

Following is a piece that just posted at the Washington Post by Amb. Matthew Bryza, a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council who served at the center of U.S. policy-making on Turkey at both the National Security Council and State Department.

His core thesis: Casting Turkey loose risks a rupture and economic collapse — and could send our close ally into the arms of Russia. It would also weaken NATO, forfeit our influence in the Middle East and threaten the coalition whose fight against ISIS is far from finished (recent reports suggest that the terrorist network is trying to make a serious comeback).

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https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/08/15/the-u-s-cant-afford-to-lose-turkey/?utm_term=.92ac6e44d376

The U.S. can't afford to lose Turkey

Sanctions risk a rupture and economic collapse — and could send Turkey into the arms of Russia.

By Matthew Bryza

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Matthew Bryza is a nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council and worked on Turkey policy at the National Security Council and State Department.

President Trump's decision to double steel and aluminum tariffs on Turkey — and reports that broader sanctions are being considered — mark a dangerous escalation.

This was an unprecedented hostile act against a NATO ally, timed to inflict maximum damage. Turkey is already struggling to stem the collapse of its currency, and Trump announced the tariffs precisely when

Turkey's minister of finance was delivering a crucial speech outlining his government's plan for managing the country's economic crisis.

What's more, these "large sanctions," as Trump has described them, essentially blew up a delicate negotiating process between Ankara and Washington that was on the verge of success. An agreement was within reach, according to which Turkey would have freed American Pastor Andrew Brunson from house arrest. But Trump apparently lost patience and decided to turn up the heat rather than negotiate to a successful conclusion, resorting to what President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has termed "economic warfare."

By publicly backing the Turkish leader into a corner, Trump has made it significantly more difficult for Erdogan to agree to Brunson's release. Indeed, Erdogan's defiant stance is the only thing he has done in recent years that enjoys virtually unanimous support across Turkey's political spectrum. And, by trying to damage the already-fragile Turkish economy, the U.S. president is kicking a friend when he is down. It seems the White House has decided to give up on Turkey as an ally.

Abandoning Turkey now would weaken NATO, forfeit U.S. influence in the Middle East and threaten the coalition whose fight against ISIS is far from finished. Recent reports suggest that the terrorist network is trying to make a serious comeback.

It could also drive Turkey into the arms of Russia, whose strategic goal in the region has long been to drive a wedge between Turkey and the rest of NATO, especially with Washington. A top Kremlin adviser has openly admitted this.

While the U.S. alliance with Turkey has been central to our Middle East strategy since the Truman administration, the Russians are working overtime to change this power balance.

Moscow wants a Middle East with a diminished Western presence. Key to Putin's approach is sidelining the United States and empowering Iran. Casting Turkey loose now would give the Kremlin exactly what it wants and make it impossible to pursue diplomatic solutions in Syria and Iraq.

Let's remember: The United States has a lot at stake in the future of Turkey.

Take Turkey's Incirlik Air Base as an example. It is the most important overseas military base that most Americans have probably never heard of. As a diplomat who spent 13 of my 23 years in the U.S. Foreign Service covering the region, I have seen how indispensable the base is.

It has been ground zero for the war on ISIS. Strike missions flying out of the base dropped on average 180 bombs a day on ISIS targets at the peak of the fight against the terrorist group. Congress reaffirmed Incirlik's importance to U.S. national security in December when it approved more than \$48 million in upgrades to the base.

The base is crucial. While ISIS is on the retreat, the war is far from over. The group is breaking up into new and dangerous pieces. Alarming new reports suggest that ISIS fighters have gone into hiding near Damascus and in Syria's northwest region of Idlib, on the border with Turkey, and are awaiting orders. Others have defected to al-Qaeda's branch in Syria, which has been gaining strength while ISIS fighters have scattered.

More generally, U.S. national interests in the Middle East will be far better served by partnering with a NATO ally that borders Syria, Iraq and Iran, rather than by crippling that country's struggling economy. Moreover, if Turkey's economy were to collapse, the U.S.'s vital strategic interests would eventually and inevitably drive it to help pick up the economic pieces.

"In response to deliberate and continued US escalation of trade tensions, Turkey today has again raised tariffs on key US imports. Trade wars help no one, but Turkey will do what is necessary to protect our industries and economy from assault."

Ms. Ruhsar Pekcan is Turkey's Minister of Trade

HS Code	Product	Additional Customs Duties (%)
08.02	Other nuts, fresh or dried, whether or not shelled or peeled	20
10.06	Rice	50
2106.90	Food preparations	20
22.08	Undenatured ethyl alcohol of an alcoholic strength of < 80%; spirits, liqueurs	140
24.01	Unmanufactured tobacco; tobacco refuse	60
27.01	Coal; briquettes, ovoids and similar solid fuels manufactured from coal	13.7
2704.00	Coke and semi-coke of coal, of lignite or of peat, whether or not agglomerated	10
2713.11	Petroleum coke	4
3304	Beauty or make-up preparations and preparations for the care of the skin	60
3904.10	Poly"vinyl chloride"	50
3908.10	Polyamides-6, -11, -12, -6,6, -6,9, -6,10 or -6,12, in primary forms	10
3926	Articles of plastics and articles of other materials of heading 3901 to 3914, n.e.s.	60
4401	Fuel wood, in logs, billets, twigs, faggots or similar forms; wood in chips or particles	10
4802	Uncoated paper and paperboard	20
4804	Uncoated kraft paper and paperboard	20
4811	Paper, paperboard, cellulose wadding and webs of cellulose fibres, coated, impregnated,	50
550210	Artificial filament tow as specified in Note 1 to chapter 55, of acetate	60
7308.90	Structures and parts of structures, of iron or steel, n.e.s.	60
8413.70	Centrifugal pumps, power-driven	20
8479.89	Machines and mechanical appliances	20
87.03	Motor cars and other motor vehicles principally designed for the transport of persons	120
9022.19	Apparatus based on the use of X-rays	10

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REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Paix-Travail-Fortitude

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
Paix-Travail-Patrie

PRESS RELEASE

The Minister of Communication wishes to inform the public that following the release of a video footage showing unacceptable acts of brutality against women and children by armed men, the HEAD OF STATE ordered the conduct of an investigation to shed light on this matter and determine responsibility.

The investigation led to the arrest of the following military personnel:

- Lieutenant FOBASSOU Etienne;
- Sergeant BITYALA Cyriaque Hilaire;
- Lance Corporal GODWE MANA Didier Jeanot;
- Lance Corporal TSANGA;
- Private 2nd Class DONOSSOU Barnabas;
- Private 2nd Class MANASSE Jacobai Jonathan;
- Private 1st Class NTIECHE FEWOU Ghislain.

The persons concerned have been handed over to the judicial authorities and will be given a fair trial. Obviously, they have so far enjoyed the presumption of innocence.

The Minister of Communication reiterates the HEAD OF STATE's resolve to ensure that the atrocities that may be committed by a few misguided soldiers are systematically investigated and, if need be, appropriate sanctions meted out.

He once more expresses to the Defence and Security Forces the trust, support and appreciation of the HEAD OF STATE and the entire Nation for their bravery, professionalism and determination in the fight against terrorists and other criminal groups in a bid to defend the territorial integrity, peace and stability of our country, and ensure the security of citizens and their property.

Done in Yaounde on

ISSA TCHIROMA BAKARY
MINISTER OF COMMUNICATION

Disseminated by Mercury Public Affairs, an agent of a foreign principal. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice.