

A Defense of Young Turkey



"We shall begin to have peace in the Near East as soon as the West drops its wholly futile habit of hating him."

[The writer of the following article speaks without apology or compromise an estimate of the Near Eastern situation, utterly opposed to that generally accepted in this country and in Western Europe. It is to be said for him that he has spent some time in the troubled regions of which he writes.]

By CLAIR PRICE

THE Greco-Turkish war is drooping to its end, and it has once more become clear that if an enduring peace is ever to be built in the Near East its foundation must be the Turk.

Ever since the Congress of Berlin, the West has proposed to solve the Near Eastern problem by a campaign of hatred directed against the Turk. As a result, the Near East is today reduced to the most ghastly scene it has ever known. In fifty years of assiduous application to the Near Eastern problem, Turk-hating has solved nothing. It is time a new trick was tried.

In the Treaty of Sevres, the West's habit of hating the Turk has reached its climax. I doubt whether the solution of the Near Eastern problem which the Sevres Treaty proposed is widely understood. Imagine that the United States had been defeated in the late war, and the peace treaty which its enemies sought to impose on it proposed to deprive it of all its territory except, let us say, the State of West Virginia, and proposed, furthermore, to make over in perpetuity its enemies complete financial, economic and military control over even the State of West Virginia. By imposing this species of sudden death on the strongest population in the Near East, the Sevres Treaty proposed to pacify the troubled Near East—altogether the sort of proposal one could find issuing from no place on earth except that charming name, anyium which is Europe.

However, the Greco-Turkish war is nearing the end of its pitiful course and the Sevres Treaty is even more dead now than it was on the afternoon of May 11, 1920. It is once more possible to make a fresh start in the Near East; to appraise the Turk for what he is and to begin building on him accordingly.

The Gladstonian "bag and baggage" policy which sought to solve the Near Eastern problem by driving Turkey out of Europe (there would be no Near Eastern problem today if fifty years ago Europe had been driven out of Turkey) has had its chance since the Turkish armistice was signed late in 1918. Far from solving anything whatever, this bag and baggage business has not only hurled Greek troops against Turkish trenches, but has thrown Islam into a storm of unrest which reaches all the way to the back hills of Java. It is time the West realized that the Turkish Nation is now, and will remain for several centuries to come, the largest and most dependable population in the Near East. Whether the West likes it or not, the Turk is the only possible basis of any solution of the Near Eastern problem. And we shall begin to have peace in the Near East as soon as the West drops its wholly futile habit of hating him.

In order to understand the Turk aright, it is necessary to realize that Eastern and Western theories of government differ. Religion and government are essentially one in the East and the Church-State is the organization not merely of the ruling Moslems, but of the Christian and Jewish minority communities as well. The Turkish Government is a Moslem Government, in which the Sultan is the Caliph of Sunni Moslems who comprise the majority of Islam, and the Sheik ul Islam is a member of the Turkish Cabinet. In the same way the Armenian community is organized under the Catholicos of the Gregorian Church, the Jewish community under its Grand Rabbi, and the Greek community under not only its religious head, but its secular head as well, its present ruler, Constantine, being styled, not King of Greece, but King of the Hellenes. This community system of government is deeply embedded in the social fabric of the Near East and is carried down to the very smallest groups, even the ninety Abyssinians in Jerusalem having their own community organizations. Indeed, it is carried further than the native populations, for before the war foreigners in Turkey also had their own groups, who were

responsible, under the capitulations, not to the Turkish Government, but to their own Consuls. Thus under the Turkish flag a number of semi-independent communities existed side by side, the Turkish Government maintaining its contact with them through their religious heads in Constantinople and, in the case of foreigners, through their Consuls. It is an excellent fact to remember, when the Turk is accused of not knowing how to rule his minorities, that he specifically refrained from ruling them. He left them in large part to rule themselves.

