

Erdogan's Snarling Dogs of War

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On September 4, the Turkish daily *Yeni Safak*, Erdogan's mouthpiece (akin to the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the Nazi Party daily newspaper), published an [article](#) under the war-drum bombastic title "*Fear of Turkey' is spreading like wildfire. If Turkey is back, others will go! Anti-Erdoğan sentiment has nothing to do with internal policy. The East Mediterranean belongs to Turkey!*" In the now routine Erdogan barbaric jingoistic style, the writer confidently predicted that "*Whenever we returned, whenever we achieved a rise, others regressed and weakened. This is because both our existence and struggle has been with the most powerful.*"

This maniacal screed comes as no surprise. It is only one piece of evidence, among many, of an acute case of political schizophrenia born out of the lust for violence and war that has overtaken the neo-sultan whose wild fantasies of restoring the Ottoman empire grow by the hour.

This chorus of violence and threats to peace billow against the backdrop of the pandemic crisis and a rapidly tanking Turkish economy coupled with growing popular dissatisfaction. In a [scathing statement](#) Turkish opposition leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu said: "Tens of thousands of people eat from the garbage. They have sounded the alarm in the supermarkets for olive oil and baby food so that they do not steal it. Why does the modern Turk want to steal oil and baby food?" The Turkish lira has been pummeled by the continuing outpouring of Erdogan's warmongering; [on September 11, one euro bought 8.8565 liras, an all-time low.](#)

Yet, nothing seems to stop Erdogan's accelerating race to chaos. His ministers compete in threatening Greece in language akin to street thugs and not top government officials. And to add

further threatening spunk to this outpouring of ugly invective, Turkey announced yet another live fire NAVTEX for 12-14 September north of Cyprus in an obvious effort to signal she is ready for a naval confrontation in the Aegean and the East Med.

The Turkish moves, for the first time ever, have mobilized European tangible reaction led by France. A summit of EU members hosted by French President Macron on the island of Corsica on September 10, with the participation of France, Greece, Malta, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Cyprus, agreed on the [Ajaccio declaration](#) calling upon Turkey to cease and desist or suffer European sanctions. Predictably, Turkey rejected the declaration, denigrated its signatories, and repeated her demands for negotiations “without preconditions” (i.e. a platform for Turkish monologue).

To complicate matters further, [according to the Washington Post](#), the neo-sultan benefits strongly from his “strange relationship” with President Trump that has made the Trump administration Erdogan’s enabler.

Erdogan’s secret is that he has assiduously stroked President Trump’s ego. He places regular calls to the White House and plays to Trump’s idea of personal diplomacy. Trump bragged last month that a “top leader” had asked him to call the Turkish president, saying: ‘You’re one he respects. You’re the only one he’ll listen to.’

According to the same report, however, the U.S. Congress takes a dim view of Erdogan’s antics “....and for the past two years key members ‘have quietly frozen all major U.S. arms sales’ to Ankara,” which dovetails with the recent partial [lifting of the US arms embargo to Cyprus](#).

These are encouraging signs from the U.S. Congress yet they do not offer sufficient promise of harnessing the neo-sultan’s lust for armed confrontation and bloodshed. The keys to averting disaster now lie with the EU and NATO.

On the EU front, President Macron’s posture is the first ever European expression of concrete desire to draw the line and warn Ankara that warmongering won’t go unanswered. Predictably, Ankara is angry, especially because Macron has offered Greece the option of buying France’s advanced fighter jet—in addition to sending the French nuclear aircraft carrier *Charles De Gaulle* task force to deploy in East Med waters and keep its sensors focused on the Turkish navy.

NATO, meantime, is its usual napping self—and it has been [diagnosed as becoming “brain-dead”](#) by the French president. Greece has the longest experience of observing NATO watch Turkey’s illegal air intrusions into Greek air space for decades and doing nothing other than “counseling accident avoidance.” Furthermore, Greece has consistently failed to press for an official NATO interpretation of the [infamous Article 5](#), which forms the cornerstone of the Alliance calling for the allies to come to the aid of any member experiencing a hostile attack by an aggressor. NATO, however, has tip toed around this issue arguing that Article 5 does not cover the case of one ally attacking another. **This is the time therefore for a major re-writing of Article 5 providing for the immediate expulsion of any rogue member, such as Turkey, that attacks another member of the alliance.**

Greek PM Mitsotakis will be well advised to avoid “unconditional talks” with Turkey; any such agreement will immediately deteriorate into a Turkish harangue directed at the Greek side demanding territorial concessions and “demilitarization” of Greek islands.

Germany’s presence in such talks would be a double-edged sword. Berlin remembers Germany’s cozying up to the Ottoman Empire against the Western allies (with war criminal General [Otto Liman von Sanders](#), who happily deported hundreds of thousands of Greeks and Armenians from their homelands, many of whom perished in horrendous conditions) nor the to-and-fro with Nazi Germany as Hitler unsuccessfully tried to draw Turkey, sitting on the fence, into the Second World War. Berlin is also Europe’s biggest modern Turkish enabler toying with a special customs union with Erdogan’s “empire” and pushing for “softer” treatment of the Ankara maniac because Turkey is “vital” to the West—a very old song that is rapidly losing its essence as Turkey is transmogrifying into *another maniacal Iran-type country swearing eternal war of annihilation upon the infidel (and especially Israel)*.

Talking to Turkey under these circumstances would be useless. The neo-sultan thirsts for conflict to prove Turkey’s emerging “greatness” and how she is indeed the No. 1 “superpower” in the Eastern Mediterranean setting the stage for the reconstruction of the Ottoman Empire. In that case, all bets are off. Unless some superior power intervenes with conclusive determination to show Ankara the futility of using force at this time, war, with all its imponderables and disasters, would be unavoidable.

