

Pope Francis and Imam Drouiche on the Strasbourg Attack

by Hugh Fitzgerald



After the recent murderous attack by a Muslim terrorist at the Strasbourg Christmas Market, Pope Francis [condemned the violence and offered his compassion for the victims:](#)

The Pope has expressed “sadness”, “concern” and “condemnation” of the December 11 attack on the Christmas market in Strasbourg. In a telegram signed by the secretary of state, Card. Pietro Parolin, addressed to the archbishop of the city, Msgr. Luc Ravel, Francis expresses his “compassion ... to the families affected and to all the people affected by this attack, assuring his prayer.” While entrusting the dead “to God’s mercy”, he addressed “a special thought to the professionals and volunteers who care for the injured. As a sign of consolation, he implores the abundance

of divine blessings on the victims, on those who assist them and on the entire French people.

Pope Francis's statement was a cut above his usual comments after such attacks, when he seldom fails to remind us, in one form or another, that "there is no such thing as Islamic terrorism" and that "authentic Islam and the proper reading of the Quran are opposed to every form of violence." He mentioned, this time, only the victims, expressing his "sadness" and his "compassion..to the families affected by this attack," offering a "special thought to the professional and volunteers who care for the injured," and especially, asked for divine blessings "on the victims, those who assist them, and on the entire French people." This was more heartfelt than the usual boilerplate of his remarks of sympathy, especially his asking for "divine blessings...on the entire French people."

But Pope Francis still could not bring himself to mention the killer's faith, much less the reason for his murderous spree. He dared not, on this occasion, to yet again exculpate Islam: it's becoming too absurd to do so. Had he been less pusillanimous, he might have mentioned "those texts which lead some astray" or even have used the word "Jihad" – just imagine what a clearing of the air that would have been, if at long last even this appeasement-minded Pope had managed to do so, as in such a simple remark as this – "we see in Strasbourg, to our great sadness, more innocent victims of Jihad"). Instead, he did not mention the murderer at all, or the texts that beyond all doubt motivated his killing of Unbelievers (see, e.g., Qur'an 2:191-194, 4:89, 8:12, 8:60, 9:5, 9:29, 47:4).

Meanwhile, the situation has returned to near normal in Strasbourg: there is a heavy police presence but shops and schools have been reopened, excluding Christmas markets.

The situation "has returned to near normal"? Normal, except

that the “Christmas markets” remained closed for at least a week in mid-December. The plural is used – are there many such markets in Strasbourg? We know that one of the largest and most important Christmas Markets in all of Europe takes place in Strasbourg. Keeping it closed deals a heavy economic blow to all those merchants who do a great deal of their year’s business at the Christmas Markets, and to restaurants and hotels frequented by tourists who would ordinarily come from all over to visit the Christmas Market in Strasbourg. When the Market reopened, with that “heavy police presence,” just how light-hearted and celebratory for the season could people be, seeing those machine-gun-toting police everywhere, remembering the killings, and no doubt worrying – as they never had to worry before the Muslim invasion of Europe – of a repeat performance by other Muslim killers? Can Strasbourg truly be described as having “returned to near normal”? And what kind of atmosphere was there likely to be at other Christmas markets in France? In Germany? Murder casts its pall. The heightened anxiety felt by many is not so easily dispelled. Some no doubt decided not to visit any Christmas markets. Was there be a significant decrease in the total number of visitors? Now that it is after Christmas, the results will soon be in.

The death toll are three dead and 14 wounded. Among them was the young Italian journalist Antonio Megalizzi. Of those killed, one is Thai, one French, one Afghan.

*The 29 year old , Cherif Chekatt, who initially escaped capture, was found on a Strasbourg street and shot dead by the police. According to Interior Secretary Laurent Nuñez, **Chérif “incited religious practice in a radical form” and was engaged in proselytism of others.***

According to some testimonies, confirmed by the prosecutor Remy Heitz, the young man would have shouted “Allah[sic] akhbar! (God is great!)” before killing the first victim.

He shouted "Allahu Akbar," which does not mean "God is great!" but "Our God is greater [than yours]." When uttered by a jihadist in the course of committing his crime, it is a supremacist war cry, designed to "strike terror" in the hearts of the Unbelievers. The Western media continue to insist, however, on translating the phrase variously as "God is great," "God is greater," and "God is greatest." They apparently can't be bothered to find out the true significance of the phrase.