Much might be said both for and against this theocratic community system of government. Undoubtedly the tendency in Turkey, as well as in the other enlightened areas of Islam, has been against it and toward a more secular and Western form of government. But conservative opinion, not only among Moslems but among the Christian communities as well, is still unable to visualize any government which does not exist by divine sanction. Thus far the most promising start is that made by the Turkish Nationalist Government of Angora, which is trying to free itself of the dead hand of religious tradition; and the miraculous rise of the Angora Government evidences not only the strength and virility of the Turkish Nation, but the marvelous power of progress which has been pent up within it during the last century, when European intrigue in Constantinople has persistently strangled it.

Under this community system of government, Turks, Armenians, Greeks and Jews have been peaceful neighbors for centuries, for the Turk is the most tolerant of all the empire builders who have risen and fallen in European history. From the day he first set foot on European soil down to the present the Turk, as a ruler of subject peoples, has been characterized by a broad live-and-let-live tolerance. He hewed out his great empire in a day when savage fighting ability was the single standard by which nations rose and fell; he is still a great soldier, but he has never been a fanatic. No such gratuitous massacres for religion's sake as have stained the name of almost every other nation, in Southeastern

Europe have stained the name of the Turk. Far from desiring to exterminate his non-Moslem neighbors, he has watched them rise to the highest positions in his empire. In thousands of provincial towns and villages he has lived as neighbors with them. Even today, when a Turkish peasant goes on a journey he leaves his valuables with his Armenian neighbor, and when an Armenian peasant leaves his home he deposits his goods for safekeeping with his Turkish neighbor. The Turkish peasant is an ignorant, docile person with whom anybody can get along on neighborly terms; he is a good-natured farmer, as bovine as his own ox team, who asks only to be left alone in peace; he is the very foundation of the economic Near East. There has never been trouble between him and his Armenian neighbor except on orders from Constantinople.

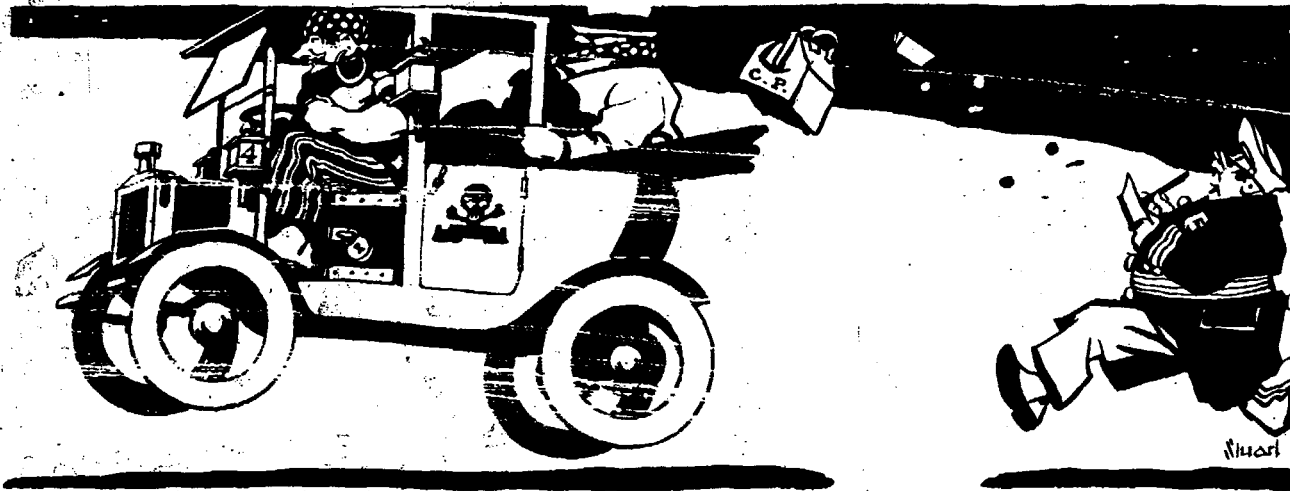
Yet despite the inherently peaceable Turk, the West has rung with "massacre" charges against him. The worst of these charges have to do with the great Armenian deportations of 1915. Whatever military basis there may have been for evacuating the Armenians from the rear of the Turkish armies operating on the Russian front (and a French officer told me in Constantinople that 22,000,000 francs were smuggled through the Turkish lines on one occasion for the purpose of "raising" the Armenians in the Turkish rear), it is true that the deportations cost an ocean of Armenian blood and that they were ordered by the Turkish Government in Constantinople. It is also true that scores of Turkish Governors and Mayors resigned rather than obey Constantinople's order, that thousands of Turks saved the lives of Armenian men and women and boys and girls by hiding them in their homes, and that a large number of these Armenians who have since been given up to the Americans or the Near East Relief have taken the first opportunity to escape and return to their Turkish homes. When one has seen Turks and Armenians dining together, one realizes that their problem is not one of a simple racial or religious feud. The Turk is not an enemy of the Armenian and the Armenian is

