is that it forms a strategic and challenging triangle, which includes the Balkans, Caucasians, and Middle East, regions with troubling histories and current problematic structures.



The location of Turkey is at the center of this triangle. In other words, the geography of Anatolia is like the heart of the geopolitics of Eurasia. Therefore, our country relatively has both more friends and more enemies. The geopolitical position and significance of Turkey is not limited by this feature. Turkey is also one of the rare countries in the region with a long and steady state tradition and with a modern political regime.

In terms of geo-economics and geopolitics, Turkey has a very valuable and privileged position, too. It is on the road of marketing of the strategic resources, such as petroleum, water, and natural gas, which will be further needed raw materials of the visible future. Turkey is a bridge between the "East" producing these materials and the "West" consuming them.

Our geo-cultural structure is also as unique as our geo-economic position. Our historical, religious, and humane virtues provide us a unique place in the "map of meaning" of the world. This humane quality is completed by the magnificent location of Turkey where we host the meeting of civilizations, cultures, and religions.

All of these amazingly unique and

matchless qualities are the blessings of Sublime God to our nation. This unique position, potential, and resources of Turkey, on one hand, make heavier the burden and responsibility of the Turkish nation, on the other hand, it provides significant opportunities and privileges, and indicates a great future.

As a nation, our people's determination to survive and develop, historical accumulation, and sensibility on their freedom and honor form our greatest national capital. The greatest sources of our inspiration and strength are the glorious epic of the National Struggle (Milli Mücadele), and the historical Seljuk and Ottoman civilizations built by the Turkish nation in the Anatolia in the last millennium.

Appearance of Turkey from the 20<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Now, let us remember together the beginning of the last century, the years of the 1910s and the 1920s. These are the troubling and challenging years with dark clouds wandering over Turkey. The Turkish nation was under the ruins of a great empire and was expected to disappear from the stage of history, but it is revived and protected its independence.

Immediately after the National Struggle, political and legal reforms began, and the efforts for industrialization followed them. However, the young Republic lived her first several decades under a single party administration.

Multi-party politics began in 1946 after the end of the Second World War driven by the influences of domestic social developments and the new alliances established in the world. The basic political preference of Turkey was formed by the acceptance of the principle of "National Sovereignty" on April 23, 1920<sup>7</sup>, and by the acceptance of "Republic" as the regime of the country on October 29, 1923. This basic preference gained a new meaning as we began to practice the multi-party democracy. Although there are some ups and downs, after this basic preference, Turkey has continued her life within a democratic regime.

The years of the 1960s and the 1970s passed under the shadow of the "Cold War Period," and with the absence of healthy relationships, inherited from the 1950s, between the political

---

<sup>7</sup> The popularly elected Turkish Grand National Assembly met in Ankara and declared the formation of Turkey as an independent state on April 23, 1920. Translator's note.

parties in power and their opposition. In this period, antagonistic plans of foreign forces over our country intensified, the incidents of terror and sabotage, and extreme polarization heavily influenced our political life.

Here, under these heavy conditions, like Turkey, the Nationalist-Idealist Movement<sup>8</sup>, too, passed through a challenging test. In this period, it was seen that the Turkish nationalists, without any concern about their self-interest, can sacrifice their life for the country and nation.

Today, when we look back, it is impossible not to remember the sacrifice and pain experienced in this period. Our greatest wish from Sublime God is the protection of our nation and country from recurrences of these kinds of pains and sacrifices.

We are aware that the sad events of the past are also very valuable experiences for us. As the current representatives of a historical and suffering cause, which is entrusted to us, our moral obligation is to protect this trust in the best way and pass it on to the future generations.

---

<sup>8</sup> In Turkish politics, the Nationalist-Idealist Movement (Milliyetçi-Ülkücü Hareket) is the general name of a larger constituency favoring or supporting the Nationalist Movement Party. Translator's note.

The Turkish nationalists are aware of their national duty and responsibilities and have the political wisdom and consciousness to carry the trust to the future without wasting it within daily politics.

Dear Members of the Nationalist Movement, Distinguished Members of Media,

We can consider the 1980s as a turning point in which both in Turkey and in the world important social and political developments took place and technological developments accelerated.

In the 1970s, on one hand, a political change was occurring toward democracy in South America and Southern Europe, and on the other hand, the world economic system was striving to recover from the shock of the oil crisis. I am mentioning this points to indicate their relations with the today's technological developments.

### **Meaning and Significance of the 1990s**

One of the reasons behind the accelerating technological developments in the 1990s is the ability of the technologies to renew themselves. Possibly, the most important of these reasons is the investment of more resources in technology and inventions based on the lessons learned from the experienced oil crisis. After these

years, the industrialized countries began to encourage innovations through assigning more resources.

In our country, too, in the 1980s, since domestic and international conditions were appropriate, a visible revival was observed in economic developments. However, in the 1990s, since a balance could not be established between rivalry and consensus, and unfruitful political disputes increased, the process of development slowed.

In the 1990s, one of the important reasons retarding the development of Turkey was her inevitable struggle with the separatist terrorist organization,<sup>9</sup> which gradually improved its power and attacks during this period. Since this organization received logistic support from some neighboring countries and also from some Western European countries, the struggle with it became difficult and long lived.

---

9 The separatist terrorist organization that Dr. Devlet Bahçeli refers to is the Kurdish Worker's Party, which is widely known with its acronym, the PKK. Translator's note.

It is a well known fact that the separatist and destructive terrorist activities retarded our socioeconomic developments. At the same time the separatist terrorism reduced our choices and limited our Initiative capacity in the area of foreign policy. In other words, the political and economic bill with which the terrorism burdened our country in this period is much higher and heavier than estimated.

In the beginning of the 1990s, with the collapse of communism and the end of the "Cold War Period," the emerging reformed geopolitical balances reduced the power and ability of Turkey to take action. Most importantly, because of her own challenges, Turkey could not show sufficient care and make necessary contributions to the Turkish Republics in Asia, which gained their independence after the collapse of communism in this period.

