

A Student's Life in Turkey

Turkey calls itself a democracy but it is not in the sense that we know it. Armed army personnel still patrol the campuses of the state-run universities.

Student organizations are banned from the campus. Even AICSEC (Association International of Students in Economics, Science, and Commerce) is not allowed to have its office on campus. This is the student exchange program that allowed Valerie Kilfoil, full-time reporter and part-time UNBSJ student to work in Turkey on a newspaper in Bursa.

Kilfoil reports that students are not allowed to form political organizations, as a result, generations of students are growing up politically ignorant and susceptible to radical political groups such as the banned communist party and the KKK (Kurdish Workers Party). Student groups were banned following the September 12, 1980

coup by the military. Groups usually meet off campus in downtown offices.

University is very cheap in Turkey, approximately forty dollars Canadian a year. However, only a small portion of the population gets in. Of about 500 000 who apply, roughly 100 000 will get to attend. Those 100 000 will be selected from the entrance exams. Students get selected to go to the university according to their marks, for example those scoring the very highest on entrance exams go to the best university, Middle East Technical University in Ankara. Three years ago a private university was built by the government. It is open to anyone who can pay the six million lira a year (\$5 000 Canadian a year). This university is dubbed the university of the "rich and stupid" by other students. They are looked down on in their culture because they do not earn their place.

As an exchange student Kilfoil is enjoying her stay. The new culture, the general way of life, and hot weather are so appealing she decided to stay longer than her three month exchange. Kilfoil now works for the Turkish Daily News, the only English paper in the country. Kilfoil has taken advantage of travel along the Mediterranean and the proximity to Europe. She finds Turkey an excellent place to learn because of its location between Europe and Asia. "I have learned more about the middle east than I ever have at home, or ever could have. The wars in Lebanon, Iran, and Iraq suddenly take on a different significance when they are being fought only a day's drive away. As a journalist I've learned just how free we are in Canada." For example in Turkey, 300 journalists were put on trial in 1988 for stories the "democratic" government did not like. According to reports many were tortured.

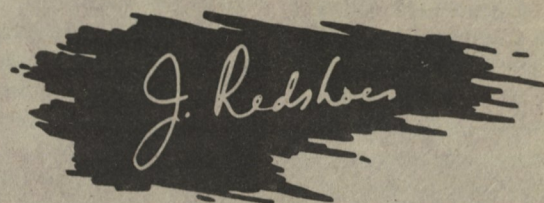


The Date Series; Continued

The Divorce

Three years of eternal infinity passed
 As John and Lisa continued the duet of mundaneness;
 Then, Starzan fell; right on their neighbour's lawn.
 The neighbours cried "What was that?"
 Another responded, "Oh..., Starzan. What was the score in the Hockey game?"
 In the year before the fall,
 Lisa discovered she enjoyed buffets,
 with the person who once told of the events of the day.
 The Trojan, Dry now, did not perspire as the groom once did;
 Lisa admired that.
 She discovered that Wendall was the best man after all.
 John discovered the same truth.
 So they got a divorce.
 And everyone lived happily everafter knowing the truth.

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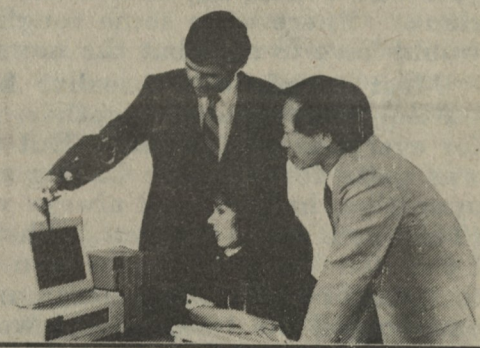


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