

What Happens to Jews Who Live in a No-Go Area?

by Hugh Fitzgerald



We all know that throughout Europe today there are Muslim No-Go areas, where police and firemen enter at their peril. For they are frequently attacked by young Muslim males, who throw objects – bottles, bricks, rocks – at them, as a way of making clear that the state's writ does not run in these areas. A sufficiently intimidating Muslim presence can be established with far less than a Muslim majority.

In these places, the police must escort firemen, who are otherwise afraid to enter. The police themselves only enter such areas in groups.

What happens to non-Muslims, especially to Jews, who continue to live in these areas?

Recently, a French Jewish woman spoke in public for the first time about her family's harrowing experiences with

antisemitism in the Paris neighborhood where they lived for nearly a decade, in [an interview with one of France's most popular talk shows](#).

49-year-old "Stella," who is married with children, spoke with Europe 1 host Olivier Delacroix about two antisemitic episodes in 2017 that, she said, had driven the family out of their home. Now, Stella said, she and her husband continually debate whether their family should make aliyah to Israel.

For nine years, Stella and her family lived in a house in the suburb of Romainville, which lies about five miles to the east of central Paris. "We felt good, we never had the least concerns," she said. "We loved the neighborhood, everything was always open on a Sunday, we knew all the store owners."

Life for the family changed dramatically in March 2017, when they awoke one morning to find that their house had been ransacked while they slept. To her shock, Stella learned from the police forensics team dispatched to their home that the intruders had gained entry through their daughter's bedroom window. Much as the family wanted to believe that they were the targets of a routine burglary – "one that could happen to any family," as Stella put it – only a few items were actually stolen from the house. More suspicious was the spectacle of family photographs taken in Israel that had been ripped up and scattered on the floor.

Shaken by the invasion of their home, Stella and her family took a ten-day vacation in April. Shortly after their return in early May, Stella was preparing to drive her daughter to school when she saw to her horror that the word "Juifs" – "Jews" – had been scrawled in large letters on the driver's side of the family car.

'Mommy, do you see what's written there?' my daughter asked me," Stella recalled. "I told her, "Don't worry, daddy will take it to the garage, let's get in the car.'" As the two of

them drove to school, Stella said, "I was honked a dozen times. I lowered my window and said, 'Yes, I know what is written on my door.'"

But it wasn't the antisemitic graffiti that the other drivers were calling attention to. "One of them called out, 'Madam, your tires!'" Stella said. Pulling into a gas station, she realized that her rear wheels had been slashed. To underline the message, the word "Israel" had been scrawled on the back of the car.

When she spoke with the police later on, Stella said that one officer had told her, "Listen, I'm speaking to you not as a cop, but as a father – you have to leave." The family did just that, moving that same evening to Stella's parents' house. More than one year on, she said of their experience, "I cry less when I talk about what happened, but I can say that we fled from antisemitism in 2017."

It was at that point that Stella and her husband began to discuss moving to Israel. Several years of antisemitism had taken their toll on the French Jewish community's morale, they reflected. "It is not for nothing that we put our children in Jewish schools," Stella remarked.

At present, the family remains in France. "I said that I had seniority in my job of 23 years, our children had their lives here, I did not want to leave," Stella recounted. "That was one year ago. But with what we see on TV, and what we hear, we will end up leaving one day or another.

This is the daily antisemitism that expresses itself not in murders, but in a stillycide of acts steadily eroding the sense of security of Jews who live in such places. The poor ones can't leave; Mireille Knoll and Sara Halimi, two elderly Jewish ladies killed by Muslim neighbors, had both lived in subsidized housing. It doesn't take bullets or explosives to create an atmosphere of fear. It need only be a nighttime

break-in designed less to steal valuables (only a handful of things were taken from Stella's family) than to frighten the Jewish inhabitants. For when they woke up the next day, they would find that the major damage done by the night intruders was to photographs, taken in Israel, which the burglars had ripped up. Clearly, a sign intended to scare the Jewish victims. And it worked. "Shaken by the invasion of their home," they took a ten-day vacation to calm down. On their return, they found, in large letters scrawled on the driver's side of their car, the word "JUIFS." The mother assured her daughter that she shouldn't worry, her father would take it to the garage and take care of it, but the damage had been done: the girl was frightened. And as they drove to school, people honked at Stella; she was confused, but one person warned her that the back tires on her car had been slashed, and on the back of the car, another word had been scrawled: "ISRAEL."

One of the policemen who came to investigate, who surely had dealt with similar cases, knew the true dimensions of the problem of Muslim antisemites, advised them to leave: "Listen, I'm speaking to you not as a cop, but as a father – you have to leave." And they did leave, that very day, moving in with her parents in a neighborhood deemed still safe. They had been scared out of their house by unidentified Muslims, who had struck them twice, first with the break-in at night, and then with the vandalized car, and they did not wish to risk a third, possibly much more dangerous, encounter. They have children. They could not live with the fear.