Today, our relationship with the Turkish Republics is not, unfortunately, at the desired level. In the years ahead, our relationship with these Republics has to be reestablished and developed with care and patience, like embroidering.

During the last 10 years, a painful and fluctuating line has dominated in the area of

both domestic and foreign politics. In the 1990s, specifically after the election of 1995, the domestic-political disputes and troubles reached their highest limits.

In this period, political crisis and vulgarity was felt not only in the cabinet related instabilities, but also in all aspects of our political life. Unfruitful political disputes, inconsistent political attitudes, and vulgarity in style enslaved our democratic life.

Briefly, if the conjuncture of the world is considered, for our country, the 1990s became a period of stagnation and faltering. At the beginning of the 1990s, the political authorities of that period could not realize necessary arrangements in politics and economy, and postponed many required decisions or made poor ones.

Naturally, it would be unrealistic to expect our young and developing democracy to mature in this kind of an atmosphere. In this period, despite the frequent mention of democratization, any serious step was not taken to facilitate the development of democracy. This fact is one of the main contradictions with which Turkey has to deal.



### **MHP<sup>10</sup> and Elections in the 1990s**

To correctly perceive the meaning and significance of these developments is not so difficult. However, for this, first one's intention and mentality should be changed and be receptive. This kind of mental transformation is necessary to make the process of political development both healthy and faster. In order to understand this necessity, an orderly analysis of the periods before and after the April 18, 1999 election should be made.

It seems that those who keep negatively referring to the Nationalist Movement Party are far away from this kind of a sensibility and determination. The crooked mental structure of these people is seen in their statements on any serious issue when carefully reviewed.

Members of the chorus speaking continuously against the Nationalist Movement Party often mention that they would open a new blank page. In doing so, they in fact confess their wrong-doing. Despite these confessions and promises, they live with their traditional habits and keep attacking us. Unfortunately, so far, they could not get rid of their mental turbidity

---

10 The MHP is the Turkish acronym of the Nationalist Movement Party. Translator's note.

and vulgar style in seeing our party as their only political rival and in dealing with it.

Regardless of whatever they say or do, the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) is the remedy of this negative political atmosphere. The MHP is determined not to leave its known line for the sake of those who need lessons in politics, but at the same time the MHP is patient enough to give them lessons through keeping its own right, fair, and ethical line.

Dear Friends,

Distinguished Members of Media,

The strategy pursued by the Nationalist Movement Party both before and after the election of April 18, 1999, has been based on two main sources. The first source consists of a realistic assessment of the distant and near periods of the Turkish politics, in this source, the issues which are taken into consideration are the chronic illnesses of our democracy and the issues about which the Turkish nation complains most.

The second source includes the answer for the question of "What will be the future of the world, and in such a world, what is the place and significance of Turkey?" The answer to such a question is vitally important in a time period in which technological and economic

developments have gained amazing speed, and global interactions intensified.

It has gradually become a necessity for every political party and politician with a cause to search for the answer to this or other similar questions, and to develop plans regarding the future. The assessments and suggestions, which I stated at the beginning of this speech, include some answers that we gave to this question.

While contemplating on the issues in such a context, naturally we face with the issues of national goals and priorities, and the issues, which should be taken care of in the short, middle, and long term, in ranking national priorities, a new political understanding and style, a stable economic growth, and a healthy democratization process take their place at the top of the list. This list also includes a decisive and constant struggle with corruption and poverty, which is a ruthless illness of our social life.

### **MHP's Approaches and 57th Government**

As known, when our party became a partner of the coalition government, political and economic uncertainty and hopelessness had reached its highest level. While we decided to be a partner of the government, we did not

make this choice for a short-term appeal of being in power, but for the future of the nation and country. In that period, Turkey had a temporary budget and the economy was almost collapsing. The country was under the pressure of debt and interests, and even estimating the economic developments of the next a few days was almost impossible. This economic tableau was one of the bitter realities of Turkey.

The political tableau was also as complicated and troubled as the economic tableau. In a little more than one year, the country has evolved from a period in which there was no stability, at all, to a period in which the level of stability achieved is being discussed and criticized. This is an important development. In essence, it means that we have overcome the critical threshold created by the chronic political instability. However, we should remember that the value of stability is better appreciated not when it is present but when it is absent. Therefore, we should not mix up criticism with slandering, and positive developments with negative ones.

When the decision of our party to participate in the 57th Government, which adopted the principle of consensus and reformism, is evaluated within this framework,

it would be more meaningful and realistic, it cannot be denied that the presence and efforts of the Nationalist Movement Party in the 57th Government has a very important share in the establishment of the current political and economic stability.

Not only our party but also two other political parties in the government have plans and polices, which they cannot completely realize in a coalition government. When the structure of a three party coalition government, and the current economic conditions of the country are considered, it would be better understood that everything we desire cannot be accomplished.

In your presence, I sincerely state that in this period while we are in power, besides many projects implemented, there are some others, which we could not realize. Also, there are some other projects that as a political party and as a partner of a coalition government, which we will materialize them in middle and long terms. All of these are kind of natural events and developments occur in all democratic regimes experiencing the conditions similar to those of the world and Turkey. For today, what is important is that we have already solved some of the significant problems

of the country, and are striving to solve the rest of them.

**Urgency and Importance of the Economic Program**

As known, among these priorities, the nuisance of high inflation has a special place with its a quarter century history. Naturally, making this main and critical problem a nuisance is not only its long history. It simultaneously causes multifaceted and significant damages in social, cultural, and economic life. In the country, during the last 20 years, big gaps have taken place between the purchasing power of the masses and the ratios of increase in the prices.

Particularly, unemployment and inflation have led to frightening increases in the inequality of income distribution and unfairness. In so far as inflation cannot be taken under control at a given level, its negative social and economic effects cannot be eliminated.

When the 57<sup>th</sup> Government was established, there was a challenging tableau before it, but there was not more than one realistic way to overcome it. The first thing to do was to rescue Turkey from her challenged fiscal position, which was dependent on the temporary

budgets. Administration of the economy and the country with a budget, which was not approved by the Turkish Grand National Assembly was the source of many other problems.

