

Roy Jenkins, President of the
Commission of the European
Communities, in Brussels.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS .AT LUNCH WITH MR ECEVIT
25 MAY 1978

It is an honour and a pleasure for my colleagues and myself to receive you here today on behalf of the Commission of the European Communities. We have just had a most useful conversation on your country's relations with the Community. We value our friendship with Turkey, and we pay tribute to her crucial role in the affairs of Europe. Associated with the Community, prominent in the Council of Europe, and a custodian of the south-eastern flank of the Atlantic Alliance, Turkey makes an important contribution to the character and stability of the Western political system.

I do not deny that there are sometimes tensions between us as there are in all friendships or family relationships. I am in particular aware of your misgivings about what could follow the further enlargement of the Community, and about some aspects of the functioning of our Association Agreement. At our meeting today we have had an opportunity to discuss some of these problems and achieve better understanding between us. Be assured, Mr Prime Minister, that if there are those who tell you that few in Europe ^{today} care for Turkey they are ^{profoundly} wrong. We want to improve and develop our relationship, and rekindle the spirit of the Agreement which was signed in Ankara in September 1963.

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In particular we want to resume the dialogue with you. As was said at the last meeting of our Association Council in December 1976, the Community is willing to consider sympathetically any specific request you may wish to make for modifications in our relationship. For example we might introduce greater flexibility into the way in which the provisions of the Association are applied. We could thus take better account of your national objectives in the industrial, technical, commercial and other fields. Co-operation of this kind would, in our judgment, be better attuned to the needs of our future relationship than the old approach of tariff reductions. As you know we have already removed tariffs on the great majority of Turkish goods. I add, Mr Prime Minister, that we hope soon to make available to you a substantial sum - some US \$ 450 million - in loans. We await ratification by the parliaments of some Member States and by the Turkish Grand National Assembly. It might, indeed, be no bad idea to begin work with you on selecting the projects to be financed to avoid unnecessary delay.

We are, Mr Prime Minister, fully aware of the problems which affect the Eastern Mediterranean and the distress which has been caused to its people over the years. I would not presume to intrude with advice but I should like you to know of our sympathy and desire to give any help we can to settle differences between friends. In the

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longer run I share the confidence you have expressed in one of your own poems when you said that "the golden age of the Aegean shall come to life again".