

**THE WEEK THAT WAS: JEWS SHOCKED BY MORE BARBARIC  
ISLAMIC VIOLENCE, POLLARD'S PAROLE DENIED (AGAIN), &  
RETRACING LVIV'S JEWISH HERITAGE**

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**STATEMENT BY HON. IRWIN COTLER**

**ON THE JERUSALEM SYNAGOGUE ATTACK**

**Nov. 18, 2014**

**Mr. Speaker, early this morning in Jerusalem, two Palestinian men wielding knives, axes and guns stormed a synagogue, killing four people and injuring eight, including one Canadian. This brutal attack is part of a recent escalation in terrorist violence. Indeed, on the day of the terrorist attack in this House, a terrorist attack killed a three-month-old baby in Jerusalem, and others since. Moreover, this escalation cannot be divorced from the incitement to hate and violence and the glorification of terror propagated by much of the Palestinian media and leadership, where Palestinian authority officials have praised terrorists as “heroic martyrs”, declared that Jerusalem needs blood to purify itself of Jews, while Hamas celebrated the attack and President Abbas' party's Facebook page today announced that candy was being distributed in celebration of it. I join with all hon. members in offering our heartfelt condolences to the victims of today's attack, while we call for an end to incitement, an end to the glorification of terror, an end to the terror itself, and a commitment to peace and non-violence.**

**CIJR Congratulates Irwin Cotler, MP for Mount Royal, and former Justice Minister, for being honoured with Maclean's Magazine “Parliamentarian of the Year.” [to Read the Full Article Click the Following [Link](#)—Ed.]**

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**THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF MICHAEL ZEHAF-BIBEAU,**

**A SOLDIER OF ALLAH**

*Paul Merkley*

[Bayview Review](#), Nov. 18, 2014

Islam is becoming more dangerous for everybody every day. In a typical evening broadcast on any of the major global news-networks at least one in three leading items brings to our ears and eyes the horrific effects of the command of Muhammad to “slay the unbeliever.” Typically, there will be stories about this day’s work by suicide-bombers: scores of people who had been going about their daily lives, removed from the earth in the blink of an eye because of the need of dedicated individuals and groups to make theological statements. As I was writing these words the emergency services were cleaning up the human muck left by such incidents in several Arab countries from Mali to Pakistan, in Indonesia and in Muslim parts of Africa as well as in parts of Africa being newly-won for Allah from nominally Christian regimes, such as that in Nigeria. Not always at the top of the news but always going on somewhere are similar events in the Muslim parts of China, Central Asia and the South Pacific - everywhere, in short.

The usual intent of these mass-murderers is to display to the world how utterly right he or they are about a point of theological difference between real Muslims and false Muslims. The Holy Qur’an teaches that such differences cannot be set right by argument, because entering into argument with falsifiers of the truth would have to begin with recognizing the right of falsehood to exist at all. Being the inheritors of a spiritual tradition that has at its heart the conviction that God, the Creator of All, has made us in his image (Genesis 1:26), equipped with free will and intelligence, fully responsible for our choices and thus always liable to error —

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we cannot grasp this zero-sum thinking, and we inevitably go wrong when we  
imagine that we can – that is, when we rush into the debate seeking to help things  
out by separating the “moderates” from the “radicals.”

Within the world of Islam, there have always been elements so fanatical -  
nowadays, our journalists call them “Islamists” – that the political leaders of the  
time have had to rally the community against them, using the full force of loyal  
and equally bloody-minded armies to crush and pulverize them - for the sake of  
the continuity of life. In the absence of such loyal and bloody-minded armies, the  
leaders of the regime have no alternative but to flee the land. In this connection,  
the story of the “Assassins” of the Eleventh to Thirteenth Centuries is instructive.

A few weeks ago there went out from the website of Islamic State to all the  
faithful everywhere in the world this ukase from Abu Muhammad al Adnan: “If you  
are not able to find an IED, a bullet, then single out the disbelieving American,  
Frenchman or any of their allies. Smash his head with a rock, or slaughter him with  
a knife, or run him over with your car.” Here we find up-to-date and practical  
advice for carrying out the mandate that Muhammad left to all the faithful: “Fight  
and slay the Pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and  
lie in wait for them in every stratagem (Sura 9:5.) ISIS’s hot-off-the-press  
instructions lack nothing to make them immediately applicable to daily life.  
Paradoxically, as the Islamist organizations have mutated to meet the challenge of  
commanding millions of souls in the age of the internet and cell-phone, unlimited  
possibilities for solitary response have also ramified - making use of objects lying  
as close to hand today as the knife was in the days of the Prophet, items for which  
the world owes everything to European invention and nothing to Islam.