After the budget problem was solved, some other urgent measures were taken. Although, there are different ideas on the methods adopted for the solutions of the problems, a large consensus has been provided on the program to restructure the economy and struggle with the inflation.

It should not be forgotten that despite the persistence of some problems, a realistic three-year economic packet of solutions began to be implemented. For such an economic reform, there has been an inconvenient ground created by an abnormal increase in the world oil prices, and by the two earthquake disasters causing extraordinarily high expenditures. Negative impacts of these conditions should not be overlooked in assessing the performance of the government.

The program designed to restructure the economy and struggle with the inflation has two main goals and dimensions. The first dimension is mostly psychological and sociological; the second is mostly economic.

First of all, the defeat of the psychology of weariness and submission prevailing among the people for the struggle with the inflation was necessary. For the success of the reform, society must trust the government and its economic program. Also, as part of this effort, the work has been done to renew the belief of the industrialists and other economic actors in themselves and in the country.

The second main goal of our program has been to break our economic vicious circle, launch a stable growth process, and take relevant technical measures. The work has been done to break the spiral of debt and interests enslaving the economy through finding healthy financial resources. Our fundamental purpose is the transformation of economic structure and mentality, and open the road for the economy of investment and production.

### **Expectations of the Turkish People and the MHP**

As it can be seen, in all of these areas, the progress made in the affairs of the country and the work done by the government is not sufficient, but important. If you look at back the point that we assumed the responsibility, you can see the considerable progress we have made. We have reached our determined targets



of growth in many areas, and the inflation began to decline for the first time in years.

Despite the progress in many areas, the problems of the low-income citizens have not yet been solved. Our next goal is to eliminate the large gaps in the skewed distribution of income and ease the unrest in society.

We hope that as years pass the political and economic stability will be constantly reinforced, and social peace and welfare for which we have been longing will be permanent. We strive for these goals and believe they will be realized, because we believe and trust in Turkey and the Turkish people.

Evidence of our government's action is its decisive struggle against societal corruption and injustice. This struggle will have to be deepened and continued until the eradication of the microbe of corruption, which penetrates the Turkish economy like cancerous cells. The Nationalist Movement Party and I personally will support the struggle as much as we can to rid Turkey of terrorism, corruption and injustice. Esteemed Guests, Dear Friends in Cause,

Up to this point of my speech, I have made a general assessment of the world and Turkey. In this part of the speech, in addition to

drawing your attention to some important developments, I wanted to reach a general conclusion and leave a record to history in the presence of you. Now, I will underscore "a set of general goals and principles" oriented toward the future. I consider this as a national duty and responsibility.

### **Basic Priorities and Policies of Turkey in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

1. Turkish politicians and intellectuals have to have a perspective in viewing the world and should develop alternative ideas and policies. The main framework of our designs should be formed by the answers to be given to the questions of "What kind of a world?" and "What kind of a Turkey?" If we consider the quality of effort that hundred years ago the Ottoman intellectuals and politicians and sixty five years ago the first generation of the Republic had made, it is not possible to see the debates of our time as sufficient. Instead of a mere imitation, searching for original projects and proposals is a responsibility given to us by our nation's history and experience of civilization. A challenging future awaits our nation together with entire humanity. We have both the right and responsibility to discuss and

make determinations about our global future. Humanity must make a "Just and Moral Contract with the New Century," and the signature of the Turkish nation must be on this contract. Hence forth, this is one of the new goals of the Turkish nationalism.

2. It is a fact that we could not provide sufficient progress in the relationship with the Turkish world during the last 10 years after they gained independence. The improvement and institutionalization of this relationship should be considered as a national and strategic issue in which each side should meet its own responsibility. Approaching this issue with the eyes of a foreigner or with prejudgments will not benefit anyone, but may provide a deceptive satisfaction.

3. The obsession of interrogating or fighting our history and culture, which becomes fashionable from time to time among our intellectuals, should be given up as soon as possible. Instead of doing this, our main choice should be working to understand and learn lessons from our history, which, as a resource, is one of the guarantors of our national existence and memory. Having the Ottoman Empire fight the Republic of Turkey, the

Republican regime fight democracy, and the state fight the nation, or describing them as fighting sides with one another has not benefited any body so far, and it will not benefit any body in the future, either. A similar assessment is also valid for the negative or indifferent attitudes toward our national culture and values. The love of Turkey and respect for national values is not a burden but a necessity for every ideology and political party.

4. Finding reasonable and possible ways of cooperatively developing our democracy and human rights policies and implementing them are both necessary and important. Also, we have to possess a perspective considering the "unity of the nation and the country" and "democracy" not as conflicting concepts, but as the ideals developing together. Likewise, there is a need to show our decisiveness and sincerity, to eliminate any hesitation on the belief that democratic state governed by the rule of law is the minimum condition to provide a united, happy, and peaceful life for all Turkish citizens.

5. Inconsistent and vulgar rhetoric and conduct of daily politics should be avoided; they are the main reasons behind the loss of respect for the institution of

politics. It should not be forgotten that a principal function of politicians is to enrich the quality of politics and improve the respect for it, not to narrow the field and function of politics. This kind of a standing and decisiveness regarding the field and conduct of politics should be at the top of the common responsibilities of politicians both in power and opposition. Republic and democracy are the insurance of one another; however, clean, quality, and principled politics is the insurance for both of them.

**6.** The existence and future of Turkey is directly proportional with the existence and future of the Turkish language. Our language, the Turkish, beyond being a symbol and an instrument of communication, is one of the basic values making us a nation. It has been formed by the thoughts and historical experiences of our ancestors for hundreds of generations. The protection and improvement of the Turkish language as a cultural bridge binding our past to our future is a duty, which should not be ignored by any generation. This national duty has a vital place among the common duties of the nation and state.

