

# **TURKEY'S HAIL MARY PASS**

**(And the trembling Europeans)**

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Tayyip Erdogan, the rising Islamic despot of Turkey, isn't a man to be dissuaded by the usual tricks of politics. Attacking all those who oppose him with blind fury, he has set a new measure of brewing totalitarianism in Turkey's violent history. His most recent brutality [against Zaman](#), Turkey's largest circulation daily, has added to the growing Western unease about the "model Muslim democracy" that was touted for decades as the best thing that happened to the Islamic world since the coming of the Prophet (peace be unto him).

Even the *uber* politically correct *New York Times* found the *Zaman* action too much to stomach. In a lead editorial, the squishy editors of the paper discovered at last that Turkish democracy is [disintegrating](#). Unfazed by such criticism, but with Turkey becoming boxed in thanks to his disastrous and [terrorist-supporting-and-feeding](#) regional policies, the self-appointed sultan needed a quick fix. He found it in rising as the savior of a Europe in total disarray over the illegal migrant crisis – a deluge largely of Turkey's own deliberate making.

The hasty agreement reached between a breathless EU, led by the once staunch opponent of Turkey in Europe, Angela Merkel, and the ever-so-smiling Turkish premier, Davutoglu, was indeed the perfect Hail Mary pass at a time Turkey feels the Russian breath on her neck, among other complications: not only Turkey elbowed the European gates open with ease, she is now dictating terms, demanding more money, and pushing the hapless Europeans to lift visa restrictions for Turkish travelers. Ankara also demands the re-opening of EU

membership negotiations that have been stalled for years; and has [announced](#) that under no circumstances would she take back the tens of thousands of illegal arrivals, now bottled in Greece under increasingly desperate conditions, by unilaterally preempting the supposed EU-Turkey agreement that has yet to stick.

Turkey's shameless bazaar carpet haggler's maneuvering has triggered pushback from those in Germany and elsewhere, who aren't enthused by a Turkish (Moslem) wedge aimed at Europe. Some of Mrs. Merkel's closest allies have been quick in [warning](#) the madam chancellor, in no uncertain terms, that there is a definite red line Europe must not cross in trying to woo Erdogan.

Mrs. Merkel's Economy Minister, Sigmar Gabriel, leader of the center-left Social Democrats, made these objections more than [clear](#): "The European Union isn't currently in a position to accept Turkey [as a member] and Turkey isn't ready to be accepted." In this atmosphere of growing skepticism and unvarnished defiance, Mrs. Merkel's "open borders" approach is expected to cost her CDU party severe punishment in regional polls to be held in Baden-Wuerttemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony-Anhalt.

Mrs. Merkel and her (diminishing) supporters, not to mention the EU Brussels mandarin, are all in for a preordained surprise: no person, with even rudimentary understanding of Turkey's longer term diplomatic practice and manner of bargaining, would expect Turkey to sufficiently *meet the obligations she supposedly undertook during the first round of emergency talks with the EU on March 7.*

All in all, this grotesque to-and-fro that stands to continue beyond another summit scheduled for March 17 proves three conditions about the European "union:"

- Humanitarianism ala Merkel is not recommended either for domestic consumption or as high politics of a "union" that has yet to decide how strongly "united" it is.
- Turkey, the professional regional bully, cannot be appeased, manipulated or "approached" in the Western, cross-eyed, and submissive fashion. Turkey understands only tactics that may not be publicly acknowledged or announced.

- Shutting down the “Western Balkan Route,” and leaving Greece to hold the basket full of illegal migrant goodies, while broke and disintegrating herself, is the definitive confirmation that, given a good push, the European “partners” would *swiftly revert to behaviors that haven’t changed in centuries and which have been so deeply rehearsed and applied as to be the only instinctive European reaction when disaster strikes*. The fact does not augur well for the future.

As for commenting on Greece’s complete inability to defend herself or energize, even at this terminal point, the survival instincts that save countries from crumbling, the exercise is now without purpose. PM Tsipras, with theatrics [like these](#), provides us daily with the undeniable evidence that Greece will simply lie down and take it – again – en route to oblivion.

Abandoned by her “partners” [to fend](#) for herself, with only symbolic chatter delivered for succor, her survival instincts absent, her politicians resembling a crumbling kindergarten playground collection, and her people with little to hope beyond more austerity, more lender *diktats* delivered in pseudotechnical lingo, and more expressed and implied humiliation from all her “friends,” Hellas faces the failed state possibility with the true risk of achieving it soon. Those who still hark back to the days of Greek heroic patience and pertinacity, and kindle hopes of imminent revival expend their efforts in playing to an empty house.

**PS:** Faced with the inevitable, Greek commentators, especially those deemed “authoritative,” have now discovered that Mrs. Merkel is Greece’s “best ally” in the present circumstances. There is little one can say once such “logic” has taken root.