Now cottage-industry jihad has come to Canada. In recent weeks, Canadian  
citizens have been murdered by solitary Muslim zealots in broad light of day  
because their uniforms identified them as Canadian military. Progressive  
politicians and commentators are exhausting their deposit of credibility as they  
argue whether such creatures as Michael Zehaf-Bibeau and Martin Rouleau were  
“solitary agents” or foot-soldiers in the ranks of some Islamist organization,

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known or yet to be uncovered. The first murdered Nathan Cirillo, a ~~resisting~~ soldier standing guard at the National Cenotaph and then ran up Parliament Hill — and into the Centre Block intent on murdering parliamentarians; the second used his car to murder soldier Patrice Vincent on a street-curb in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec. Each left unambiguous testimony to his conviction that he was a soldier for Allah.) Neither of these individuals needed to have been a card-carrying member of anything in order to win the prize of eternal martyrdom held out by these internet scholars of Islam. Here is the paradox: by acting utterly alone, seeking the purpose of his life in annihilation of himself and others, each of these men was accomplishing, all by himself, everything for which all the Islamist organizations exist. This is not the sort of individualism that Western political philosophers like to celebrate.

Many commentators (including the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in Canada's Parliament) persist in ringing the changes on the theme that Zehaf-Bibeau's motives are a mystery. ("Mulcair deems Ottawa shooter Michael Zehaf Bibeau a criminal, but not a terrorist," National Post, October 29, 2014.) It is politically urgent to such people to keep maximum distance between this mad man's deed and the Muslim community. But most people acknowledge that Zehaf-Bibeau knew exactly what he was doing, and that we do not need specialized sociological or therapeutic vocabulary to comprehend it. He simply wanted everything that we belong to die. The marvelous fact is that Zehaf-Bibeau accomplished just the opposite of what he intended. He assaulted the Center Bloc and briefly made most of the Members of Parliament his prisoners, cowering in realistic fear for their lives. But when they were let out, they were changed for ever. Only a few hours later, we saw the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Leader of the Liberal step out of their places in the House and embrace without embarrassment - something none of us ever expected to live to see!

An even more profound and widespread effect could be seen when Remembrance Day came around a few days later. For several decades now, the Remembrance Day ceremonies at the National Memorial in Ottawa and those held at the thousands of municipal monuments throughout the land have stood alone as occasions in our public life when Christian hymns are sung aloud by children's

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choirs and by unembarrassed crowds of civilians and when prayers are sung/ out loud to God — and it is all televised without interruption! This year's Remembrance Day (as noted by the Hamilton Spectator) was marked by “record commemorative crowds, soaring poppy sales, a revived drive for a statutory holiday and media coverage stretching over several days.... Far from fading in significance as once feared, Remembrance Day is resonating with Canadians more now than it has in decades.” (Hamilton Spectator, November 7; “Remembrance Day 2014; Record-Breaking Sales Lead to Poppy shortage,” Huffingtonpost.ca, November 7, 2014.) And this year, as a bonus, there has been a stream of statements from all the Muslim organizations and from the Mosques affirming loyalty to Canada and repudiation of violence. None of this bears any resemblance to what this soldier of Allah intended.

*Paul Merkley is a CIJR Academic Fellow*

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**POLLARD'S PAROLE PLASTERING**

*Gil Hoffman*

[Jerusalem Post](#), Nov. 19, 2014

Today, Israeli agent Jonathan Pollard enters the 30th year of his life sentence for the crime of passing classified information to an ally. As he does so, he is aware that yet another possible door to his long-awaited freedom has just slammed shut. The first time such a door closed was November 21, 1985, when he was prevented from entering the Israeli Embassy in Washington and arrested outside. Today also

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marks another significant anniversary: 19 years since the day he ~~retained his life~~ for parole after 10 years in prison. Since then, he has decided repeatedly not even to try and seek parole, because his release would be conditional, and his lawyers had told him that he had no chance in a parole hearing where the legal deck would be overwhelmingly stacked against him.

Many have questioned why Pollard never even tried the parole path and focused instead on seeking clemency - asking presidents of the United States to commute his life sentence to the time he had already served. But after so many years of failure, that strategy was secretly reconsidered and replaced last year, according to documents and information revealed exclusively to *The Jerusalem Post*. Pollard finally applied for parole in December 2013. The person who persuaded him to take that step was the man in whose hands his fate lies: US President Barack Obama. Obama's statements when he came to Israel in March 2013 left no doubt about what approach Pollard should take. The president ended hopes that he would announce clemency for Pollard during the visit as part of a so-called charm offensive. But he hinted that if Pollard were to apply for parole, he would be treated like any other prisoner. "I have no plans for releasing Jonathan Pollard immediately, but what I am going to be doing is make sure that he - like every other American who has been sentenced - is accorded the same kinds of review and same examination of the equities that any other individual would be provided," Obama told Channel 2 anchorwoman Yonit Levi in an interview. Obama said his obligation as president was to uphold his country's laws and make sure they were applied consistently, "to make sure that every individual is treated fairly and equally."

