

KENNEDYS SALUTE ROBERT COLLEGE, AMERICAN COLLEGE FOR GIRLS

New York, April 19: President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy Tuesday night felicitated Istanbul's American colleges and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson praised the institutions for forging "links of friendship" between the United States and Turkey.

Stevenson commended the standards of the famous schools, Robert College and the American College for Girls, as models for President Kennedy's new "Peace Corps" to be manned by youthful American volunteers.

Stevenson, Turkey's U.N. Ambassador Turgut Menemencioglu and Sir Leslie Munro, U.N. Special Representative on the question of Hungary, all paid high tribute to the work of Robert College and the American College for Girls.

The three diplomats and newscaster H. V. Kaltenborn spoke here at a program for the colleges given by the trustees of Robert College. President and Mrs. Kennedy graciously consented to serve as honorary sponsors of the benefit dinner.

Dinner Committee Chairman Mrs. Robert H. Baldwin announced proceeds from the dinner totalled more than \$30,000.

The dinner honored two of the Board of Trustees of Robert College - Mrs. Dumont Clarke and Goldthwaite H. Dorr.

Messages were read to the some 600 Americans and Turks gathered here at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel from the leaders of the United States and Turkey.

A message from President John F. Kennedy said the contribution which the colleges have made to "education and the American reputation with our friends in the Middle East has provided this nation with a unique reservoir of understanding and good will."

General Cemal Gursel, Turkey's head of state, said the celebration will "further consolidate the friendship which exists between our two countries and to which the Turkish people and I attach great importance."

General Gursel recalled that U.S.-Turkish friendship was founded long ago on solid foundations - the "sincere devotions" of the two peoples to "the principles of freedom and democracy and their readiness for any sacrifice for the safeguarding of these ideals."

Stevenson said there "is no more solid way in which links of friendship between nations can be forged than by contact in depth with each others' intellectual tradition."

The colleges have sent out trained men and women throughout the Middle East "who understand from the inside something of Western thought and tradition," he observed, and those connected with the college have served as "interpreters in the West of the rich life and history of the Eastern Mediterranean."

"You have set patterns and standards which such new expressions of American idealism such as the Peace Corps would do well to emulate," Stevenson said.

The U.S. envoy noted it is "especially comforting" to the United States "to have such a tried and true ally as Turkey" in this "time of political cynicism."

Stevenson said the "bonds which join both our countries are greatly superior in strength to the paper treaties that officially express them." But he noted that treaties show a nation's position in the world community and he recalled that Turkey is the only Middle Eastern nation that is "treaty bound to two major Free World alliances - NATO and CENTO."

Menemencioglu said there is "no better example of successful and truly useful American philanthropy than the two American colleges in Istanbul."

After almost a hundred years, he noted, the colleges have "expanded through further generous donation from this country to become two splendid institutions of learning." They continue to pour out their graduates who are well trained to serve Turkey's development and progress in all fields of life."

The Turkish envoy noted that Turkey will hold "elections in six months so that the Turkish people may choose in all freedom the government which they desire."

He added: "Whatever the outcome of those elections, one thing is certain: the foreign policy and the foreign commitments of Turkey will not be affected. I can say this with certitude because the foreign policy of my country is based on the full support and understanding of our nation. Nor can there be any change in the friendly relations which exist between Turkey and the United States."

Menemencioglu traced some of the high points in Turkish-American relations and noted that "today 160 years after the visit of the frigate George Washington to Istanbul, Turkey stands as a friend" of the U.S. and they share a common determination "to safeguard freedom and democracy in peace and security."

Sir Leslie recalled that the college has had many distinguished graduates. He praised Turkey for her steadfast devotion to democracy and courage in the face of Soviet pressure.

Robert College, founded in Istanbul in 1863, was the first American institution of higher learning abroad. The American College for Girls was started in 1871.

The colleges have "always been non-sectarian; international and democratic in character" and "open to all races and creeds."

Now - under a charter by the Regents of New York - the colleges are united as one corporation - The Trustees of Robert College of Istanbul. They give American Bachelor's and Master's degrees. They also work with Turkey's educational system and are the only foreign colleges that can give courses at the "Yukse" (higher education) level.

Following is the full text of message sent by President Kennedy:

"Mrs. Kennedy and I are happy to be included as honorary sponsors of the first benefit dinner for Robert College in the 99 years of its existence.

"We are pleased to have been invited to share in the efforts which it is currently undertaking to improve and strengthen the curriculum, faculty and plant of a most distinguished American educational institution and a most unusual one as well.

"The contribution which Robert College and the American College for Girls, now united under the name of Robert College, have made to education and the American reputation with our friends in the Middle East has provided this nation with a unique reservoir of understanding and good will.

"Mrs. Kennedy and I wish you complete success in your undertaking."

Boğaziçi Üniversitesi

Arşiv ve Dokümantasyon Merkezi

Kişisel Arşivlerde İstanbul'da Bilim, Kültür ve Eğitim Tanıtı

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