New York Times covers up Obama administration's role in Turkish coup

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5 August 2016

In an August 4 editorial titled "Turkey's new anti-Americanism," the *New York Times* takes not only the government but also the people of Turkey to task for drawing the obvious and well-founded conclusion that Washington played a central role in backing the abortive July 15 coup to overthrow the country's elected president, Recep Tayyip Erdo?an.

"Shaken by a failed coup attempt, Turkey's government and many of its citizens are desperate for someone to blame. Instead of undertaking a thorough investigation of the facts, though, they have accused the United States of complicity in the insurrection," the *Times* argues, adding, "This has ignited a new wave of anti-Americanism."

The *Times* treats such accusations as illogical and absurd. "It makes no sense that the United States would seek to destabilize a NATO ally whose cooperation is crucial to alliance security as well as to the fight against the Islamic State, especially when much of the region is in chaos."

In fact, Turkey has been a NATO ally of the United States since 1952. Since then, Washington has backed the Turkish military's seizure of power not once, but three times—in 1960, 1971, and 1980—not counting the bloody events of last month.

Moreover, it was precisely the "cooperation" of the Erdo?an government that had been called into question in recent months, particularly in relation to its attempt to achieve rapprochement with Moscow under conditions of rising US-Russian tensions. Relations had further deteriorated over Syria, where the US military has forged an alliance with Kurdish separatists, which Ankara views as an existential threat to the Turkish state.

"The Turks," the *Times* tells us, are "playing a duplicitous and cynical game" in suggesting that the US had anything to do with the failed coup.

When it comes to cynicism and duplicity, the *Times* has no equal. How can it claim that the US had nothing to do with the coup?

It is well-established that much of the coup was organized out of Incirlik air base in southeastern Turkey. The base is not only the center of the US air war against Iraq and Syria, housing 1,400 US military personnel and hundreds more American contractors, it is also the site of the largest stockpile of US nuclear weapons on the European continent, as many as 90 B-61 tactical nuclear bombs, each capable of delivering a destructive power over ten times greater than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

After the coup had failed, the base's commander, one of the many military figures with close ties to the Pentagon who played a prominent role in the plot, asked his American colleagues to grant him asylum.

If the CIA and other US intelligence agencies had known nothing about the impending coup, organized under the noses of the US military, it would constitute one of the greatest intelligence failures in US history. What if it had been an Islamist coup, with the nuclear bombs turned over to Al Qaeda, ISIS or a similar organization? Such a failure would warrant the resignations of CIA Director John Brennan, Adm. Michael Rogers, director of the NSA and others. Needless to say, no such resignations were forthcoming.

Moreover, the only reason that Erdo?an escaped shortly before a military assassination squad arrived at the door of his vacation home was that Russian intelligence, which had apparently picked up military communications between the coup plotters, had given him enough advance warning.

Is it frankly credible that the US military, which

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likely heard these same communications from adjoining offices, or the CIA and NSA, whose spying capacities in a country where they have operated for decades have to be far superior than those of their Russian counterparts, did not have the same or even more extensive prior knowledge?

Their decision not to issue Erdo?an a similar warning can only have one interpretation: Obama and the US military and intelligence chiefs preferred to see the Turkish head of state dead.

The initial reaction of the US government—given in Moscow by US Secretary of State John Kerry before it became clear that the coup would fail—points to the same conclusion. Kerry limited himself to expressing US desire for "stability and peace and continuity within Turkey." Neither Erdo?an's name nor any US concern for the continuation of elected civilian rule was even mentioned.

The recklessness and criminality of this policy are breathtaking. Having killed and maimed millions and wrecked entire societies in Iraq, Libya and Syria, US imperialism was prepared to do essentially the same in Turkey to further its desperate drive for regional and global hegemony.

Given the ruling AKP party's sizable popular base, one can only assume that a successful coup would have been followed by a bloodbath far exceeding that carried out by Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, the US dictator in Egypt, or the savage repression of the 1980 Turkish coup. The likely result would have been the eruption of civil war in a NATO country on the borders of Europe.

This is what the *Times* is trying to conceal. From its deliberate distortion of the events in Turkey to its frenzied campaign to indict—with literally no objective evidence—Russia's President Vladimir Putin for allegedly stealing incriminating Democratic National Committee emails and providing them to WikiLeaks, the *Times* functions more and more openly as a media arm of the US military and intelligence apparatus, alternately aiding and abetting its operations and covering up for its crimes.

Last week, the World Socialist Web Site posted a column titled Who is James Bennet?, calling attention to the political pedigree of the *Times'* recently installed editorial page editor James Bennet. We pointed to Bennet's family connections, from a father who was a former head of USAID, a front for the CIA, to a brother who is the senior senator from Colorado, as exemplifying "the politically incestuous relationship between the media and the political establishment and state apparatus."

The combination of disinformation and propaganda that dominates not only the *Times'* editorials, but also its news coverage, makes it impossible to know where the CIA ends and the newspaper begins.

While the *Times'* banner logo reads "all the news that's fit to print," the paper's real function is to distort, manipulate and conceal information to further the aims and interests of the US state and to prepare public opinion for war.

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