



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on September 11, 2017

Jews Continue To Be Targeted in France

"This odious act is proof, if we needed any, that the Jews of France are especially threatened in the street, and even more disturbingly, within their very homes," said Francis Kalifat, president of the Representative Council of French Jewish Institutions (Conseil Représentatif des Institutions juives de France, CRIF). CRIF is an umbrella organization of various Jewish groups in France.



Kalifat was responding to an attack late last week in a Parisian suburb upon a Jewish family in a home invasion. The government released the information Sunday. Three members of the family in Livry-Gargan, located in the northeast suburbs of Paris, were kidnapped, brutally beaten, and robbed. The National Bureau for Vigilance against Anti-Semitism (NBVCA) said the home belonged to Roger Pinto, who is president of the Siona group, which represents Sephardic Jews. The home was protected by metal bars, but the attackers cut through the bars to gain entry.

Pinto was able to secretly contact the police, which caused the attackers to leave.

The motivation appears to have been that because the family was Jewish, they "have money." This motivation explains some of the historic animosity toward Jews in Europe — that they tend to be wealthier.

(Of course, it is not new for some to resent those with more wealth, which often provides a justification for thievery, and even demagogic attacks by leftist politicians, who often rail against "the rich." Instead of invading the home of a wealthier person, you can have the government take their wealth for you.)

Because the attack occurred in a private home, rather than in a public place, some Jewish leaders fear that this indicates a growing trend. For example, Sarah Halimi, a 65-year-old Orthodox Jew, was murdered in April in Paris by a Muslim neighbor, Kada Traore (an immigrant from Mali). In that case, the motivation was almost certainly antagonism because of her religion. It is not yet known if the assailants upon the Pinto family were Islamic, but they clearly targeted them because they were Jewish, and therefore, in the attackers' words, would "have money." The assailants were identified as black men, who took jewelry, cash, and credit cards.

Credit cards were taken from a Jewish couple in another Paris suburb in 2014, which the attackers used to withdraw cash from an ATM.

Five thousand Jews left France for Israel in 2016, continuing a trend that has accelerated since 2011. The main concern appears to be fear of attacks from Islamic terrorists in France.

"The Aliyah (the act of moving to Israel) of French Jews has been significant over the last decade," said Danie Benhaim, who leads the Jewish Agency of Israel. France hosts the largest number of Jews of any nation in Europe (about 500,000), making it the home of the third-largest number of Jews in the world.

A recent poll by the French Institute of Public Opinion found that 43 percent of French Jews are considering moving to Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been quite open about



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inviting French Jews to relocate to Israel, saying, “Every Jew everywhere should know that they have a home in Israel.”

Some Jews who do opt to move to Israel return to France, which provides a lesson we can learn about the Jewish exodus from France to Israel. When Jews leave France for Israel, they often encounter economic difficulties. Netanyahu’s promise he would “take care of them” has been misunderstood by some to mean the Israeli government would provide them with jobs and housing. A welfare state, after all, is a powerful magnet for immigration. But when European Jews arrive in Israel, they often discover that the government there does not have as generous a welfare state as the one they left.

Furthermore, Jews emigrating to Israel are confronted with the ongoing Arab-Israeli hostilities, which poses additional challenges. The well-known White House press corps veteran Helen Thomas, now deceased, was asked a few years ago what the Jews in Israel should do in the face of Arab hostility. She responded, “Tell them to get the hell out of Palestine.” When asked where they should go, Thomas suggested they go “home” to Germany or Poland. Of course, the reason many Jews migrated to Palestine after World War II was that they did not feel very welcome, to say the least, in Germany or Poland. Today, many argue that the solution for the Arab-Israeli conflicts is for Jews to “go home” to Europe. But if the Arabs in the Middle East truly want Jews to leave Israel, it makes little logical sense for Islamic terrorists to target them in European countries, like France.

Not wishing to place themselves in the boiling cauldron of Middle Eastern conflicts, most Jews have decided to stay put in France — for now. However, their lives, and the lives of their non-Jewish countrymen would be much safer, and their liberty more secure, if larger numbers of the Jews themselves were armed. Tragically, European Jews were disarmed prior to the Holocaust, and in France today, restrictive gun laws have left the civilian population largely defenseless in the face of terrorist attacks.

Logically, if the perpetrators of this recent home invasion in France believed the “wealthy” Jews were armed, they would have been less likely to have invaded the home to rob and terrorize them. Even the perception that civilians are likely to be armed can deter a person intent on violence. It is noteworthy that mass shootings invariably take place in “gun-free zones,” such as schools, movie theaters, churches, post offices, and the like. This is a lesson that Americans can learn from this unfortunate episode in Europe.



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