

6 pages

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Jan 23, 2015

Sen. Klobuchar
Sen. Franken
Rep. McCollum

Re: Benjamin Netanyahu

January 27 is the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz in 1945. Fifteen years ago, May 4, 2000, I was with a group of 40 people from Basilica of St. Mary and Temple Israel who spent the entire day at Auschwitz-Birkenau. In fact, we walked from Auschwitz to Birkenau on the infamous railroad tracks, apparently one of the few groups to have ever done so. At the end of this wrenching visit, the youngest in the group, and myself, 60 the day we were there, were chosen to light a candle in memory at a gathering place between the ruins of the ovens. I will never forget that sacred time.

A couple of weeks ago, in Paris, over a million people gathered to remember the deadly attacks that killed about 20 people (included in that number are the attackers who died – they were deaths too.) The day after the gigantic march, the STrib had a picture featuring the leaders who stood in solidarity. There appeared to be a half dozen or so. I had a particular interest in this gathering because a good friend of mine, a lifelong Parisian and long-time journalist, was there, and was shocked by the “Je Suis Charlie” attack.

One of those few leaders pictured in the front row that day was Benjamin Netanyahu.

A few days later I got some context, in the form of the enclosed Tikkun newsletter, from a former member of the Israel Knesset. It speaks for itself at the top of page two.

Now, I come to find that Netanyahu is being invited to speak to a joint session of Congress, and the timing and the motivation of both himself and the GOP are highly suspect and relate to such things as his own reelection, and our own U.S. policy towards Iran, which is, thank God, finally appearing to be more sane.

I understand that anyone can be invited by the Speaker to speak before Congress.

This particular speaker, for the apparent reasons given, is one of those who I would urge you to not support by even being in the room when he appears. At the very least, support the President's efforts to normalize relationships between Iran and the U.S.

The last thing we need (which the GOP seems to be lobbying for) is another war.

Sincerely,

Dick Bernard

From: Tikkun magazine@tikkun.org
Subject: Uri Avnery on Paris Massacre & Zionism
Date: January 16, 2015 at 6:22 PM
To: dick_bernard@msn.com

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Editor's note: Uri Avnery is the leader of the Israeli peace movement Gush Shalom. A soldier in the Israeli war of independence, he served in the Israeli Knesset. His articles appear in the Tikkun Daily blog which you can receive either daily or in weekly digest form **FOR FREE** by signing up at: www.tikkun.org/tikkundaily/join-tikkun-daily/

Uri Avnery

January 17, 2015

Waving in the first Row (Reflections on the recent Paris Massacre and Zionism)

THE THREE Islamic terrorists could have been very proud of themselves, if they had lived to see it.

By committing two attacks (quite ordinary ones by Israeli standards) they spread panic throughout France, brought millions of people onto the streets, gathered more than 40 heads of states in Paris. They changed the landscape of the French capital and other French cities by mobilizing thousands of soldiers and police officers to guard Jewish and other potential targets. For several days they dominated the news throughout the world.

Three terrorists, probably acting alone. Three!!!

FOR OTHER potential Islamic terrorists throughout Europe and America, this must look like a huge achievement. It is an invitation for individuals and tiny groups to do the same again, everywhere.

Terrorism means striking fear. The three in Paris certainly succeeded in doing that. They terrorized the French population. And if three youngsters without any qualifications can do that, imagine what 30 could do, or 300!

Frankly, I did not like the huge demonstration. I have been in many demonstrations in my time, maybe more than 500, but always against the powers that be. I have never participated in a demonstration called by the government, even when the purpose was good. They remind me too much of the late Soviet Union, Fascist Italy and worse. Not for me, thank you.

But this particular demonstration was also counterproductive. Not only did it prove that terrorism is effective, not only did it invite copycat attacks, but it also hurt the real fight against the fanatics.

To conduct an effective fight, one has to put oneself first into the shoes of the fanatics and try to understand the dynamic that pushes young local-born Muslims to commit such acts. Who are they? What do they think? What are their feelings? In what circumstances did they grow up? What can be done to change them?

After decades of neglect, that is hard work. It takes time and effort, with results uncertain. **Much easier for**

politicians to march in the street in front of the cameras.

AND WHO marched in the first row, beaming like a victor?

Our own and only Bibi.

How did he get there? The facts came out within record time. Seems he was not invited at all. On the contrary, President Francois Hollande sent explicit messages: please, please don't come. It would turn the demo into a show of solidarity with the Jews, instead of a public outcry for the freedom of the press and other "republican values". Netanyahu came nevertheless, with two extreme rightist ministers in tow.

Placed in the second row, he did what Israelis do: he shoved aside a black African president in front of him and placed himself in the front row.

Once there, he began waving to the people on the balconies along the way. He was beaming, like a Roman general in his triumphal parade. One can only guess the feelings of Hollande and the other heads of state – who tried to look appropriately solemn and mournful – at this display of Chutzpah.

Netanyahu went to Paris as part of his election campaign. As a veteran campaigner, he knew that three days in Paris, visiting synagogues and making proud Jewish speeches, were worth more than three weeks at home, slinging mud.

