

United States ship *Missouri* arrived to protect the peace in the uncertain days following World War II. That sent a message that America will always be there when our Turkish friends need us.

Since then, it's been equally true that each time our common interests have been imperiled, the Turkish people have been there alongside America. This fall another American vessel came to Turkey, under tragic circumstances, when the *Kearsarge* arrived to assist the victims of the earthquake. Now Turkey again has suffered natural disaster. And again I send the same simple message: Please, let us know what we can do to help, and we will be there.

How we use our friendship will do much to define the century we are about to begin. What we do together will help to determine whether peace takes hold in the Middle East, whether tolerance takes root in the Balkans, whether young democracies succeed in the Caucasus. The way we do business together will help to determine whether our people have the jobs and reliable sources of energy necessary well into the new century. What we have stood for together, most recently in Kosovo, will help to decide whether the coming century is marked by democracy rooted in our common humanity or by tyranny feeding off hatred.

I must take a moment tonight to express my appreciation for the contributions to the United States of our citizens of Turkish descent. Just last week a remarkable Turkish-American, named Kenan Sahin, gave \$100 million to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology out of gratitude for the education he received there. Ahmet Ertegun was the son of a Turkish Ambassador to the United States who grew up in Washington. But instead of attending diplomatic events like this one, he spent most of his time going out to hear rhythm and blues musicians. When he founded Atlantic Records, he fundamentally changed the history of modern American music in ways that have greatly enriched every single citizen of our country and hundreds of millions of people throughout the world.

When we finished shaking hands with all of you tonight, the President said, "Well, I know that was a long line, but I wanted you

to see the face of modern Turkey." Well, I have had the opportunity to see the face of modern Turkey, and I am confident that when it comes to our relationship and our common endeavors, the best is yet to come.

Mr. President, we are grateful for your leadership and all you have done in your distinguished career. Fifty years ago you came to the United States to study and work among us. When we celebrated our Bicentennial in 1976, you wrote a moving essay describing how your first visit persuaded you of the importance of, and I use your words, "providing full opportunities to all citizens, regardless of birth, origin, and creed."

Mr. President, though your engineering days are over, I am proud of the bridges you have helped us to build together. I ask all of you to join Hillary, me, and our American delegation in a toast to the President and Mrs. Demirel, Prime Minister and Mrs. Ecevit, and the people of Turkey.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:05 p.m. in the Main Dining Room at the Presidential Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Demirel's wife, Nazmiye; Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit of Turkey and his wife, Rahsan; and Turkish Grand National Assembly Speaker Yildirim Akbulut.

### **Remarks to Earthquake Survivors in Izmit, Turkey**

*November 16, 1999*

Thank you for making us feel so welcome. I want to especially thank the Governor, the mayor, the Deputy Governors who went on tour. I want to thank the Yoldas family and the other families who took us into their tents and gave us a feeling for what your lives are like here. I want to thank the teachers and the students who took us into the schools. I want to thank the children who sang us songs and gave us their posters and gave us their little work of clay. I want to thank all of you who have worked hard to clear away the remaining damage done by the earthquake and to begin the process of rebuilding.

I know this is a time of great uncertainty for you, especially since another earthquake just hit not too far from here. I want you to know that most of the tents that you are staying in here came from the United States;

and we have sent 500 more winterized tents to that province to help the people who have been made homeless by the earthquake there. We are also working hard to help the reconstruction process and help Turkey's businesses get back in business. We want everyone to be able to go back to work as soon as possible.

The one thing I would like to say today—I know I speak for my wife and my daughter—is that we were very, very moved by having family contact with other families. And we could imagine what our lives would be like if such a thing were to happen to us, as we have seen it happen to families in the United States.

We were so impressed that a total of 87 other countries came forward to help the people of Turkey who were hurt in the earthquake. And we were very grateful that one of the countries that came forward to help was your neighbor Greece. And then, when the Greeks had their earthquake, the Turkish people came forward to help them.

I hope the ordinary people in Greece and Turkey who have suffered from these terrible natural disasters can send a clear message to the leaders that the people of this region can get along, and they should get along, and when they do get along, our children's lives and futures are better.

Now, in the meanwhile, I want you to know that we in the United States will do everything we can to help you until your lives return to normal. And we will help those people in the area hit by the most recent earthquake. We will stay with you and work with you. And I just want to urge you to keep your spirits up, keep the smiles on your children's faces, keep helping the people who lost their loved ones in the earthquake, and know that together we will get through this to better days.

Thank you very, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. at the Dogukisla tent city. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kemal Onal of Izmit Province; and Mayor Sefa Sirmen of Izmit.

### **Remarks to American and Turkish Business Leaders in Istanbul, Turkey** *November 16, 1999*

**The President.** Thank you very much. First, to my good friend President Demirel, thank you for your remarks and for the wonderful visit that you have hosted for Hillary and Chelsea and me and our entire American party, culminating in the magnificent dinner last night and the presentation of the award, which I will treasure always. Thank you, Mr. Koc, for gathering this distinguished group of Turkish business leaders. To the American delegation here, Secretary Albright and others, thank you very much for being here.

And I want to say a special word of appreciation to Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker for her willingness to lead this group. The presence of Nancy and her husband, Senator Howard Baker, here—literally, two of the most outstanding Members of the United States Senate since the Second World War—is a great tribute to the importance of the relationships between the United States and Turkey. I am grateful for their service to our country and grateful for their leadership. And Nancy, thank you very much for your giving your time to this important endeavor. I thank you very much.

I am honored to be in this historic city of two continents and three empires, now the modern hub of Turkey's free market democracy. I am thrilled to be in this magnificent building, in this beautiful room. It's almost enough to make you miss the empire. [*Laughter*] Unfortunately, at least if we still had the empire, I'm sure I wouldn't be invited to lunch here today, so—[*laughter*]—I think we're getting the best of both worlds.

I'm honored to be with all of you who have contributed so much to the growth and strength of this country. I thank the Turkish-U.S. Business Council and the American-Turkish Council for all they have done to promote ties between our two nations and to improve the welfare of our peoples.

President Demirel has said that Turkey is situated at the center of the world. That was true in ancient times; it was true in the 20th century, even after the end of the Ottoman