

Jihad Attacks in Paris: True & False Notes

by Nidra Poller (February 2015)

Excerpts from the [Israel Hayom](#).

Zari Siboni and Andrea Shamak, two Hyper Cacher cashiers, tell the sequence of events in great detail. Zari is the person sent to order the people in the cellar to come upstairs. They do not mention Bathily, at least not in the published account of an extensive interview. I can't stop wondering why no one else chose to escape via the freight elevator. Another way of saying, "What would I have done?"

The question nagged me. As if I could retrospectively save the hostages by developing a strategy. We have fire drills, the Japanese have earthquake drills, the Thais improved their tsunami alert system, weather forecasters help us reduce risk and damage of exceptional storms... don't we need to be trained in hostage defense? All I could come up with was an image, a sort of wishful thinking cartoon image of the hostages slipping into one aisle of the Hyper Cacher, silently and simultaneously picking up heavy cans and jars, throwing them at Coulibaly, knocking him senseless.

Then came a knife attack in a Tel Aviv bus. A 14 year-old boy boards the bus, sees the driver fighting back after he is stabbed in the chest, and alerts the passengers. They all run to the back of the bus, the killer pursues them, the boy throws his back pack at the stabber and the bus driver slams on the brakes. The assailant falls, the passengers rush out of the bus, run for their lives, the stabber runs after them, stabbing wherever he can.

There's a difference between a knife and an assault weapon. But there is something universal about the delicate balance between submitting, in hopes of surviving, and fighting back with desperate courage.

SWEETHEARTS

Jeanette Bugrab, an outspoken critic of radical Islam and former minister in the Sarkozy government, suddenly emerged in the media as the grieving companion of Charb. The love story – brutally terminated by the Kouachi brothers – between the gorgeous sophisticated highly educated Algerian-origin conservative and the far Left boyish Charb who was a cartoon of

himself was a poignant surprise to the uninitiated.

A few days later Charb's brother tersely denied any sentimental relationship between Charb and Bougrab, and asked her to never mention it again. Paris Match published romantic photos of the couple, she continued to give interviews but agreed to stay away from the rousing funeral ceremony complete with jokes and song. What explains the slap in the face? Is it Leftist political orthodoxy that bridges no romantic exceptions?

MARINE LE PEN

I'm trying to figure out the American infatuation with Marine Le Pen that flared up immediately after the jihad attacks in Paris. Mainstream media profiled her, the WSJ interviewed her, my own knowledgeable friends and colleagues wrote flattering articles about her. Some were so impressed by occasional truths uttered by the president of the *Front National* that they want her to be president of France! Others scolded me for insisting on her dubious entourage, unsavory electorate (recent polls show they rank third, after the Far Left and Muslims, for anti-Semitic attitudes), questionable alliances, and zigzagging judgments. Besides, she doesn't have a party ready to govern. Is this a time for amateurs? This American crush on Marine Le Pen reminds me of the French love affair with Obama in 2008!

Does it matter? It matters to me. How can it be so easy to convince intelligent people that you are France's best hope for countering Islamic aggression, when your close collaborators have connections with Nasrallah, do PR for Bashir al Assad, or dine at the table of Mustapha Tlass? Where is the *Front National* coming from and where is it going? Marine Le Pen has publicly disowned Aymeric Chauprade, her foreign policy advisor and head of the party's European parliament delegation, after he circulated a video in which he says we are at war with Muslims, not all Muslims but some Muslims who want to destroy us. This week she is snuggling up to our Far Left/ Greenies coalition and celebrating Szipras' victory in Greece. If Syriza can make an alliance with the Far Right, join Gaza flotillas and pro-Hamas demonstrations, why couldn't the *Front National* hook up with our Chavez wannabe who'd like to unite France with the Maghreb?

I'm just about to wrap up this article when two items hit the press: first, a poll shows Marine Le Pen with a large lead in the hypothetical first round of the 2017 presidential elections and, second, her close collaborator Frédéric Chatillon is [20- minute YouTube diatribe](#) against the kuffars

But the most poignantly ironic thread, especially but not only for French Jews, is undoubtedly this bit about apartheid. The idea is that certain ethnic populations are not given the

opportunity to become decent law-abiding integrated citizens of the *République* because they are artificially concentrated in virtual ghettos. The solution, then, is *mixité*. Mixing. If nobody stops them, this government will use busing and other tricks to keep people from running away from troubled schools and neighborhoods.

Only one third of Jewish children still attend public schools in France. A bit more *mixité* and it will go down to one tenth. More than half of the Jewish population in France today is Sephardic, essentially refugees from the Maghreb. In the past fifteen years they have been fleeing Muslim-dominated neighborhoods in French cities. And some are fleeing all the way to Israel, the US, and other destinations.

Flight Or Fight

French Aliyah doubled this year and may triple next year. Or become an exodus. It depends.

The French government is a bit scared. "France without the Jews would not be France." In more ways than one, *mon vieux*. Remove the lightning rod and your house might go up in flames.

The manager of the Hyper Cacher, who had taken over only four days before the murderous attack, says he's leaving for Israel. Other hostages or bereaved family members of victims are staying. There is no argument with personal decisions. My grandparents left Europe before the First World War. I left the United States to live somewhere in Africa and ended up in Paris. Staying and leaving both make sense to me personally. I do not think we are in a 1930s configuration where the danger was concentrated in Europe; Jews with foresight escaped to safety. Today the same threat hangs over us, Jews and non-Jews, everywhere. The question that faces us collectively is how to defend ourselves wherever we are.

The *Charlie Hebdo* lesson is that no matter how much is done to dissuade the citizens of the still free world from defending their precious values, reality prevails. One or two or two hundred big and small incidents can be ignored or misinterpreted but finally reality will prevail. Cockeyed schemes will be concocted to delay the reckoning but reality will knock them over like bowling pins.

The personal answer to the question of staying in France or leaving is by definition correct. The choice that isn't offered – as long as we are alive – is leaving or staying in the world. However we name the destructive force that is on the march, it is everywhere, it has to be confronted everywhere.

Epilogue

January 27, 2015: I followed the entire 70th anniversary ceremony at Auschwitz-Birkenau and then watched hours of debate on a variety of outlets. No, it's not a hypocritical commemoration exercise organized by a cynical world. It's a moment of crushing reality.

The ceremony and debates were marked this year by the Paris jihad attacks and the January 11th reaction. How can that momentary flicker be conserved, and fanned to a life-giving flame? You cannot reverse the tide of confusion that unwittingly feeds genocidal hatred unless you can speak to the heart of your fellow citizens. Unless you believe the person you reach out to has a heart.

Nidra Poller's book *Karimi Hotel* is [Al Dura: long range ballistic myth](#) is available in paperback and on Kindle.

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