**7.** For the unity and peace of the country,

there is a need for the existence of a harmonious triangle to be formed by political and economic stabilities completed by social stability. We believe that this "golden triangle" will not be established until the political and economic stabilities are completed by the social stability. Therefore, without reducing the poverty and unemployment to the minimal levels, our struggle of economic development cannot be considered successful. Also, for the comfort of social conscience, a decisive struggle with corruption and injustice is necessary. For these reasons, a national campaign should be started to fight poverty, unemployment, and corruption, and "urgent action plans" should be developed and implemented.

**8.** To prevent Turkey from lagging behind in global competition, which is already reached an amazing speed, the areas of investment and technological branches with strategic priorities must be wisely determined. Although, our industrial policy and strategies have a 75 year history, today, Turkey is not the leader in any of the branches of industry and technology. In fact, there are many countries, which began much later than Turkey, but today their technology level has reached of world standards. Together with the priorities in the

branches and investment, we have to take seriously the importance of education and youth. To have a quality education system, all sources should be utilized, and in order to raise learned and skilled generations with character, every kind of sacrifice must be taken.

Esteemed Guests,

Dear Friends,

Distinguished Members of Media,

I have presented our views and proposals regarding the present and future of the country for your consideration and the consideration of our nation. To increase the number of these observations and suggestions, which are grouped under eight categories is possible. However, for us, more than their number, the meaning of this effort is important. To improve the ability of the institution of politics to produce values and solutions, these kinds of contributions should be made.

### **The Content of Turkey-Europe Relationship**

In this part of my speech, in light of the views and suggestions that I just presented to you, I will talk about some central and critical issues occupying the agenda of Turkey for a long time.

Within this framework, the first issue I will address is the Turkey-Europe relationship. As it will be accepted, the entry of Turkey to the European Union has more significant and deeper meaning than the entry of any of European countries to the Union. This observation is valid for both Europe and Turkey.

I underscore this point for two reasons. First of all, it should be accepted that the membership of Turkey in the European Union would be a turning point for both our country and Europe. It is closely related to the future of our nation, which is the heir of a rooted civilization and history. At the same time, it indicates a historical meeting between two cultures and civilizations. Therefore, considering Turkey's membership in the European Union as a relationship based on only mutual self-interest would be a mistake.

The second contradiction and mistake is the acceptance of the legitimacy of the critiques of Turkey's approach to and preparation for the membership by the member-countries of the European Union, but not to give the same legitimate right to our country to discuss and criticize their approach to our membership



process. Within the Union, there have been fierce discussions on the policy of the Union for the acceptance of new members and for the enlargement of the Union. A large part of the recent discussions is taking place on the restructuring of the Union and on the membership of Turkey

For this and similar other reasons, the dynamics and future of our relationship with the European Union should not be reduced to a simple pro and con dilemma. Turkey's relationship with the European Union has almost half a century history. However, for various domestic and international dynamics, this historical process could not smoothly progress. After the end of the Cold War period, the relationship was ambiguous for a while, but during the last year we have made considerable progress.

### **MHP's Policy of the European Onion**

The issue of Turkey's full membership to the European Union has gradually become a "state policy" and has taken its place among the national goals and strategies. The Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), until the beginning of the 1990s, was somewhat cool to the issue of membership in the Union. However, after the

1990s, it has developed a decent and multifaceted approach toward the realization of the membership.

Particularly, in the post-Cold War period, which symbolically began with the collapse of the communism, the increase in the importance of the regional cooperation among the countries has led to the consideration of the option of the European Union very carefully. Second, to vitalize economic and technological developments, the creation of the new areas of cooperation has become necessary.

Lastly, the MHP's view of Eurasia to make this critical geographic region an island of peace, stability, and prosperity has become influential in forming our party's new approach to the European Union.

For the Nationalist Movement Party, Turkey's membership to the European Union is a serious and significant issue. Our party believes that if the administration of the Union approaches sincerely and realistically to this issue, the full membership can be realized in a reasonable time period.

In a few days, the European Union will explain "the Accession Partnership Document" which will reflect the perspective of the administration of the Union toward both

Turkey and the world. In this process, it is our most natural right to expect that the European Union will take into consideration our principal sensibilities. Also, the administration of the Union, in its relationship with Turkey should give up its approach to the Aegean and Cyprus questions as one-sided, and should not use and hide behind Greece in these issues.

What is important for us is that the new century should not be a stage of a destructive economic and technological war, but the stage of a "fair competition" in which humane responsibilities should not be overlooked- It is vitally important that the 21<sup>st</sup> century should not host the conflicts of nations, cultures, and religions, instead of international solidarity and peace. The basic and universal mission of the European Union has to be formed within this kind of a framework. The existence of a global level, fair and lasting competition depends on this kind of a formation.

These are the views and suggestions of the Nationalist Movement Party regarding the European Union. Now, it is time to ask those who constantly criticize the views of the MHP on this issue: "Whom do you represent and what do you want to say?" It seem that they are not even aware of whom they repre sent and what they want to say.

It is hard to understand those who are disturbed by the stated global perspective of the MHP, and by its desire for a just and honorable cooperation with the European Union.

The attitudes toward the European Union that we must be disturbed by and be concerned about them are either submissive or indifferent toward the policies of the Union. Approaches to this issue with temporary feelings and desires or with self-interests do not have any humane and national values. These kinds of approaches show not only a lack of understanding of the New Age, but also an underestimation of Turkey and the Turkish nation. It should not be forgotten that adopting a responsible and sensible approach to Turkey's relationship with the European Union is not the duty of the Nationalist Movement Party alone. It must be everybody's issue and responsibility in this country.

### **A Necessary Framework for the Relationship of Religion, Society, and State**

In this part of my speech, I will talk about another significant issue. It is the issue of religion and laicism (secularism), which has been debated for years, and from time to time has topped our political agenda.

In addition to the ongoing theoretical and political debates on this central issue of religion and laicism, there are also debates and discussions on various other issues, which are either related to or stemming from this main issue. All of these debates and discussions of religion and laicism heavily influence our political and social life.