Here was the opportunity that Pollard had been waiting for. He felt he had been treated unfairly and unequally for so many years, and now the president was hinting - in his view, even promising the Israeli people on record on the highly rated nightly news - that he would fix that. Pollard's parole hearing was scheduled for April 1. But then a different opportunity came, the sort Pollard had always made a point of rejecting. Obama was ready to commute Pollard's sentence as a gesture to Israel for releasing Israeli Arab prisoners as part of an American-brokered diplomatic process with the Palestinians. That process nearly brought Pollard home in time for the Passover Seder, but it ultimately failed. Pollard

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[retracing-lvivs-jew-terrorists](#) withdrew his parole application so it would not be connected to a ~~retracing~~ ~~lviv~~ ~~terrorists~~. Only when the trade talk died down did he reapply for a parole hearing, which was scheduled for July 1. He and the team working for his release then had a limited time to make efforts to ensure the parole hearing would go well. To that end, they enlisted the man who is arguably the most respected Israeli in America - possibly the only Israeli who enjoys a close relationship with Obama: then-president Shimon Peres.

Peres's role in bringing about Pollard's release was more than symbolic. He was the prime minister at the time of Pollard's arrest. At the time, he did not alert the embassy staff about Pollard to ensure he would be let in, and he gave the US documents with Pollard's fingerprints that incriminated him. Many Israelis saw Pollard's continued incarceration as a lingering stain on Peres's decades of public service that neither of the medals he recently received in Washington could remove. The two presidents were due to meet in the US capital during Peres's final tour in office on June 25, six days before the parole hearing. Peres vowed to the people of Israel to take action for Pollard, and the Israeli agent's pro-bono lawyers prepared him meticulously. Respected New York attorneys Eliot Lauer and Jacques Semmelman, who have represented Pollard for free for 15 years, met with Peres's aides extensively to explain how the US parole process worked. Lauer reviewed the information with Peres himself at Washington's Willard Hotel immediately before he met with Obama.

Peres's message to Obama was to be the following: You don't have to grant clemency. In fact, you can distance yourself from the matter completely. Just privately let the US Justice Department know that you don't oppose paroling Pollard and letting him leave for Israel. Obama would not need to get his hands dirty, just keep the commitment he had made to Israelis 15 months earlier to treat Pollard fairly, like any other prisoner, and let his parole be assessed naturally on the merits of his case. Following the meeting, Peres's diplomatic adviser Nadav Tamir reported back to the lawyers with good news: The message had indeed been delivered. Peres's office leaked to the press that Obama had personally referred the matter to his attorney-general and close confidant Eric Holder - the head of the American Justice Department and the chief law-enforcement officer of the US government. "The entire nation is interested in releasing Pollard, and I am the

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[emissary of the nation," Peres told reporters after the meeting. "recounting his je/](#)  
[myself as Shimon. I am the representative of the State of Israel, and I speak in the](#)  
[name of its people."...](#)

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**PICKING UP THE PIECES OF A LOST CULTURE**

*Eitan Arom*

[Jerusalem Post](#), Nov. 19, 2014

I'm traveling across the bleak Ukrainian countryside with half a dozen Israeli journalists, two history professors in animated discussion, an employee of Wikipedia and two native speakers of Ukrainian. Together, we form the press attaché for Limmud FSU, an organization that travels the former Soviet Union to stoke the heritage and Jewish life of the Jews still there. We pull off the highway into a town called Brody in Western Ukraine and stop at the main square. In the middle of the overgrown grassy plaza, facing two Soviet-looking apartment blocs and a convenience store, is a synagogue. Or more precisely, what used to be a synagogue - its roof has fallen in and the interior is choked with undergrowth.

We all troop out of the bus. I turn up my collar against the damp and chill. The Great Synagogue of Brody is a metaphor for Eastern European Jewry, written in stone. Cut down at the apex of its greatness, once the site of rich culture, legend and scholarship, it is now derelict. It is a faint shadow of what it was, much like the community to which it once played home. And yet, Europe is full of these ruins.

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Walking around the perimeter of the eerie monument, I ask myself what I'm supposed to feel - other than the cold? Thousands of Jewish cemeteries, schools, *mikvaot* (ritual baths) and places of worship face a similar fate across Ukraine and the rest of Eastern Europe. Languishing for many long years under the cruel and intentional neglect of the Soviet regime, they now overstretch the resources of the region's much-diminished Jewish population to protect.