Imam Hocine Drouiche, vice president of the imams of France, expresses his concern for this violent use of religion. "Once again – he has told AsiaNews – "France is hit by terrorism in the name of the Islamic jihad. These sick people always find religious coverage to justify their inhumane crimes. Terrorism will not stop until all Muslims condemn it firmly and remove this cover that dirties them and endangers their future in France and Europe".

Imam Drouiche calls Jihadis "sick people" who "always find religious coverage to justify their inhumane crimes." No. He has it backwards. They do not commit these crimes just for the fun of it, and then attempt after the fact to give these "inhumane crimes" a religious justification. Those we call Jihadis are led to commit these crimes by the Qur'an itself, and its clear commands, in over 100 verses, to commit Jihad against the Infidels. Religion is not the ex post facto excuse, but rather the cause, of this violence. Nor are Jihadis "sick people"; they understand and take to heart these commands; they are good Muslims, following Islam's texts (Qur'an, hadith, sira) and teachings.

Imam Drouiche says that "terrorism will not stop until all Muslims condemn it firmly and remove this [religious] cover that dirties them." How can Muslims possibly condemn those many verses in the Qur'an that call upon them to "strike terror" in the hearts of the Infidels? How can they ignore

Muhammad himself, who claimed in a famous hadith that “I have been made victorious through terror”? Muslim terrorism will last as long as the uncreated and immutable Qur’an itself. How does Imam Drouiche, who means well, but cannot allow himself to believe that the sources of Muslim terrorism are to be found in the Qur’an and Hadith, hope to convince 1.5 billion Muslims to ignore so much of what they read in those texts? It can’t be done.

Prof. Drouiche points the finger at the indoctrination of imams in mosques.

“In general, the speech of the imams has not yet adapted to the values ??of the republic or human ones. If Muslims want to continue living in France and in Europe, it is necessary and urgent to awaken and free this religion from the hands of intolerant integralists. If a religion does not introduce peace, it is harmful to itself and does not deserve to be close to the divine.”

These “intolerant integralists” have the Qur’an and the example of Muhammad, as described in the hadith, on their side. They are not making up these Qur’anic verses. It is the truly “moderate” Muslims, like Prof. Drouiche himself, who want us to ignore, as they do, all the jihad verses in the Qur’an. But it is they who are being untrue to both the letter and spirit of Islam, an aggressive conquering faith whose adherents are taught to wage jihad until the entire world is dominated by Islam, and Islam rules everywhere. It is Imam Drouiche who is ignoring the 1,400 year history of Jihad, and the conquest by Muslims of many lands and many peoples, who when once they were subjugated, were given the choice of death, conversion to Islam, or acceptance of the permanent status of dhimmi, with the many onerous conditions, including payment of the jizyah, that that status entailed.

For Drouiche, “Islam is going through a profound crisis

worldwide.” It needs “a new wise and intelligent elite to be free and humanized. We can still save the situation in Europe, but I’m not too optimistic.”

Is Islam truly “going through a profound crisis worldwide”? Isn’t the problem that Islam is not going through such a crisis, but that it ought to be? Within Muslim states there is internecine warfare of every kind: Sunni versus Shi’a, Arab versus non-Arab Muslims, Muslims versus Christians, locally-based militias fighting among themselves for power and money – in Yemen, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, Egypt, Bahrain.

And there should be, but there is not, a “profound crisis” in Islam among Muslims who have settled deep within non-Muslim lands, by the tens of millions, unwilling to integrate, battenning on the largesse of generous non-Muslim states, that provide free or highly subsidized housing, free medical care, free education, family allowances, unemployment benefits. Muslims seem quite pleased with this arrangement, taking all this as if by right, with some even describing it as the “jihad seeker’s allowance” – a proleptic jizyah, in societies where non-Muslims are still in control. They don’t see a crisis in Islam; they see Islam instead as triumphantly on the march, unstoppable by such confused Western leaders as May, Macron, and Merkel. They see a crisis among the Unbelievers, who are gradually losing control of the Muslim-populated parts of their own countries.

