
The Politics of Betrayal: Obama Backstabs Kurds to Appease Turkey

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The Kurdish militias (YPG, PKK) have been Washington's most effective weapon in the fight against ISIS in Iraq and Syria. But the Obama administration has sold out the Kurds in order to strengthen ties with Turkey and gain access to Turkey's Incirlik Air Base. The agreement to switch sides was made in phone call between President Obama and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan less than 48 hours after a terrorist incident in the Turkish town of Suruc killed 32 people and wounded more than 100 others.

The bombing provided Obama with the cover he needed to throw the Kurds under the bus, cave in to Turkey's demands, and look the other way while Turkish bombers and tanks pounded Kurdish positions in Syria and Iraq. The media has characterized this shocking reversal of US policy as a "game-changer" that will improve US prospects for victory over ISIS. But what the about-face really shows is Washington's inability to conduct a principled foreign policy as well as Obama's eagerness to betray a trusted friend and ally if he sees some advantage in doing so.

Turkish President Erdogan has launched a war against the Kurds; that is what's really happening in Syria at present. The media's view of events—that Turkey has joined the fight against ISIS—is mostly spin and propaganda. The fact that the Kurds had been gaining ground against ISIS in areas along the Turkish border, worried political leaders in Ankara that an independent Kurdish state could be emerging. Determined to stop that possibility, they decided to use the bombing in Suruc as an excuse to round up more than 1,000 of Erdogans political enemies (only a small percentage of who are connected to ISIS) while bombing the holy hell out of Kurdish positions in Syria and Iraq. All the while, the media has been portraying this ruthless assault on a de facto US ally, as a war on ISIS. It is not a war on ISIS. It is the manipulation of a terrorist attack to advance the belligerent geopolitical agenda of Turkish and US elites.

Just take a look at these two tweets from CNN Turkey on Saturday and you'll see what's going on under the radar:

@CNNTURK_ENG:

#BREAKING Sources tell CNN Türk last night Turkish jets made 159 sorties against #PKK camps in N.Iraq&hit 400 targets pic.twitter.com/oGVJmKsGbs

@CNNTURK_ENG:

#BREAKING Sources tell CNN Türk last night there was no air strike against #ISIS, targets were hit by tank fire near #Kilis.

(The tweets first appeared at Moon of Alabama)

Repeat: 159 air attacks on Kurdish positions and ZERO on ISIS targets. And the media wants us to believe that Turkey has joined Obama's war on ISIS?

The Turks know who they're bombing. They are bombing their 30-year long enemy, the Kurds.

Ankara also confirmed it carried out airstrikes against PKK sites in Iraq. While Davutoglu said any organizations that "threaten" Turkey would be targeted in a crackdown on militants, on Friday President Tayyip Erdogan said the PKK would be the main focus of attacks." ("Turkey Says More Anti-PKK Strikes to Come", Telesur)

Repeat: "Erdogan said the PKK would be the main focus of attacks."

For Washington, it's all a question of priorities. While the Kurds have been good friends and steadfast allies, they don't have a spanking-new air base for launching attacks on Syria. Turkey, on the other hand, has a great base (Incirlik) that's much closer to the frontlines and just perfect for launching multiple sorties, drone attacks or routine surveillance fly-overs. The only glitch, of course, is that Washington will have to bite its tongue while a former ally is beaten to a pulp. That's a price that Obama is more than willing to pay provided he can use the airfield to prosecute his war.

It's worth noting, that Turkey's relationship with jihadi groups in Syria is a matter of great concern, mainly because Turkey appears to be the terrorists biggest benefactor. Check this out from Turkey's Hurriyet Daily News:

"Naturally, one has to ask who fathered, breastfed and nourished these Islamist terrorists in hopes and aspirations of creating a Sunni Muslim Brotherhood Khalifat state? Even when Kobane and many Turkish cities were on fire, did not the Turkish prime minister talk in his interview with CNN about his readiness to order land troops into the Syrian quagmire if Washington agreed to also target al-Assad?

This is a dirty game...." (Editorial, "Kobane and Turkey are Burning", Hurriyet Daily News)

The media would like people to believe that the bombing in Suruc changed everything; that Erdogan and his fellows suddenly saw the light and decided that, well, maybe we shouldn't be supporting these ISIS thugs after all. But that's just baloney. The only one who's changed his mind about anything is Obama who seems to have realized that his takfiri proxy-warriors aren't ruthless enough to remove Assad, so he's decided to team up with Sultan Erdogan instead. That means Erdogan gets a green light to butcher as many Kurds as he wants in exchange for boots on the ground to topple Assad. That's the deal, although, at present, the politicians are denying it. Now check out this blurb from Foreign Policy "Situation Report":

"The nominee to be the next commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. Robert Neller, didn't really get off to a great start in his relationship with Senate Armed Services Committee chief Sen. John McCain. The general drew the ire of the Arizona lawmaker by telling the panel on Thursday that the Islamic State is essentially fighting to a draw in Iraq and Syria. McCain took the opportunity and ran with it, telling the Iraq vet that "I'm very disappointed in a number of your answers," on the Islamic State, promising to send along more questions to push the general on his views. It was an unexpected ending to what had been a hum-drum confirmation hearing, and if McCain wants to press the issue, it could hold up a vote on Neller's confirmation until after the August congressional recess." (Situation Report", ForeignPolicy.com)

The point is, the Big Brass is telling US policymakers that ISIS is not going to win the war, which means that Assad is going to stay in power. That's why Obama has moved on to Plan B and thrown his lot with Erdogan, because

the Pentagon bigshots finally realize they're going to need boots on the ground if they want regime change in Syria. But "whose boots", that's the question?

Not U.S. boots, that's for sure. Americans have had it up to here with war and are not likely to support another bloody fiasco in the Middle East. That's where Erdogan comes into the picture. Washington wants Turkey to do the heavy lifting while the US provides logistical support and air cover. That's the basic gameplan. Naturally, the media can't explain what's really going on or it would blow Obama's cover. But who doesn't know that this whole campaign is aimed at removing Assad? You'd have to be living in a cave for the last three years not to know that.

The bottom line is that Erdogan has three demands. He wants a buffer zone on the Syrian side of the border to protect Turkey from ISIS and Kurdish attacks. He wants a no-fly zone over all or parts of Syria. And he wants Syrian President Bashar al-Assad removed from power. That's what he wants and that's what Obama has agreed to (as part of the Incirlik deal) although the media is refuting the claim. To help explain what's going on, take a look at this article in Reuters that was written back in October, 2014. Here's an excerpt:

"Turkey will fight against Islamic State and other "terrorist" groups in the region but will stick to its aim of seeing Syrian President Bashar al-Assad removed from power, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Wednesday...

"We will (also) continue to prioritise our aim to remove the Syrian regime, to help protect the territorial integrity of Syria and to encourage a constitutional, parliamentary government system which embraces all (of its) citizens."...

But it (Turkey) fears that U.S.-led air strikes, if not accompanied by a broader political strategy, could strengthen Assad and bolster Kurdish militants allied to Kurds in Turkey who have fought for three decades for greater autonomy.
