



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on December 11, 2018

Many Jews No Longer Feel Safe in Europe

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 then go, Thomas suggested that they should return to their "home," which she identified as either 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 either Germany or Poland.



But a recent study conducted by the European Union (EU) indicates that more than one in three Jews have considered leaving Europe sometime during the past five years, because they no longer feel safe in Europe.

Twelve nations in Europe are the home for 96 percent of the Jews that are still in Europe. The nation where the most Jews expressed feelings of insecurity was France, followed by Poland, Belgium, and Germany. The hostility toward Jews is expressed either online, in the workplace, or in graffiti scrawled on walls near a synagogue. Sometimes there is actual violence, via invasions of synagogues or even Jewish homes. Many Jews have been attacked on the streets.

Interestingly, EU officials suggested member governments combat the rising hatred of the Jews by commemorating the history of the Holocaust, in which six million Jews died. European Commission head Frans Timmermans told reporters, "What we need now is concrete action in the member states."

It is doubtful that reciting the history of the Holocaust would deter anti-Semites. Does anyone think that an Islamist who hates the Jews so much that he is willing to kill them is going to suddenly change his attitude if he learns more about the National Socialist (Nazi) effort to kill all of them? It may just encourage them.

One "concrete action" taken by governments in response to the rise in actual violence against Jews is the presence of soldiers at the doors of synagogues or Jewish schools. In 2015, a volunteer guard outside a Jewish synagogue in Denmark was shot dead when he confronted an armed Islamist intent on entering the building where a bar mitzvah was being celebrated. Fortunately, his heroic action deterred the attacker long enough for the police to arrive. The arrival of police led to the assailant's demise. In Paris, a 2014 attack on the Synagogue de la Roquette was thwarted by several volunteer guards. Apparently, the rioters wanted revenge for Israeli actions in Gaza.

Despite these heroic actions, many Jews have lost confidence in the ability of their government to protect them, leaving them to contemplate leaving Europe, or even disassociating themselves from their Jewish community.

Israel is a logical destination if they do leave Europe. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been quite open about inviting French Jews to relocate to Israel, saying, "Every Jew everywhere should



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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 to “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.

And, of course, the Jews have to know the Middle East is a boiling cauldron of conflicts. Most Arabs, whether Muslim or Christian, tend to agree with Helen Thomas — the Jews should go “home” to Europe. But in Europe, with its rising number of Islamic immigrants, the Jews find much hostility — even violence. (It should be noted that Muslims who commit such violence in Europe against Jews are in the minority, but that doesn’t matter if you are the Jews on the receiving end of the violence perpetrated by that minority).

Not wishing to just jump out of the European frying pan into the Middle Eastern fire, most Jews in Europe have opted to stay in Europe — 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 Europe today, restrictive gun laws have left the civilian population largely defenseless in the face of terrorist attacks. Civilian gun ownership would be especially relevant in preventing home invasions by robbers who believe all Jews are wealthy.

Logically, if the perpetrators of home invasions in France believed the “wealthy” Jews were armed, they would have been less likely to have invaded the home to rob and terrorize the occupants. 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 Jews in Europe — and all Europeans and Americans for that matter — can learn from these unfortunate attacks on synagogues and churches in Europe or America.

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