It's hard to know why these derelict or otherwise reconstituted buildings are so important to the Jewish people. Certainly, history has practical value - there's that oft-repeated idiom about knowing your past to avoid repeating it - but it doesn't explain why Jewish historiography can put such a heavy focus on individual people, places, stories. Surely the broader picture of a people destroyed by industrialized, political hatred does the trick, right? Yet the ghost of a culture that lives in Eastern Europe holds an attraction for today's Jews that I don't pretend to fully understand. Among those traveling with the Limmud FSU press corps is Fania Oz-Salzberger, a professor of history at Haifa University and the daughter of Israeli novel-ist Amos Oz. Rovne is the childhood home of her grandmother, Oz's mother, and is memorialized in Oz's novel *A Tale of Love and Darkness*, soon to be a motion picture starring Natalie Portman. But the Rovne of Oz's book - a community with more than 20,000 Jews - is gone. The house where Oz-Salzberger's mother grew up stands (we attended the installment of a plaque at the site) but the inhabitants share no relation with her other than their goodwill. Even in the absence of the Jewish population they once housed - the same population that invented the Hassidic movement - the abandoned or re-purposed structures that mark our Eastern European heritage command our inexplicable attention and respect.

About three hours by car to the southeast of Rovne is Lviv, where Limmud FSU's annual festival of culture and learning in Ukraine took place this month. The city of pristine Polish architecture is a draw for history-seekers both Jewish and otherwise. Krzysztof Willmann is an amateur historian of Lviv, a Warsaw resident who dedicated himself to researching the place his parents fled after his father ran afoul of the Gestapo. After retiring from his career as a PhD economist, Willmann spent two years in Lviv documenting the rich history of the town. He researches people and places, participating, for example, in the annual International Bruno

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[Schulz Festival celebrating the Jewish artist and critic slaughtered in the Holocaust. It's a vocation that costs rather than earns him money. He describes finding and purchasing with his own funds a letter written by a famous prewar actress from Lviv.](#)

What's the point of this whole business? Why does Willmann care about an actress from a city he didn't grow up in? Why do we Jews care about old hulks of buildings that haven't seen Jewish worship since before the war? Something of an answer to those questions can be found in the achingly tragic and hysterically funny story told in Liev Schreiber's *Everything is Illuminated*, based on Jonathan Safran Foer's novel of the same name. The main character, named Jonathan Safran Foer after the author, is a magpie-like collector of family heirlooms, seeking items for his collection from grandfather's *shtetl* in Western Ukraine. When he reaches the site of the *shtetl*, only one woman remains, a recluse whose sister was his grandfather's sweetheart. She reveals to Foer that before being killed by the Nazis, her sister left her wedding ring buried under the ground, "in case someone should come searching one day." "So they would have something to find?" asks Foer's translator. "No, it does not exist for you," she answers "You exist for it. You have come because it exists.

Stories don't exist for us. They exist whether we see them there or not, and they exist for their own sake. Given that they are there, collecting them seems the only human thing to do. Foer, Oz-Salzberger, Willmann - these people are collectors. They collect stories, mo-ments, and objects from the past. The exercise is important for its own sake. As a journalist, this is a fact I should probably have grasped by now. After all, my world is made up of stories. I scurry around looking for plotlines, characters, settings, anecdotes, and disseminate them to as many people as possible. I do it for its own sake. I do it because these stories exist. Because, unequivocally and above all else, they are human.

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**Friends, On the Sabbath, tomorrow, congregations across Canada, will show their solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Israel - see the link below. On Tuesday, the terrorists struck at the core of our identity as Jews - of who we are - they deliberately committed a grotesque and monstrous attack against innocent worshippers, rabbis, praying to God in the sanctity of a synagogue, a house of worship in Har Noff Israel.**

**The terrorists want us to be afraid - their goal is to promote fear - now is the time to show strong support for Israel and go to Israel and be there just to make the statement "We will not be intimidated". People living in Western society who value life and believe in the sanctity of life are shocked at the outrageous attacks committed by these sociopaths with no moral conscience - they are murderers. How can someone be capable of committing such evil?**

**In Israel, most restaurants, shops and malls have security at their entrances - in Toronto, many synagogues, schools and community centres have security at their entrances - synagogues in Israel will have to follow suit - pogroms against Jews must stop... Plan on attending a synagogue on Shabbat where we will stand together in solidarity...**

***[For More Information Click the Following [Link](#)—Ed.]***

**Shirley Anne Haber, The Media Action Group**

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**CIJR Wishes All Our Friends & Supporters: Shabbat Shalom**

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[The Essentiality of Anger](#): David M. Weinberg, *Jerusalem Post*, Nov. 20, 2014 —A grotesque kind of quiet has taken root among Israelis in the Promised Land; a morose passivity that expresses depression and suggests acquiescence.

[In This Struggle, Israel Can Prevail](#): Dr. Mordechai Kedar, *Arutz Sheva*, Nov. 20, 2014 —During these difficult days of increasing terror, the most urgent question is: What can we do in order to cope optimally with the growing terrorist violence in Israel, knowing that behind the scenes there are several players who are expending intense efforts to bring about an explosion.

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