

Daesh Jr. Strikes a Jew in Marseille

by Nidra Poller (February 2016)

Yusuf, the young Turkish-Kurd who tried to kill a Jew in Marseille recently, was a baby when the al Dura blood libel triggered the plague of genocidal Jew hatred that besets us to this day. Back then they were avenging the “cold-blooded murder of a Palestinian youth by Israeli soldiers.” Today, fifteen years later, Yusuf X. proudly explains he saw that Palestinians were stabbing Jews in Israel and decided to follow suit in Marseille.

The blade of his machete was not sharp enough to kill Benjamin Amsellem but the Jewish schoolteacher had no doubts that his assailant was trying to decapitate him. Amsellem fought back. Yusuf lost his grip on the machete, and ran. Two men followed in hot pursuit. The police seized the aspiring killer. The initial press release, most likely from the notorious Agence France Presse, reported that a Jewish teacher was “slightly wounded” in an attack by a psychologically unbalanced youth and, curious detail, protected himself with his “torah.” I suppose they meant a book of prayers or *parashot*?

More honest than the press releasers, Yusuf presented his credentials: he pledges allegiance to Daesh, was carrying a ceramic knife to kill policemen, has no regrets but is ashamed that he wasn’t able to kill the Jew.

Yusuf apparently doesn’t fit into the sociological box. As far as we know he was a good student with no outward signs of radicalization. His teachers and classmates are perplexed, his family is dumbstruck. Yusuf says they are apostates. When Yusuf was a baby and Jews were being assaulted all over France, then Interior Minister Daniel Vaillant saw no evil, just a problem of rowdiness that could be treated with the usual socialistic remedies. The motto was “don’t pour oil on the fire”: If we admit there is a wave of anti-Semitic violence propagated by Muslims (but we will call them “youths”) it will only make things worse.

In January 2016, Yusuf has grown up to be an aspiring Jew & cop-killer and jihad in its myriad forms has forced its way into the public mind. This time, the

attack on a Jew because he is Jewish is covered from every available angle, dominating the news stream for a whole week. It is the subject of reports, debates, man on the street commentaries, flashbacks and projections, solemn statements by the authorities relayed by journalists that 15 years ago would have hidden it under the media rug. The three major dailies simultaneously ran articles on why Jews wear the kippa—a mix of misleading and informative but nothing nasty. There were some kippa friendly hashtags and high profile kippa wearers: The pro-Israel deputy, Claude Goasguen, wore a kippa to the National Assembly and a Muslim specialist on radical Islam, Mohamed Sifaoui, wore one on Facebook. But Goasguen said he'd make a gesture if a Muslim woman in hijab were attacked and Sifaoui said we must be exceedingly careful not to stigmatize Muslims. This brings us back to square one, as we will see below.

Local, national, and international media jumped on the suggestion by Zvi Ammar, president of the Marseille Consistoire, that Jewish men should perhaps refrain from wearing the telltale kippa until the situation improves. Might as well say until the "*meschia*" arrives! Chief Rabbi Haim Korsia and CRIF President Roger Cukierman, among others, said we should continue to wear the kippa with pride and courage. The yes-no dilemma got batted around as if it hadn't been twisting our minds for fifteen years already. Wear the *magen david* or the *chai* openly, hide it, leave it at home; carry a plastic bag from a kosher delicatessen or bookstore, or camouflage it in a brown paper bag; read a book in Hebrew on the metro, read a book in French about the Mideast Conflict... Who can argue with any individual decision on these issues? When we've finished divesting ourselves of all this paraphernalia, how will we hide our Jewish eyes?

The novelty is the absence of pity for Yusuf's callow youth and dull bladed machete. He is in preventive detention, charged with attempted murder aggravated by antisemitism and associated with terrorist intentions. This is a giant step forward. The judges were obviously not influenced by the "slightly wounded" twist.

In the wake of the November 13 jihad attacks, President Hollande promised a broad slate of measures including a constitutional revision that will, if enacted, reinforce powers of investigation and repression currently employed under the state of emergency. One controversial measure is the proposed denaturalization of dual nationals guilty of terrorism, including those born in France. Except for a tiny minority, no one is actually pleading in favor of

these traitors. A majority would be in favor of extending the measure to any French citizen who takes arms against his nation, but international law forbids the creation of stateless persons.

The question is elsewhere: will the measure violate the founding principles of a nation where citizenship is determined by *jus soli* and not parental origin? Will it stigmatize dual nationals? Will it have any practical effect? Commentators on a serious political TV program, *C Dans l'air*, explained that the measure would be worthless: it would not dissuade terrorists, because they don't give a damn for their French nationality, and would not disgrace them, because they would already be dead. While this reasoning hummed along, the banner announced that the young Turkish-Kurd had been charged and detained. Wouldn't he benefit from the measure? If, of course, he has Turkish nationality. He has a long life ahead of him, with multiple options... locked up in a Turkish jail, hunted down as a Turkish Kurd, or living it up in the caliphate.

There is something indecent about raising the red flag against stigmatization of Muslims every time jihad strikes. If Islam is indeed the culprit, the fact is it couldn't express itself without Muslims. What about the "90% moderate Muslims" concept? Nine times out of ten when a killer steps out of the mass, it turns out everyone thought he was a regular guy. Fellows like Yusuf with a machete for the Jew and a knife for the policeman can pop up anywhere any time. If you come across one that knows how to sharpen the blade, you're dead. Last week a Tunisian living as an asylum seeker in Germany attacked a Parisian police station with a meat cleaver. Before that, a Muslim rammed his car into soldiers guarding a mosque in Valence. France is reeling from the November 13th massacre, Germany wakes up to mass sexual assaults on New Year's Eve, Jews are stabbed in Israel, European tourists are murdered in Tunisia, in Istanbul, and everyone knows the next atrocity is around the corner. Muslims, under pressure of the inevitable backlash, will have to find a way to liberate themselves from the genocidal ideology that gives birth to monsters in their midst.

Nidra Poller's latest book, *The Black Flag of Jihad stalks la République*, is

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