not an enemy of the Turk; and nobody knows the web of common interests which bind the two peoples better than the two peoples themselves know it. Even today when the Armenians of Paris, London and New York have filled the world with hatred of the Turk, the Armenians of Turkey are working with the Turks to preserve the territorial integrity of their country in the Turkish Nationalist Government. Mustafa Kemal Pasha has an Armenian aide-de-camp, and there are a number of Armenian Deputies in the Grand National Assembly.

The old Turkish Government of Constantinople, a Government which in fact was anything but Turkish, ordered the deportations of 1915 as it had ordered every bit of trouble with the Armenians before that date. It was the enemy of Turks and Armenians alike, an enemy against which Turks and Armenians had revolted on several memorable occasions, notably in 1808, when Turks and Armenians rejoiced together at their supposed liberation. But had the Committee of Union and Progress been the Twelve Disciples themselves, they could not have survived against the combined intrigue of the Embassies of Pera. For the last century the European Embassies have had only one point of agreement in their attitudes toward the Turkish Government, i. e., a determination to prevent it from becoming strong enough to stand on its own feet. The old Turkish Government was deliberately and relentlessly rotted by every intrigue known to an unscrupulous European diplomacy. Islam has demanded again and again in the strongest possible terms an impartial investigation into the source of the massacre orders which have gone out from Constantinople and which in Western eyes have stained the name of its Turkish Caliph. But Constantinople has never permitted itself to be investigated.

However, the old ring which ran the Turkish Government in Constantinople is gone. Talaat is dead, Djemal is in Germany and Enver is supposed to be in Kabul or Kirghistan or both. Mustapha Kemal

"Want a Taxi?"—and After



"Seem to approximate the ideals of Captain Kidd and his pirate crew more often than those of Sir Galahad or Lord Chesterfield."

By MARY FISHER TORRANCE

IT'S fellows of your sort," thundered Deputy Commissioner James Geraghty, shaking a big fist at the culprit who quailed before him. "That make the public take hack drivers for a bunch of robbers! License suspended!"—then, aside to an attendant in waiting, "Strip the car!"

Every Friday afternoon, at the Department of Licenses, 57 Centre Street, the little courtroom is set aside for the hearing of complaints by citizens against taxi drivers. On the day of my visit it appeared that a young immigrant girl, who spoke no English, on landing from Ellis Island was delighted to hear herself addressed in her native tongue, Bohemian, by a youth driving a taxicab. He aimed to please, and thankfully she interested himself and her small luggage to him, on his assurance that he would convey her safely to her sister's address, somewhere in the Bronx. He did so, and at the journey's end, collected \$16, which the girl paid without dispute, unacquainted as she was with the customs of the country—though the sum struck her at the time as unduly large.

