

Munich 1938, EU Appeasement, Erdogan

Is Europe ready to cave in to the [world's loose cannon](#)?

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The only thing bullies respect is strength, and the Free World has shown precious little of that in recent times.

Timothy Ogden

Those who truly worry about the steadily worsening situation in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean, thanks to Erdogan's incessant piratical sing-and-dance, have every reason to be concerned at the pathetic posture of both NATO and the EU vis-a-vis Turkey, which ["Mossad thinks...is a bigger menace than Iran."](#)

As the EU is preparing for a members' meeting at the end of the month to contemplate Turkey's aggression toward Greece and Cyprus over drilling rights in the East Med, Turkey's dictator sultan Erdogan constantly fans the fires of aggression, threats of war, and demands for all to bow before a Turkey that, in his deluded mind, is a "regional and world power."

At a moment like this, when covering EU officials are again discussing, as always, "sanctions" and economic measures, which Erdogan simply ignores as administrative gimmicks, it is good time to look back and see what happens when a deluded dictator manipulates the hesitation and, even, the cowardice, of others to win handsome rewards without firing a single shot.

It was September 1938 when Adolf Hitler, buoyed by his absorption of Austria without firing a bullet, turned his attention to Czechoslovakia and its Sudetenland region populated by three million German speaking people. He thus began his usual inflammatory speeches demanding the "unification" of the Sudetenland with Mother Germany—and instructed his generals to draft plans for attacking Czechoslovakia. War at that moment, however, was deemed "impractical"

although it was obvious that Britain nor France, to whose “treaty guarantees” Czechoslovakia believed, were eager to avoid a war at all costs.

British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, and his opposite in France Édouard Daladier, both believed that Prague had no option but to succumb to Hitler’s Sudetenland demands. Neither the British PM nor Daladier believed (incorrectly) that Hitler wanted the whole of Czechoslovakia. Chamberlain, in particular, met with Hitler twice and found the German dictator a “rational interlocutor” and a perfect host.

Finally, on September 30, 1938, Hitler invited the British and French PMs, and the Italian dictator Mussolini to Munich. With two Czech diplomats kept in a nearby hotel, an Italian plan for the secession of the Sudetenland was presented and initialed by the four powers present—and the Czech government capitulated for fear of an all-out war. An enthused Chamberlain returned to England declaring famously that “Peace in our time” was guaranteed. The news spread quickly throughout Europe to the great relief of the populace. The following year, 1939, however, Germany invaded and occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia. *And on September 1, 1939, Hitler attacked Poland sparking World War II.*

Erdogan must be a dedicated student of Hitler’s early tactics that paid handsomely indeed in the face of the trembling leadership of the once Great Powers of Europe. He is also correct in reading the reactions of both the US and the EU. From his palace in Ankara he can see “leaders” without backbone enmeshed in an interminable debate about “sanctions” and other administrative gimmicks that supposedly would force Turkey to cease and desist. In other words, the man who is determined to ignite the Eastern Mediterranean *perceives no real obstacle on his way to Armageddon.*

Even at this advanced stage of US-European dilly dallying, there is still room for delivering some strong medicine to the Ankara sultan *if the US and Europe shake off their political and strategic stupor and remember the days when they acted by offering a small carrot backed by a big stick.*

At this moment all of Greece’s “allies”—the EU, the Americans, and NATO—believe that if any meaningful dialogue can be initiated Turkey should not suffer any sanctions despite occasional statements to the contrary. The “allies” act as if they are dealing with a rational Turkish leader who understands crisis management. But Erdogan is the man who has already unleashed chaos and violence in Syria and Libya; who is in bed with Putin, atom-armed Pakistan, and the Iranian mullahs; who is eyeing grabbing some of Lebanon after the devastating Beirut explosion; who continues his maniacal schizophrenic vendetta with the Kurds, and who has declared the Aegean Turkey’s “Blue Motherland” without asking its inhabitants.

Let us be clear on the crux of the matter: No amount of negotiation “in good faith” will stop the Turkish bully. If Erdogan and his grandiose mad scheme of reclaiming the lands of the Ottoman Empire are to be stopped, the Europeans, in particular, but the Americans as well, must understand that it is time for action.

The only European country that has gotten the message is France. President Macron, by sending France's nuclear-powered aircraft carrier task force to the Eastern Med, has already delivered a strong signal to the marauding Turks. Unfortunately, there seems to be no other European power that would act similarly. As for the Americans, they are enmeshed in the chaos that shrouds their country only two months before the most controversial presidential election ever—and are paralyzed like the deer suddenly struck by oncoming headlights.

This is a highly dangerous situation. Erdogan is pushing for an attack on Greece that could easily ignite a wider war. As Simon Tisdall [wrote](#) in *The Guardian*, "Erdogan is both a bully and a menace. Europe ignores him at its peril." And Washington should pay more attention to Erdogan's cozying up with Hamas by hosting two of its top members, one of whom has a price of \$5 million on his head for this terrorist activities, and treating them ["with the deference typically shown to representatives of foreign governments."](#)

EU expressions of "steadfast support" to Greece and Cyprus are empty words when they are not backed up by military power. In this sector, the "union" still remains a toothless dragon Erdogan can ignore with little apprehension. And in ignoring European appeals without much worry, the Turkish bully always keeps in mind Cyprus, where the Turkish 1974 piracy remains unpunished and thriving.

History teaches us that men like the madman in Ankara react only to death-threatening power that pounds until the result is secure. To remember Wellington, the victor at Waterloo, "Hard pounding gentlemen. Let's see who pounds the longest."