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**Letter from the President \_\_\_\_\_**

Dear Fellow Collector:

On 2 September 2000 at Balpex, a group of collectors formed this new society called the OTTOMAN AND NEAR EAST PHILATELIC SOCIETY (ONEPS for short), and our publication is called The Levant. Our purpose is to promote the collection and study of the postage stamps, postal stationary, revenues, and postal history of the Ottoman Empire, Republic of Turkey, and the Ottoman successor states. A copy of our CONSTITUTION is included in this issue of The Levant.

The initial slate of officers is given on page two. In addition, Yavuz Corapcioglu will coordinate shows, meetings, and conventions; Carl Catherman will act as North American

Coordinator for the International Ottoman Cancel Project; and Mahmut Emirmahmatoglu will be our representative for Turkish members.

Dues are described on page two, and a APPLICATION/SUBSCRIPTION form is included with the journal. Please fill out the form and return it to the Secretary as soon as possible, and as the Society is newly organized, *donations* beyond the subscription amount will be very much appreciated.

Initially we plan to publish two or three issues of The Levant each year, and later we hope to establish closer collaboration with OPAL in the UK on some joint editions. Articles, questions, and research notes are needed for the journal, so I encourage everyone to send to Dr. Rose anything that would be of interest to the members.

Later on, we plan to have an annual auction, and by the end of next year, we will publish a membership directory which will facilitate communication among members. Information on our website appears in this issue, and member's interest are also listed there.

The key benefits of membership in any philatelic society are good fellowship and a good journal. We will strive to excel at both.

**Robert W. Stuchell**  
President