THE BLOOD of the four Jews murdered in the kosher supermarket was not yet dry, when Israeli leaders called upon the Jews in France to pack up and come to Israel. Israel, as everybody knows, is the safest place on earth.

This was an almost automatic Zionist gut reaction. Jews are in danger. Their only safe haven is Israel. Make haste and come. The next day Israeli papers reported joyfully that in 2015 more than 10,000 French Jews were about to come to live here, driven by growing anti-Semitism.

Apparently, there is a lot of anti-Semitism in France and other European countries, though probably far less than Islamophobia. But the fight between Jews and Arabs on French soil has little to do with anti-Semitism. It is a struggle imported from North Africa.

When the Algerian war of liberation broke out in 1954, the Jews there had to choose sides. Almost all decided to support the colonial power, France, against the Algerian people.

That had a historical background. In 1870, the French minister of justice, Adolphe Cremieux, who happened to be a Jew, conferred French citizenship on all Algerian Jews, separating them from their Muslim neighbors.

The Algerian Liberation Front (FLN) tried very hard to draw the local Jews to their side. I know because I was somewhat involved. Their underground organization in France asked me to set up an Israeli support group, in order to convince our Algerian co-religionists. I founded the "Israeli Committee For A Free Algeria" and published material which was used by the FLN in their effort to win over the Jews.

In vain. The local Jews, proud of their French citizenship, staunchly supported the colonists. In the end, the Jews were prominent in the OAS, the extreme French underground which conducted a bloody struggle against the freedom fighters. The result was that practically all the Jews fled Algeria together with the French when the day of reckoning arrived. They did not go to Israel. Almost all of them went to France. (Unlike the Moroccan and Tunisian Jews, many of whom came to Israel. Generally, the poorer and less educated chose Israel, while the French-educated elite went to France and Canada.)

What we see now is the continuation of this war between Algerian Muslims and Jews on French soil. All the four "French" Jews killed in the attack had North African names and were buried in Israel.

Not without trouble. The Israeli government put great pressure on the four families to bury their sons here. They wanted to bury them in France, near their homes. After a lot of haggling about the price of the graves, the families finally agreed.

It has been said that Israelis love immigration and don't love the immigrants. That certainly applies to the new "French" immigrants. In recent years, "French" tourists have been coming here in large numbers. They were often disliked. Especially when they started to buy up apartments on the Tel Aviv sea front and left them empty, as a kind of insurance, while young local people could neither find nor afford apartments in the metropolitan area. Practically all these "French" tourists and immigrants are of North African origin.

WHEN ASKED what drives them to Israel, their unanimous answer is: anti-Semitism. That is not a new phenomenon. As a matter of fact, the vast majority of Israelis, they or their parents or grandparents, were driven here by anti-Semitism.

The two terms – anti-Semitism and Zionism – were born at almost the same time, towards the end of the 19th century. Theodor Herzl, the founder of the Zionist movement, conceived his idea when he was working in France as a foreign correspondence of a Viennese newspaper during the Dreyfus affair, when virulent anti-Semitism in France reached new heights. (Anti-Semitism is, of course, a misnomer. Arabs are Semites, too. But the term is generally used to mean only Jew-haters.)

Later, Herzl wooed outspoken anti-Semitic leaders in Russia and elsewhere, asking for their help and promising to take the Jews off their hands. So did his successors. In 1939, the Irgun underground planned an armed invasion of Palestine with the help of the profoundly anti-Semitic generals of the Polish army. One may wonder if the State of Israel would have come into being in 1948 if there had not been the Holocaust. Recently, a million and a half Russian Jews were driven to Israel by anti-Semitism.

ZIONISM WAS born at the end of the 19th century as a direct answer to the challenge of anti-Semitism. After the French revolution, the new national idea took hold of all European nations, big and small, and all of the national movements were more or less anti-Semitic.

The basic belief of Zionism is that Jews cannot live anywhere except in the Jewish State, because the victory of anti-Semitism is inevitable everywhere. Let the Jews of America rejoice in their freedom and prosperity – sooner or later that will come to an end. They are doomed like Jews everywhere outside Israel.

The new outrage in Paris only confirms this basic belief. There was very little real commiseration in Israel. Rather, a secret sense of triumph. The gut reaction of ordinary Israelis is: "We told you so!" and also: "Come quickly, before it is too late!"

I HAVE often tried to explain to my Arab friends: the anti-Semites are the greatest enemy of the Palestinian people. The anti-Semites have helped drive the Jews to Palestine, and now they are doing so again. And some of the new immigrants will certainly settle beyond the Green Line in the occupied Palestinian territories on stolen Arab land.

The fact that Israel benefits from the Paris attack has led some Arab media to believe that the whole affair is really a "false flag" operation. Ergo, in this case, the Arab perpetrators were really manipulated by the Israeli Mossad.

After a crime, the first question is "cui bono", who benefits? Obviously, the only winner from this outrage is Israel. But to draw the conclusion that Israel is hiding behind the Jihadists is utter nonsense.

The simple fact is that all Islamic Jihadism on European soil hurts only the Muslims. Fanatics of all stripes generally help their worst enemies. The three Muslim men who committed the outrages in Paris certainly did Binyamin Netanyahu a great favor.

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