

Turkey and America: the Corridors of Intelligence and Geopolitics

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“Turkey is not as politically stable or as secular domestically as they would have you believe”, said one long time observer of US-Turkish relations in Washington, DC. “The Turks do not have a large community across the United States like, say, the Armenians and the Greeks who have been here a long time. Because of this you see a very large Turkish presence inside Washington, DC”.

Lacking a legitimate national grassroots organization, Turkey has built a notable presence inside the corridors of power in Washington, DC by spreading cash around and buying direct access to key US decision makers in and out of the US government. It all seems legitimate enough: campaign donations/junkets for members & staff of the US Congress (FMOCs); consulting fees to former FMOCs, US military generals, US State Department employees; and promises of billions of dollars in contracts to US corporate representatives operating in Washington, DC. With so much money chasing politicians, consultants and contractors of all stripes, there’s bound to be some corrupt and even criminal activity. No seasoned observer of politics anywhere is completely surprised at the occasional and well timed conviction of a white collar criminal.

But Sibel Edmonds’ seems to have stumbled into the **really big white collar crime ring** that ties an old George Bush I family friend, Brent Scowcroft—and his American Turkish Council—in with former US Ambassador to Turkey Marc Grossman; members of the Turkish Caucus in the US Congress; Douglas Feith, (once had his security clearance revoked and was rumored to be watched by the FBI) who once greased arms sales to Turkey back in the 1990’s, is a famed Zionist, formerly of the Pentagon and now at Georgetown University in Washington, DC; the Bob Livingston Group (Livingston a FMOC), who has gotten very wealthy via Turkish business; and Joe Ralston the former USAF general whose bank account has blossomed after joining Lockheed Martin and being put on the Turkish payroll as a counter-Kurdish insurgency expert. Finally, former Speaker of the US House Dennis Hastert seems a natural part of the ring whose claim to fame may become that he kept debate on the Armenian Genocide Resolution off the House floor during his tenure and was the subject of a Vanity Fair piece.

Many of us have written on Ms. Edmonds’ case and after so many years find it infuriating that the FBI continues to shut her up behind a State Secret Privilege holding. Taking recent events at the Department of Justice as guides, it is probably safe to say that Ms Edmonds’ is being silenced because of some sort of State Embarrassment Privilege. The Department of Justice, of which the FBI is a subsidiary, is seeing its credibility quotient crushed under the weight of Attorney General Albert Gonzales’ arrogance and the adolescent antics of his staff.

Meanwhile at the FBI, Director Mueller is under fire for the antics of his staff and its abuse of PATRIOT Act provisions to catch common criminals, not “terrorists.”

A few thoughts come to mind here. First, the FBI apparently was illegally monitoring subjects associated, somehow, with the Edmonds’ matter and, perhaps, saving a savory scandal for the right time. J Edgar Hoover, former FBI Director, was skilled at that sort of subterfuge. If the illegal monitoring allegation is true, that’s another damaging blow to the Justice Department and the US justice system.

Second, Ms Edmonds must have stumbled upon the payola racket that Turkey had been running and there were so many big US names involved in so many high places that to air that laundry would damage US credibility not so much abroad, as right here in the USA. Imagine one one news day FMOs, active members of the US Congress, US military personnel, US State Department people, US Justice Department folks all get nailed for being in on the Turkish gig or at least knowing about it. And what could be worse than the FBI, DEA and CIA knowing about it? Foreign intelligence agencies, of course.

Third, if it is true that Turkey is not as secular or as politically stable as its proponents in Washington, DC and Ankara say, then the whole Turkey-as-US strategic partner and would-be European Union partner would be one of the better smoke and mirrors acts sold to the US public, and the world, in recent memory.

The reality is that Turkey remains a distant and unknown entity for most Americans, although if Ms. Edmonds were allowed to speak freely it may become a well known country. It’s a product that is difficult to sell to citizens here in the USA as a strategic necessity, as a wonderful vacation land, or as a dynamic society full of business opportunity. The harsher side to the story is that Turkey has threatened to invade Northern Iraq/Kurdistan should it declare its independence, or if an upcoming referendum on oil-rich Kirkuk goes the Kurds way; the Turks brutally repress their Kurdish population; free speech and tolerance of government critiques are in short supply; and, in reality, the Turkish military holds the keys to power in Ankara.

Lastly, according to the observer of US-Turkish relations, “It seems to me that the government in Ankara, Turkey is always working on propaganda, on slogans. Trying too hard. If you visit Turkey you’ll notice everywhere you go that there is a picture of Turkey’s founder Attaturk. It reminds me sort of like Soviet times where you’d see a picture of Lenin everywhere. The Turks spend too much time worrying about petty resolutions like those recognizing the Armenian Genocide.”

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