

Danish Mother Describes Bat Mitzvah as Terror Struck Copenhagen Synagogue



The Great Synagogue, Copenhagen Denmark

Source: wikipedia

The Algemeiner interviewed the mother of a Bar Mitzvah as terror struck the Copenhagen Synagogue. Read this story of how a Danish Bat Mitzvah celebration was interrupted by Terror outside. Note the tribute by the mother of Bat Mitzvah to fallen Copenhagen Synagogue Security Guard Dan Uzan z"l v b"h.

[The Algemeiner: Defiant Mother Who Hosted Bat-Mitzva as Terror Struck Copenhagen Synagogue Recounts Harrowing Ordeal – 'No One Can Tell Me Where I Can Live My Jewish](#)

[Life' \(INTERVIEW\)](#)

by David Efune

Mette Bentow, the mother whose daughter's bat-mitzva was cut short by the terror attack at the Copenhagen synagogue late last night, sounded a defiant tone in an interview with *The Algemeiner* on Sunday, in which she recounted her harrowing experiences of the past 24 hours.

"No one can tell me where I can live my Jewish life," she insisted strongly, even as she admitted, "I don't know if there will be a Danish Jewish life" for her children to live there.

"We were celebrating the bat-mitzva of our daughter Hannah and due to heightened security in Copenhagen, there were

extra security personnel on the ground, both from the Jewish community but also from the police," Bentow recounted. "There were armed police officers, which is not a usual sight in Copenhagen."

"We were having a wonderful party until 20 minutes to one in the morning, when one of the Jewish security guards asked us to go downstairs to the basement, and, after a short while, he took my husband aside, who has a security background, briefed him on what had happened, and gave him a radio. We then proceeded into a security room, a panic room where we were left."

Bentow said that no gunshots were heard by guests at the party "because we were listening to music, we were dancing and the community center is behind the synagogue itself, so we didn't hear anything."

Most of the guests had already left the party at the time of the attack, but among those who remained were "15 classmates of my daughter, many of which were without their parents," Bentow said.

The group remained "in the panic room for an hour and a half to two hours. We did our very best to try and calm the children down," she continued. "The youngest in the room was my own son, my youngest son, who is 8 years old."

"My husband was aware of the situation but chose to hold this from the children and tried to make light of the situation, explaining it as a standard procedure, and therefore we tried to comfort each other and keep the children calm. After one and a half to two hours in the security room, we were escorted by armed police out of the building into buses and taken to an evacuation center outside the center of Copenhagen, where we were met by police, psychologists and childrens psychiatrists."

Bentow said the community is "deeply affected by the events

and very saddened,” and offered praise to the Jewish community’s volunteer security staff. “Throughout the entire time, we felt that the Jewish security personnel at the center were doing their utmost to keep us safe,” she said. “They were professional, calm, and they made us feel safe, they were truly heroes to us.”

[Bentow recounted her final moments with Dan Uzan, the Jewish security guard killed in the attack](#), whom she said she knew “very well.”

“The whole day yesterday my husband and I said to each other ‘baruch hashem (thank God) that Dan will be our guard tonight because then we will be safe,’” she said. “When I came to the community center before the party to prepare the last things, my children and I met Dan at the gate, we came at the same time. We were joking, he was teasing, and I said to him ‘I am so happy you are going to be taking care of us tonight.’”

“He was such a kind, kind person. He was always helpful, a real joker, two meters high, a huge guy and such a teddy bear,” she said.

Asked about her feelings regarding the future of the Jewish community in Denmark, Bentow was stoic but pessimistic.

“I am Danish, I am very proud to be Danish, Denmark without Danish Jewish history wouldn’t be the same Denmark,” she insisted. “No one, no one can tell me where I can live my Jewish life and I hope that this is the wake up call.”

Bentow also had harsh words for Danish authorities who, she said, should have taken greater steps to protect the Jewish community, specifically following last month’s bloody terror attack at a kosher supermarket in France.

“This should never have happened because obviously the Jewish community has been saying for quite a while that we

need more security and we need more resources. Let me just say that after the events in Paris, it was just a matter of time. We all knew that, and I think that Jews all over the world and in Europe especially are under attack, but I think you cannot set us aside from the population at large because they are also under attack."

"I don't know how I feel," Bentow concluded. "I feel that Denmark is our home, I have the right to live here, I want to live here, but I don't know if my kids will stay here."

"I don't know if there will be a Danish Jewish life for them to live here."