

Atatürk's Oration to the Turkish Youth

THE SACRED GIFT I ENTRUST TO THE TURKISH YOUTH

Gentlemen, these detailed descriptions, which have occupied you for so many days, are, after all, merely a report of a period of time, which will henceforth belong to the past.

I shall consider myself very happy if I have succeeded in the course of this report in expressing some truths, which are calculated to rivet the interest and attention of my nation and of future generations.

Gentlemen, I have tried to show, in these accounts, how a great people, whose national course was considered as ended, reconquered its independence; how it created a national and modern State founded on the latest results of science and technology.

The result we have attained today is the fruit of teachings which arose from centuries of suffering, and the price of streams of blood which have drenched every foot of the ground of our beloved Fatherland .

This holy treasure I lay in the hands of the youth of T?rkiye.

O Turkish Youth! Your first duty is ever to preserve and defend the National independence, the Turkish Republic.

That is the only basis of your existence and your future. This basis contains your most precious treasure. In the future, too, there will be ill-will, both in the country itself and abroad, which will try to tear this treasure from you. If one day you are compelled to defend your independence and the Republic, then, in order to fulfill your duty, you will have to look beyond the possibilities and conditions in which you might find yourself. It may be that these conditions and possibilities are altogether unfavorable. It may be that the enemies who desire to destroy your independence and your Republic represent the strongest force that the earth has ever seen; that they have through craft and force, taken possession of all the fortresses and arsenals of the Fatherland; that all its armies are scattered and the country actually and completely occupied.

Assuming, in order to look still darker possibilities in the face, that those who hold the power of Government within the country have fallen into error, that they are fools or traitors, yes, even that these leading persons may identify their personal interests with the enemy's political goals, it might happen that the nation came into complete privation, into the most extreme distress; that it found itself in a condition of ruin and complete exhaustion.

Even under those circumstances, O Turkish child of future generations! It is your duty to save the independence, the Turkish Republic.

The strength that you will need for this is mighty in the noble blood which flows in your veins.

M. K. Atatürk
From "The Speech", October 20, 1927

Declaration by Atatürk to the Turkish Youth (Atatürk'ün Genclige Hitabesi)

Turkish Youth!

Your first duty is forever to preserve and to defend the turkish Independence and the Turkish Republic.

This is the very foundation of your existence and your future. This foundation is your most precious treasure. In the future, too, there may be malevolent people at home and abroad who will wish to deprive you of this treasure. If some day you are compelled to defend your independence and your republic, you must not tarry to weigh the possibilities and circumstances of the situation before taking up your duty. These possibilities and circumstances may turn out to be extremely unfavourable. The enemies conspiring against your independence and your republic, may have behind them a victory unprecedented in the annals of the world. It may be that, by violence and ruse, all the fortresses of your beloved fatherland may be captured, all its shipyards occupied, all its armies dispersed and every part of the country invaded. And sadder and graver than all these circumstances, those who hold power within the country may be in error, misguided and may even be traitors. Furthermore, they may indentify their personal interests with the political designs of the invaders. The country may be impoverished, ruined and exhausted.

Youth of turkey's future,

Even in such circumstances it is your duty to save the Turkish Independence and Republic.

You will find the strength you need in your noble blood.

Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

Atatürk's Address to the Turkish Youth (Atatürk'ün Genclige Hitabesi)

You, the Turkish youth! Your primary duty is to forever protect and defend the Turkish independence and Turkish Republic. This is the mainstay of your existence and of your future.

This foundation is your most precious treasure in the future, as well, there will be malevolents, within and abroad, who will seek to deny your birthright. If one day you are compelled to defend your independence and the republic, you shall not reflect on the conditions and possibilities of the situation in which you find yourself, in order to accomplish your mission. These conditions and possibilities may appear unfavorable. The adversaries who scheme against your independence and your Republic may be the representatives of a victory without precedent in the world. By force or by ruse, all citadels and all arsenals of our dear fatherland may have been taken; all of its armies may have been dispersed and all corners of the country may have been physically occupied. More distressing and more grievous than all these, those who hold and exercise the power within the country may have fallen into gross error, blunder, and even treason. These holders of power may have even united their personal interests with political ambitions of the invaders. The nation itself may have fallen into privation, and may have become exhausted and desolate.

You, the future sons and daughters of Turkey! Even under such circumstances and conditions, your duty is to redeem Turkish independence and the Republic! The strength you shall need exists in the noble blood flowing through your veins.

If you would like to listen to this speech from Atatürk's own voice please visit:
INTERNET ATATÜRK KÜTÜPHANESİ-LIBRARY: <http://ATATURK.TURKIYE.ORG/default11.asp>