For centuries, both in the Eastern and Western societies, the relationships between religion and society, and religion and state have a painful and troubled history. Religions, which satisfy the spiritual needs of human beings, and are used as a main reference in balancing the relationship between matter and meaning, have significant functions in the life of societies. However, in all places, there have been always some people trying to exploit this great source for their self-interest.

As a result of this long and troubled historical experience, the concept of laicism has been developed as an administrative principle to organize the relationship between individuals, religion, and state. Many countries have adopted this principle in forming their system of administration through considering their historical experiences and social characteristics.

In Turkey, the efforts to implement the principle of laicism began to emerge in the 19th century. Later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Republic of Turkey, which was established in 1923, has adopted laicism as a basic principle of the state.

Today, Turkey is a secular country, however, the general approach of the state to religion or the policies of the state regarding religion, for example, regarding the Organization of Religious Affairs<sup>1</sup> \*, which is a state institution, should not be seen as an effort of the state to direct or supervise the religion. In this context, the main duty of the state is understood as the provision of the appropriate ground to facilitate the citizens to practice their religious beliefs.

Also, there are some other religion-related issues, which have deep historical roots, and have been debated in our society for a long time. Exploitation of these issues, which may create social conflicts, has to be prevented. It is vitally important that the differences in the perception and practice of religion should not

---

11 In Turkey, the Organization of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Teşkilatı) is part of state apparatus. It is responsible for the operation of all religious institutions with the exception of formal religious education. Translator's note.

affect relationships among the citizens, and should not cause any tension and conflict. To this end, both the state and society have duties and responsibilities.

### **Debate on Religion and Laicism in Turkey and the MHP's Views**

We, as the Turkish nationalists, know and believe that a large majority of the Turkish nation is sincerely devoted to its religion, and respects others' religious beliefs. In this sense, there is no any serious problem among our citizens.

Therefore, many of the fierce discussions revolving around religion and laicism, which are inflamed from time to time, do not mean much in the eyes of the nation. Briefly, the source of the discussions and conflicts concerning religion and laicism is neither our religion nor our nation.

In fact, in the foundation of the problem, there are the constant efforts of two groups of people who strive to exploit religion and laicism. The first group works to exploit islam in the name of religion, and the second group works to exploit laicism in the name of

Republican regime and Atatiirk. These groups present their narrow perceptions and

definitions of the issues as universal facts, and form the essence of the problem. They wish to gain power through the exploitation of the delicate and divine values.

Their approaches to religion and laicism are not only wrong but also dangerous. These kinds of efforts are not helping to the clarification and solutions of the issues, but making the problems more complicated than they are.

Op until now, I have tried to describe two categorical and exclusive approaches, which present obstacles to the betterment of the relationship among religion, state, and society. The issue of women's head scarf is another problem which has been in the agenda of the country as an important issue during the last 15-20 years. However, during this period, this issue has remained in the shadow of the discussions revolving around the concepts of religion and laicism.

### **Nature and Solution of the Head Scarf Problem**

As known, the issue of headscarf has been on the agenda of the country for a long time, both before and after the election of April 18, 1999. In the 1990s, the main theme of the Turkish politics has gradually turned toward a



theme and discussion focusing on history, religion, and ethnicity, while divorcing the issues forming the real agenda of the nation and foreign policy.

During these years, the religious values and symbols were brought to the center of discussion on various occasions, and were unjustly used by the politicians for the sake of their political interests. This situation shows that to gain power, politicians prefer easy, undignified ways. This has created new problems and polarizations in Turkish politics. I believe that if we try to understand this issue with this kind of a perspective then the real tableau can be better seen.

Some circles, which argue that they act either in the name of "laicism" or in the name of "religion," have begun to use certain strategies and styles that are not approved by the majority of our nation. Particularly, the clothing and appearance of the university students has been gradually brought to the center of the debate between these circles, and has gained a complex and critical dimension. In this process, because

of the approach of the Higher Education Council (YOK)<sup>12</sup> to the issues, which has spent more time on the issue of students' clothing

than on the quality of higher education, the problem has gained a chronic character.

Also, those who are against the Republic of Turkey have constantly agitated and exploited the tension stemming from the headscarf debate, which has further halted the solution of the problem. There is no doubt that the effects of this tension and polarization have reached until today.

Who benefits from the existence of this kind of a debate and tension? Finding the answer to this question will be very useful in understanding the problem. The fact is that those, who complain of the related restrictions, conflicts, and tensions, are the people inflaming the issue most. Their attitudes and conduct further deteriorate the problem. These facts must be seen and lessons must be taken out of it.

We should not overlook the fact that the freedom of religion and conscience is completely recognized in our Democratic Republic.

---

12 YOK is the acronym of the Yiksek Ogretim Kuru-lu, the governing board of the Turkish higher education system. Translator's note.

When we consider all of the relevant events and conditions together, the picture would be seen better, and the struggle would be easier against those who want to disturb social order and destroy the Republic of Turkey.

As result, the Nationalist Movement Party believes that the woman's headscarf problem that hurts our nation must be fairly resolved without creating further tensions, conflicts, and polarizations. This was our approach to the problem in the past, today we are advocating the same thing, and we will be thinking in the same way tomorrow.

### **Care is Necessary in the Discussion of Religion and Politics**

The Nationalist Movement Party wants our nation and state to be free forever from undeserved tensions and troubles. It emphasizes the importance of approaching delicate issues sensitively, and believes the necessity of reaching the best solution within the shortest time possible, without giving any opportunity to those who want to spoil the relations between the nation and state. Reinforcing social solidarity and peace should be a main duty of every politician and institution.

We know and believe that the Turkish nation has the will and experience to reconcile religious beliefs and the Democratic Republic in a harmonious way. Everyone must carefully avoid from eroding this precious will and determination.

Our party's views and sincere efforts on these issues are open, visible, and well known. Unfortunately, some politicians hunt votes through using an instigating rhetoric and simple polemics. The field of politics is not a fairground where politicians speak and market whatever they think. It is neither the art of shrewdly exploiting pure and sincere feelings of the people, nor the conflict causing them to suffer.