“I am sad – he concludes – for the victims, but also because my religion is hostage in the hands of ignorant people full of hatred.”

Imam Drouiche insists that Islam itself is innocent of hatred and violence. His religion is held “hostage” by these crazy extremists – “ignorant people full of hatred.” He doesn’t dare permit himself to study the remarks made by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the self-described caliph of the Islamic State, or

the broadcasts of Anwar al-Awlaki, on the Qur'anic commands that they urged their followers to carry out. That would upset him too much, and he wants to continue to believe that his religion "is hostage in the hands of ignorant people full of hatred." But those "ignorant people" he deplores are not ignorant of the Qur'an; they know it very well. And they are "full of hatred" toward Unbelievers because the Qur'an has instructed them to be so. In how many verses are Muslims instructed to fight against Christians and Jews, to "smite the necks" of the Unbelievers, to "fight them" wherever Muslims find them, to "strike terror" in their hearts? Muslims are instructed, too, not to take Christians and Jews as friends, for they are friends only with each other. And when Muslims are told, in the Qur'an, that they are the "best of people" and non-Muslims are "the most vile of created beings," why would they not believe it? It's the word of God.

Pope Francis appears to be moving, glacially, almost imperceptibly, toward the recognition that Islam is not quite as peaceful as he has claimed in the past. He has suggested this by failing to mention, and exculpating, Islam, as he usually does, in his statement about the Strasbourg Christmas Market attacks. He still has a long way to go to undo the remarkable series of misstatements about the faith he has previously made. Whether he will finally begin to grasp the essential nature of Islam, as terrorist attack follows attack, or whether he will revert to his previous position as Defender of the Faith[of Islam], remains to be seen.

As for Imam Drouiche, he's the embodiment of the Good Muslim, who wants so much to believe that these Muslim terrorists are "ignorant people full of hatred." But they are not "ignorant" of what is to be found in the Qur'an – they are very aware of its contents, and of their duty to follow it – and as a consequence, they are "full of hatred" toward all non-Muslims. Imam Drouiche can't allow himself to believe this, much less to admit it publicly. He senses that deep trouble is coming

because “Islam is going through a profound crisis worldwide.” It needs “a new wise and intelligent elite to be free and humanized. We can still save the situation in Europe, but I’m not too optimistic.”

But the “profound crisis” is that there is no “crisis” for most Muslims. They reject all criticism of Islam as “racism” and “Islamophobia.” They dismiss Unbelievers who dare to suggest that some parts of the Qur’an, denouncing Jews and Christians, should be rendered “obsolete.” When 300 French intellectuals and political figures wrote an open letter this spring requesting just that, Muslims all over France reacted with rage. They do not seem inclined to agree with Imam Drouiche that Islam is in a state of crisis.

And who would select this “new wise and intelligent elite” that Imam Drouiche suggests needs to be established among Muslims? Imam Drouiche gives no clue. And how exactly would this Muslim “elite” help Islam to become “free and humanized”? What do such words mean, if not that this elite should have the ability to remove, or abrogate, or contextualize so that they apply only to enemies in 7th century Arabia, the many verses in the Qur’an that command hatred of, and Jihad against, Infidels? And how does Imam Drouiche propose to convince 1.5 billion Muslims, many of them deeply reactionary, to accept these textual changes to the Qur’an? And when he says “we can still save the situation in Europe, but I’m not too optimistic,” what does this mean? I take it to mean that Muslims in Europe will have to change their attitudes and their behavior if they wish to continue to be endured by the non-Muslims whose countries they have entered by the millions, and that if they do not do so, large-scale violence – a civil war between Muslims and Unbelievers – might eventually ensue.

It’s a grim prediction. But we are already part-way there. Isn’t Europe, right now, already in thrall in many ways to Muslims and their duplicitous defenders, who have managed to label rational islamocriticism as “racism” and “Islamophobia”?

How, in such an atmosphere that stifles all dissent, can anyone believe that Islam, the religion of 1.5 billion people, can be reformed by a self-appointed Muslim "elite," its members akin to Imam Drouiche, who deplores Muslim attitudes and behavior but cannot allow himself to put the blame where it belongs, and has belonged for 1,400 years, on the texts of Islam itself?

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