

Turkey's Tyrannical Rule, Erdogan's "Democratic Dictatorship"

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Recep Tayyip Erdogan rules with an iron fist, heading a virtual dictatorship masquerading as democratic.

Anyone criticizing or challenging his leadership risks imprisonment, including public figures, journalists, academics, other intellectuals, human rights activists, even young children – on charges ranging from insulting the president to terrorism, espionage or treason.

He purged or imprisoned over 100,000 regime critics – from the judiciary, military, police, media and academia.

His state of emergency imposed after last summer's coup attempt "target(s) criticism, not terrorism," according to UN High Commissioner for human rights, Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein.

He uses emergency powers to target dissent, aimed at consolidating unchallenged power.

He's accused of disappearing opponents, extrajudicial killings, torture, and other flagrant human rights abuses.

Last year, he cited Hitler as a role model, calling his Nazi regime perhaps an ideal way to run Turkey, saying he wants things streamlined for more effective decision-making – code language for wanting iron-fisted rule, all challengers and critics eliminated.

He's at war with Kurds in Turkey, Syria and Iraq, committing atrocities on the phony pretext of combating terrorism he supports – claiming he has a "historical (regional) responsibility."

A row between Berlin and Ankara erupted after local German authorities cancelled campaign events Turkish ministers arranged to speak at in support of an April referendum on expanding Erdogan's presidential powers.

About 1.4 million Turkish nationals live in Germany, eligible to vote in the referendum.

Chancellor Angela Merkel said she had nothing to do with it. Ignoring his own tyrannical rule, Erdogan responded angrily, saying "Germany, you have no relation whatsoever to democracy and you should know that your current actions are no different to those of the Nazi period."

His spokesman Ibrahim Kalin claimed "(a) huge anti-Turkey, anti-Erdogan attitude is being systematically produced and serviced to the world, especially through Germany."

Merkel said his accusations "cannot be justified. We will not allow the victims of the Nazis to

be trivialized. These comparisons with the Nazis must stop.”

Last month, Die Welt reporter Deniz Yucel, with dual German/Turkish citizenship, was detained in Istanbul, accused of spying for Berlin and representing the outlawed Kurdish PKK group.

Germany called the charges “absurd.” Merkel told parliament her government is working “with all its means” to free him.

A separate row erupted after the Netherlands canceled flight clearance for Turkish Prime Minister Melvut Cavusoglu’s scheduled March 11 visit to Rotterdam to speak at a pro-Erdogan rally.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said Ankara wasn’t respecting public gathering rules, explaining:

“Many Dutch people with a Turkish background are authorized to vote in the referendum over the Turkish constitution. The Dutch government does not have any protest against gatherings in our country to inform them about it.”

“But these gatherings may not contribute to tensions in our society and everyone who wants to hold a gathering is obliged to follow instructions of those in authority so that public order and safety can be guaranteed.”

Cavusoglu angrily responded, saying “(i)f the Netherlands cancels my flight clearance today, then we will impose severe sanctions,” adding he intends flying to the country later on Saturday.

A Dutch government statement said his “sanctions threat made search for a reasonable solution impossible.”

Erdogan called Dutch authorities “Nazi remnants, fascists,” warning they’ll be impeded from traveling to Turkey.

How this row gets resolved remains to be seen. Dealings with Erdogan are never easy.

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