But on alighting from the car his passenger was shrewd enough to make a mental note of the taxi's number as it appeared in black figures on the lamp. That was all the data she had, but that little sufficed to set in motion the wheels of justice, which haled the young man to court, made him fork over to the passenger \$8, the amount of overcharge, and took away his license until such time as the department should see fit to reinstate him upon promise to mend his ways.

New York City's Code of Ordinances defines a public hack as a vehicle plying for hire for which public patronage is solicited upon the street. It is laid down that no public hack shall ply for hire without first obtaining a license from the Commissioner, and no vehicle shall be licensed until it has been inspected and found to be of a type in accord with requirements. Every motor-driven hack must carry a taximeter of approved design, examined and sealed by the Department of Licenses.

There are at the present time between seven and eight thousand licensed hacks in Greater New York. A certain number of drivers operate as chauffeurs in the employ of a company, which pays them a salary and becomes responsible for their conduct. There are also many "associations" of individuals, owning one or more cars, who have banded together for mutual benefit.

Each member pockets his own earnings, though all have adopted a uniform emblem and color scheme for their cars, and established hack stands with telephone service at various points in the city. They maintain clubrooms and retain legal counsel, ready at any moment to defend any member of the association who finds himself in conflict with the authorities.

Every applicant for a driver's license must be at least twenty-one years old, of sound physique, with good eyesight, and not subject to epilepsy, vertigo, heart trouble, or other infirmity of body or mind, which might render him unfit for the safe operation of a public hack in crowded streets. He must be able to read and write the English language, have progressed at least as far as first papers toward naturalization if alien-born, must be clean in dress and person and not addicted to the use of intoxicating liquors. He must present satisfactory testimonials as to character and previous record, signed by reputable citizens, and supply a detailed description of his personal appearance, together with finger-prints and photograph, for the files of the department. This photograph also must be attached to the little red license book every driver carries, to be produced for identification purposes at any time, at the request either of passenger or officer of the law.

The department has a hard time between keeping out the undesirable who clamor for licenses and persuading those who get them to act and talk like gentlemen. They may not drive in their shirt sleeves nor with lighted pipe in mouth. Many a valorous taxi driver of today made buttonholes or operated on "pants" before the war. Then the local draft board caught him and, deaf to any plaintive plea, "up with his heels and smothered his squeals" in the depths of a training camp. After the armistice he found himself loath to resume his former occupation indoors, and struck out in preference for the bold, care-free life of a taxi driver. That such individuals, generally speaking, seem to approximate the ideals of Captain Kidd and his pirate crew more often than those of Sir Galahad or Lord Chesterfield is deplorable but not astonishing.

Hack drivers are classed with other common carriers, who, having engaged to serve the public, become obligated to do so properly, by reason of occupying positions of grave responsibility and trust. It is not mere coincidence that the driver of a hack always sits himself in state; the rules of the department expressly stipulate that no vehicle shall be

licensed when the body thereof is so constructed as to enclose the driver with the passengers, or when such hack is equipped with curtains on the inside. Neither may a driver permit any one to sit beside him on the box, such restrictions being necessary lest a taxicab be converted into a medium for crime.

Every taxicab must carry a taximeter, likewise a printed copy of the legal rates of fare. A higher rate may not be demanded. For a driver to offer his services at a "flat-rate" on the excuse of "meter-out-of-order" is against the law; the fact alone of the meter not working properly automatically suspends his license until such time as the appliance is adjusted and approved anew.

With so many taxicabs in the field, competition, except at such times as theatre hour or in a sudden storm, when everybody in the city seems to want a car right away, is keen. A driver may wait for hours in line at any one of the numerous public hackstands established by the Commissioner of Licenses, unless he prefers to waste gasoline driving around town very slowly, with his flag out invitingly and a come-hither look in his eyes. But he must beware of "cruising," that is, passing and re-passing a given spot, unless between times a distance of at least two blocks has been traversed. No one is permitted to solicit for a taxicab but the driver himself, and then only from his box "in an orderly manner."