Neither history nor our nation will forgive those who do not take seriously the virtues of consistency, sincerity, and responsibility, but modify their moral criteria almost daily. The best lesson to be taught to them is to remind them of these facts from time to time and to refer them for the ultimate judgment to the nation and history.

Dear Friends in Cause,  
Distinguished Members of Media,  
In your presence, I want to express my

views regarding democracy and democratization, which is the third and final topic of discussion. In this context, my purpose is to draw a framework and present our approach to the issue to the consideration of our nation.

### **Process of Democratization and the Issue of Method**

As I stated many times on various occasions, our nation sincerely adopted democracy, and it is one of her basic political preferences. For the Turkish nation, democracy has become the road with no return. It is possible to make the same assessment for the republican regime.

Although toilsome, Turkey has been learning to solve her problems in this kind of a political ground. Gradually, both our regime will be more democratic, and our people will further adopt democratic values, so that, the development of Turkish democracy will accelerate in the future. Nobody should have any hesitation and concern for the occurrence of this development.

Then, what is the problem? Why in our country, are discussions of democratization getting some reactions? Why is Turkey having

difficulties in furthering her democratization? It is possible to ask similar other questions.

We should deliberately search and think about the answers to these questions, and make realistic determinations on the points of problem, which are fragile areas in the process. Here, we will not discuss these issues in detail. However, I consider sharing with you some of our relevant observations and suggestions as my duty.

First of all, we should not forget how and under what circumstances the Republic of Turkey was established. Second, we should study the events experienced during the establishment and development of democratic regimes in other places, and make comparative analyses when it is appropriate. These two points will save us from making unfruitful efforts to understand the problems.

It must be understood that while a country decides to make a reform, it is not possible to nullify the history and characteristics of the nation and begin everything from the zero. In other words, through excluding or nullifying the history and societal features of a nation, it is not possible to realize a sociopolitical transition. It seems that those who try to reform the regime and democracy in Turkey are not sufficiently aware of this dimension.

### **Determinativeness of Political Culture and Morality**

Another important dimension is the determinative power of political culture and political morality, which are mostly ignored in Turkey. The role and significance of the political culture in the working and development of democracy is more important than it is thought. The characteristics of the relationship between the political parties in power and opposition, the diffusion of political morality, and the penetration of love and respect into the marrow of politics are the essential complementary elements of political culture and structure.

Stated in a different way, such values and principles are like the unwritten constitution of healthy democratic politics. Their worth and role in politics are equal to the significance of air breathed by living beings.

The other element completing the moral atmosphere of the world of politics is the tradition of discussion. Unfortunately, in our country, not only in the area of politics but also in the intellectual sphere, there is not a sophisticated culture of critique and discussion.

Democracy is a regime of rules and institutions. In this sense, parliament,

government, judicial system, and elections form the main institutions. The rules determine how these institutions and the relations among them would be formed. In democracies, everybody is supposed to agree on these rules, at least at the minimum level, and obey them.

Political and social actors assume the duty and responsibility of improving the welfare and happiness of people through efficiently running the institutions within the framework of these rules. The form and quality of these processes is dependent on, before everything else, the nature of the rhetoric and conduct of politicians and political parties.

The ability of a democracy to produce healthy and lasting solutions to the social and political problems confronting them is an indicator of the quality of politics. Therefore, in the essence of democracies lies the ability of correctly handling, questioning, and solving the issues and problems.

Regrettably, in Turkey, there are serious problems regarding the methods and moral principles of investigating, questioning and solving problems. A crooked culture of discussion and critique heavily influences these processes. Particularly, a careless political mentality and conduct, which cannot



distinguish the delicate line between consensus and rivalry has dominated Turkish political life for a long time.

Recently, some hardliners from different political circles have advocated their projects in a militant manner. It is obvious that they lack developed political sensibilities. They act mostly to realize their individual ideological goals or with a motive of hostility towards the state and nation. The friendly attitude of some of these people toward the so-called Armenian genocide is an example of this situation. Either consciously or unconsciously, these and similar initiatives, which are covered with the mask of democracy, are born dead. They do not provide any contribution to democratization.

In Turkey, in order to make the discussions on democracy meaningful, and for the success of the effort of democratization, the aforementioned dimension of the issue should be calmly considered. To attribute significance to this dimension is at the same time to attribute significance to democracy and Turkey. Discussions, critiques, and proposals regarding democracy have to be inevitably fed from this kind of a sensibility.

### **Separatist Policies Contradict with Democracy**

In light of these assessments we say that the love of Turkey, republic, and democracy are not conflicting preferences and values, or alternative to one another. What is meaningful and valuable is to have them live together **in a** perfect harmony forever.

This is the basic political understanding that the Nationalist Movement Party views as its guide and cares about it. The existence of the Turkish nation in the new century depends on the enrichment and protection of these priceless values. Both democracy and republic are for Turkey, today and in future of our nation. Therefore the success of the efforts of democratization is very important.

In other words, democratization is not for any individual, group or social class, but in order to provide all citizens with a more peaceful and honorable life. Likewise, human rights are not for the protection of criminals or to make the state ineffective. They are for a better state governed by the rule of law, for a more democratic constitution, and for a state producing services with higher quality.

Also, the greatest harm done to a country and democracy is to reduce the process of

democratization to the level of the recognition of minority rights, and to identify it with making ethnic and religious differences determinative role players in the public affairs. This kind of a policy not only destroys the social texture and the ground of common social life, but also paralyzes democratic order. Nobody has privilege to act in the name of democracy yet to dig the grave of democracy.

The world over, in all societies, social and cultural differences exist and are natural. The problem is knotted in the definition of these societal features, and in assigning meaning and role to the differences of various levels. The problem emerges out of the reduction of democracy and human rights policies to this point.

Democracies have a value and function far beyond of making politics in which ethnic and religious separations and conflicts are determinative. It is obvious that designing the institution of politics according to ethnic and other differences will not empower democracy. Therefore, in a country, democracy cannot be an instrument of inflaming and deepening differences in society, and justifying destructive and separatist activities.