And now Stella and her family talk about moving to Israel, giving up their French lives, worrying about what France will be like for their children. The Muslims have won, they are indeed managing to terrorize these inoffensive people, and many others, too. "I have been made victorious through terror," Muhammad claims in a famous Hadith. They are merely emulating him, the Perfect Man and Model of Conduct. Stella doesn't want to leave. She has 23 years of seniority at her

job; if she moves to Israel, all that seniority will be lost. Besides, France is their home. It is where all their relatives and friends live. It is where they grew up, were educated, started a family. They had many happy years living in Paris, without any troubles. One does not easily leave all that. But now many Muslims have arrived, and staked their territorial claim. This is now their neighborhood. No Jews should be expected to be safe, not here, not anymore. They find the Jewish families and target them: houses invaded, cars vandalized. They make sure the antisemitic nature of these attacks is clear; "JUIFS," they scrawl, and "ISRAEL," on the family car. They want the Jews to leave.

In France, Jews are now afraid to wear their yarmulkes in public, for fear of being attacked. "You can't walk in Paris wearing a yarmulke. You're taking your life in your hands," says Steve Eisenberg, co-founder of the Jewish International Connection of New York. Cries of "Sale Juif" – "Dirty Jew" – can be heard in the Metro directed at anyone who "looks Jewish." Ilan Halimi was kidnapped, tortured over several weeks, and finally murdered by a Muslim gang. Four Jews were killed in cold blood at a kosher grocery. A rabbi and three small children – two of them his, shot in front of him before he too was killed – were murdered outside a Jewish school in Toulouse. An 8-year-old boy was beaten to the ground outside his Jewish day school in Sarcelles, and a 15-year-old girl wearing a Jewish school uniform was slashed across the face by an unknown man. An 85-year-old Jewish woman was stabbed eleven times and set on fire by her Muslim neighbor's son, who had known her all his life and been befriended by her. Another elderly Jewish woman, Sara Halimi, was beaten and thrown out a window to her death by a young Muslim neighbor yelling "Allahu akbar."

On January 9, 2018, fires roared through two kosher Paris markets, weeks after swastikas were painted on both stores. January 9 was the third anniversary of the Hyper Cacher

supermarket massacre in Paris. Two yarmulke-wearing Jewish brothers were attacked in a Paris suburb by Muslims wielding a hacksaw.

As this rash of anti-Semitic attacks – I've merely given a handful of examples above – almost all at the hands of Muslims, has hit France, many Jews are fleeing. The United States is, after Israel, their main destination.

In France, the third-largest Jewish community in the world, after Israel and the United States, is under terrific stress. More than 60,000 Jews have left France since 2000. The number of antisemitic attacks increased by 69% in the first eight months of 2018 over the same period a year earlier.

What could be done to make Jews feel more secure? The police could establish more units dedicated solely to protecting Jews in areas where Muslims have been threatening, or attacking, Jews. Penalties for antisemitic crimes should be increased. They should be treated as a special category of hate crime. They should be judged in the context of recent history. Hate crimes against Jews bespeak eliminationism, a genocidal impulse. The French state should make it a priority to have undercover policemen and policewomen dressed as Jews, with everything from a simple yarmulke to the full garb of an Orthodox Jew for a policeman, and Orthodox wigs for policewomen. These people could patrol the streets in the neighborhoods where Jews feel most threatened, and ride, too, in the metro. They could be furnished with other identifying marks: a Hebrew-language newspaper, an Israeli book, a Star-of-David on a silver chain. Anything that might serve as a come-hither prop to attract Muslim toughs who would discover, much to their chagrin, that the unarmed Jew they thought they were attacking turned out to be a policeman with a gun.

But there has to be, as well, an understanding that the more Muslims there are, the more antisemitic acts there will be. Antisemitism is too much a part of Islam. What can France – or

other European countries – do, aside from better policing? Will they monitor all the mosques, to make sure that antisemitism is not a part of the imams' sermons? Will they promptly close any mosque where such anti-Jewish sentiments are expressed? These countries have insufficiently recognized the fear felt by their Jewish populations. Their governments should be making Muslim antisemitism the subject of constant public discussion, spoken about on every conceivable occasion, and not only just after there has been an antisemitic attack. Do they really want the Jews in their countries to be driven out by a Muslim population that, in contrast to the Jews, has contributed so very little to the general welfare? And is it fair to Europe's Jews to allow so many Muslims into Europe, knowing that they are carriers of the virus of antisemitism? The German designer Kurt Lagerfeld summed up the situation most succinctly in addressing his own country: "You cannot kill millions of Jews and then take in millions of their worst enemies afterwards, even if there are decades [between the two events]."

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