Any public hack at the head of a line, any taxicab displaying the

"ready-for-business" signal, must accept any passenger who applies, to be carried anywhere within the city limits, whether it be just around the corner or to the furthest point of Staten Island. A driver who doubts the ability of a passenger to pay may demand payment in advance at legal rates, but must tender a receipt.

Frequently a passenger who has one or two painful recollections of times when unscrupulous drivers "did" him unmercifully comes to regard the whole breed with suspicion and is apt to impute extortion, when, in reality, the charge is perfectly legitimate. He may not understand that there is a charge for each item of baggage carried outside, likewise for time spent waiting, either to accommodate the passenger or when the car was held up in competition, except at such times as theatre hour or in a sudden storm, when everybody in the city seems to want a car right away, is keen. A driver may wait for hours in line at any one of the numerous public hackstands established by the Commissioner of Licenses, unless he prefers to waste gasoline driving around town very slowly, with his flag out invitingly and a come-hither look in his eyes. But he must beware of "cruising," that is, passing and re-passing a given spot, unless between times a distance of at least two blocks has been traversed. No one is permitted to solicit for a taxicab but the driver himself, and then only from his box "in an orderly manner."

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ing a train just then? In pay the amount demanded a receipt. If the driver, at least you can get license number, likewise number, which he wears right-hand side of his. Then you can write to the Commissioner of Licenses, who will arrange for a joint hearing.

And suppose, when the defendant, looking you in the eye, professes ignorance of the entire transaction. On the other hand, he is supposed to have been "some other" who went and stole the car's garage? "But the word on his lips if you make identification. For he knows the odds are always in his favor, even when supported by witnesses, if the department is aware, from experience, that persons taking time to make the trip to the Commissioner are usually those who have substantial grievances.

The rules of the department of the driver of a public hack, upon demand of the Commissioner of Licenses, a receipt made by his vehicle of sixty days from the date of such a record may be inestimable benefit, to establish either for the driver one of his passengers. It is a rule without a penalty when a driver is found for a more serious charge of impertinence, disorderly conduct, or perhaps merely lending his car to a worthy friend, if it does not have such record as to be a flimsy affair, has gathered in the hope that it will be "by" the Commissioner, the driver is very much out of luck. It is also not well for him if he violated the rule that every look inside the car to see if any articles which were left there. Any such is ordained, must be taken to the nearest police station within four hours.

It is an indisputable fact that passengers generally are in a great even the most right plaintiff against a driver man, because he measures in dollars, and the gentle because she is fearful queases or because she to think of the poor fellow's job," which encourages element in the profession to privater and to profit their faith that the traveler is as willing to be fleeced

A Defense of Young Turkey

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Faaha, the 39-year-old leader of the Turkish Nationalist Government, was Enver's most bitter enemy in the old days, and owes his great war fame to the fact that Enver sent him to the Dardanelles to give the British a chance to kill him. The Nationalist Government at present comprises all that is fine and hopeful in the Turkish nation, and, with the old Russian nightmare removed, it is strong enough to stand alone even against the embassies of Pera.

For the last century Turkey has never had a chance. Throughout a century of steady sabotage by the most powerful political influences in Europe the Near Eastern problem has been slowly built up to the proportions of a world scandal. European intrigue at Constantinople never has and never will succeed in reaching any permanent solution of it, for

European intrigue at Constantinople is itself the Near Eastern problem; the curse of the Near East has been the European embassies and the Levantine concession hunters of Constantinople. The only way in which a permanent peace can be devised in the Near East, with a maximum of justice to all the Near Eastern peoples concerned, is by letting these crucified peoples themselves do the devising. Eventually it must come to this. For the present, it promises much that a Turkish Government at last exists which is actually representative of the Turks and their minority communities, and a Russian Government exists which is not hostile.

Meanwhile, it is high time that the West, which has produced one ghastly mess after another in the Near East by hating the Turk—it is time that the West gave the Turk a chance.