For the Nationalist Movement Party, acceptance of the initiatives, which sooner or later will destroy the democratic order or lead to separatism and division in the country is impossible.

### **Common Ground for Unity is Vital in Democracies**

Both the cause of existence and the basic duty of democracy is to encourage and provide all members of the Turkish nation, regardless of their racial and ethnic origin, religious sect, and profession, to live together in brotherhood. The duty and cause of existence of the parliaments and governments is to correct the institutional and legal arrangements creating obstacles and difficulties for the implementation of democratic processes. Constant effort made to institutionalize social and cultural differences and points of conflicts by those who do not accept the importance of a culture of unity and solidarity does not serve democracy but other ideals. The destruction of our "public spirit and sphere" formed by the common values and desire of our nation will benefit neither democracy nor the country. These are the universal norms for every democratic regime around the world.

We should not forget that democratization projects can be meaningful and permanent if they are designed with this sensibility and built on ground formed at least by minimum commonalities. Construction of stronger and more developed democratic and legal structures on these sound foundations is among our primary duties.

### **Change in Political Mentality and Institutions is a Necessity**

Today in Turkey, there are many legal regulations and institutions, including first the constitution of the country, which have to be changed and improved. Particularly the constitution must be transformed into a "social consensus and democracy document," which our nation deserves and which takes into consideration the commonly accepted norms of the New Age.

Also, in every institution being responsible to society, firstly, in the institution of politics and in public organizations, the essential characteristic has to be honesty and

transparency. The ethic of responsibility should be infused into every institution from politics to economy and media.

Likewise, increasing, strengthening, and institutionalizing the participation and control of the people in every ground has become both a humane and democratic necessity.

The current system of public service, which torments and tortures its own citizens, and the logic forming it must be absolutely changed. Although the number and volume of public buildings and personnel have constantly grown, the quality of services has not improved by degree.

In the process of re-structuring, first, crooked mentalities must be changed. During the recent years, it has become a bad habit in Turkey that those who hold high-level positions of responsibility and authority in the state apparatuses have frequently complained and criticized our own values. In fact, they hardly have right to complain. Without confusing the complaint and warning, they have the responsibility to conduct their duties in the best ways.

The awareness of duty and responsibility of those who run our institutions is as important as the existence of the perfect institutions and rules. In a negative social environment in which everybody complains about everything, nothing can be done and improved. Nobody

has right to create this kind of a social and political atmosphere.

Until the institutions and rules are changed, to work to the best of one's ability is a necessity under current conditions and with current resources. This attitude is a requirement of the responsibility given to us by the nation.

### **Joint Fate of Turkey and Turkish Nationalism**

As seen, our country has to simultaneously struggle with many huge and important problems. We are a nation living in the most precious and challenging geography, and we have to be live in the same land in the future, too. We do not have the possibility of changing either our history or our geography. Yet together we should and can build a better future. As Turkish nationalists, we have existed for this purpose and we are going to exist for the same purpose.

At the beginning of the New Age, Turkey must act with a new enthusiasm and spirit of reform. For the transformation of the Eurasia into a region of peace and stability, and for enabling globalization to gain a humane dimension, Turkey has to revive and should show her ownership of these ideals.

In order to realize these ideals, we have to complete our development and democratization processes, and re-interpret our great state tradition and experience according to the conditions of the new century. Turkey's magnificent location, international status, and moral accumulation do not allow her to turn her face either to the East or the West. Turkey has to turn to and embrace both the East and the West.

We know and believe that as the Turkish intellectuals and politicians we can empower our democracy and republic if we can develop politics with historical consciousness, and at peace with our own culture and civilization. This kind of a healthy politics will re-vitalize the dynamics to again bring prosperity and stability to this land. This country has the potential to realize this goal. To the extent that the nation and state perceive these facts, a better future will be a closer future.

Nationalist Movement Will Be always  
Existent with Its Name and Ideal

There are some people who wonder whether the mission of nationalism is completed and whether the Nationalist Movement has changed its ideals. On this issue, I remind them that social and political



movements with a legitimate cause and strong historical roots maintain their existence and distinctiveness. While they evolve and develop, they do not become a different movement. For emerging needs and developments, they search new responses and solutions. This situation is both an indicator of their vitality and a production of their anticipation.

The Nationalist Movement is the name of a great political and intellectual movement, which will enable the Turkish nation to forever survive and prosper through making her basic values and historical accumulations the dynamo of new reforms. This name and assertion is going to live as far as the world is existent.

The Turkish nationalists, as the owner of these assertions and goals will always maintain their determination and pioneering role. Slandering campaigns and views of prejudgment will not be enough to cover this naked fact. Those who spend almost all of their work hours to slander our party neither understand us nor can succeed in their job. Whatever they do inside or outside of the parliament to slander us, the Nationalist Movement will not leave the right road in which it believes. As they continually criticize

the Nationalist Movement Party, the Nationalist Movement will continue dealing with the problems of Turkey and the world.

We make politics not for the "sake of politics" but to serve our nation and country. Like some others, we do not have the luxury of forgetting the basic principles, politeness, and tolerance. None of the Turkish nationalists, the men of cause and heart, can live day-to-day, behave irresponsibly, and be wasteful.

As Exalted Sheikh Edebali<sup>13</sup> said to Osman Gazi<sup>14</sup>, the men of true faith and cause cannot be like those who are "born morning and die evening."

It should be known that the Nationalist Movement Party will not let the small political games, from whatever sources they stem, to put its legs in fetters. Any Turkish nationalist, any lover of Turkey will not connive at this. On the contrary, through further growing and uniting every day, our walk will continue toward the creation of Turkey as a leader country.

---

13 Sheikh Edebali was the father in law and the sheikh, spiritual guide, of Osman Gazi who was the founder of the Ottoman Empire. Translator's note.

14 Osman Gazi founded the Ottoman Empire in 1299, which lasted more than 600 years and collapsed at the end of the First World War. Translator's note.

The Nationalist Movement Party acts with a vast consciousness of responsibility and with a great love of the nation that some people cannot even perceive. So far, it has made every decision, which its understanding entails, and for which timing is appropriate. It will be the same in the future and it will not avoid in doing whatever is necessary.

### **Call for the Turkish Nation**

Now, in your presence, I want to address to my dear nation.

### **The Great Turkish Nation**

This beloved fatherland belongs to all of us; it is the cause of our existence. Therefore it is our everything. The Nationalist Movement Party is a sincere representative and defender of this kind of an understanding.

The Nationalist Movement Party is the political party of the entire Turkish nation and the entire Turkey. It is not only the party of today, but the party of the future.

With these feelings and thoughts, I most sincerely greet all of our guests and friends in cause.

I present my love and respect to all men of heart and cause, and to all of our citizens who

could not come here today but their hearts beat with us.

May Exalted God help and protect the Turkish nation. May you all live long and be well. Thank you very much.

**THANK YOU  
AND  
CLOSING SPEECH**

**Distinguished Members of Media,**

**Dear Friends,**

**Brave Grey-wolfs,**

Here today, The Nationalist Movement Party, with the help our Exalted God, with the participation and contribution of the friends, brave lovers of Turkey, completed its great congress, which has been a meaningful meeting.

On this occasion, I thank all of you for your contribution to and interest in our congress; firstly to the foreign guests, and to the members of media, to the valued delegation, to the friends in cause, who are the faithful idealists coming in groups to the congress from all over Turkey. I greet all of you one more time with love and respect.

As seen, this congress has become a historical meeting in many aspects in which significant decisions regarding our nation and country were made, and the Turkish nationalists have prepared themselves for a great future.

Our meeting in this congress is important not only for the calendar-timing that it is gathered by chance at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but also because it overlaps with a time in which humanity is experiencing a change of age, and entering a New Age.

This congress has provided us with an opportunity to review and assess developments occurring in the world, the new century into which we are stepping, and most importantly the present situation and future of Turkey. Proposals and assessments presented in the congress both evaluate the current situation, and form the ground for the future ideas and projects.

### **Dear Friends in Cause,**

Entering a new age is not only a change in time. The change of age means a thorough change in the nature of events and developments, which characterize a time period. A new wave of development, which is described as the post-industrial age or information age has already begun to show its effects all over the world.

In Turkey, intellectuals, particularly those who are in politics, have to deeply analyze and assess the new century and age that we are entering. As the Turkish nationalists we are aware of our responsibility to understand the New Age more than anybody else. We know that those who do not understand the new developments and dynamics cannot realize the necessary reforms and transitions.

In the near history, there is no other nation experiencing and paying for the heavy cost of not comprehending the change of age. In the 18th century, Turkey could not comprehend the importance of new developments in a timely manner, and has paid its cost as a two century long underdevelopment.

Today, we are under the obligation of comprehending the dynamics of New Age and bringing them to Turkey. Therefore, the historical and national duty before us is to clear all remains of the underdevelopment and to achieve a thorough transition.

Here today, we are making an agreement with the new century. We assert and announce that the Turkish nation will make contributions to the New Age. This agreement, before everything else, means a new sphere in which the rising economic, technologic, and political waves of new century meet with the historical accumulations and assertions of Turkey.

At the same time, this agreement requires a reform in the sphere of Turkish politics according to societal needs and demands, and the democratization of the relationship between the society and politics, media, and economy. The purpose of the agreement is to prepare Turkey for global rivalry through realizing necessary economic growth and performance.



In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as Turkey progresses with this agreement, which enriches the freedoms of thought, faith, politics, and social and economic rights, the Turkish people will liberate themselves from all ties preventing their creativity, and will develop faster and further.

### **Valued Friends in Cause Esteemed Members of Media,**

The agreement that we have made with the new century briefly states the ideal and struggle of the Turkish nationalists to transform Turkey into the leader country of the new century.

Turkey cannot afford to be a country, which cannot produce with the technology of the New Age, cannot utilize the resources of the New Age, and cannot direct the flowing of events in the New Age.

We must take Turkey far beyond from her current situation in which basic rights and freedoms are not sufficient, and terrorists incidents are experienced, and there are poverty and corruption, which are the indicators of an undeveloped economy.

The goal of our nationalism is to provide the Turkish nation with a modern life including

both the national values, which have been molded through our long history, and the accumulated and latest discoveries of modernity; it considers the national and universal sources and values together for the creation of the modern Turkish society.

The Turkish nationalists who adopted such an approach have started a great walk to realize every item of the agreement that they have made with the new century.

This congress is the congress making the decision of this blessed walk. This is the congress starting a new, historical, and humane walk.

After the congress when we return to our places and organizations, the duty for all of us is to work with great enthusiasm within the framework of approaches put forth in this congress.

As devoted idealists, to comprehend and bring the dynamics of the New Age to Turkey is your duty. Realization of this goal can be possible if our organizations all over the country and our representatives in the parliament work to improve the involvement and contribution of the nation to the politics, and prepare themselves for the future challenges.

I know and believe that the Turkish nationalists are the men of cause and heart, who live and work with the love of Turkey and for the sake of God. There is nothing to prevent the great men of cause to realize their ideals. We should not forget that belief and determination in success is at least the half of achievement.

### **Esteemed Friends in Cause, Distinguished Members of Media,**

This great congress of the Nationalist Movement Party is openly giving the following message to Turkey and the world:

As one of the oldest-living nations of the world, the Turkish nation through maintaining its own identity and personality is getting ready for a new reform to reach an advanced level of life in a dignified way in the new century.

This preparation is for the establishment of a new civilization. In the construction of this new civilization, a very important role is waiting for the Turkish nation appropriate to its historical tradition and accumulations.

The current duty of the Turkish nationalists, without ever losing this consciousness, is the realization of this historical mission through

preparing Turkey for a new revival and for a new civilization.

This preparation has begun. May it be auspicious for the Turkish nation, for you, and for all of us.

May Exalted God make our road open, our heart rich, our mind clear, and our existence permanent.

May God protect all of you.