France deploys 10,000 troops in wake of Charlie Hebdo attack

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France increasingly resembles a police state.

The Socialist Party government of François Hollande has mobilised 10,000 troops onto the streets after last week's attacks on the offices of the *Charlie Hebdo* magazine and the ensuing sieges. Said and Cherif Kouachi carried out the murder of cartoonists and staff at *Charlie Hebdo*'s offices and were later killed in a siege at an industrial building in Dammartin-en-Goële. The other siege at a kosher supermarket in Porte de Vincennes, eastern Paris, ended with the death of Amedy Coulibaly.

Seventeen people were killed by Said and Cherif Kouachi and Coulibaly, including four at the Kosher supermarket—Yohan Cohen, 22, Yoav Hattab, 21, Philippe Braham, said to be in his 40s, and Francois Michel Saada, reportedly in his 60s.

Coulibaly earlier shot dead Clarissa Jean-Philippe, a 27-year-old newly trained police officer. A jogger shot in a separate attack in Paris Wednesday linked to Coulibaly was reported to be "between life and death."

Hollande ordered the massive deployment of troops across France at a crisis meeting with top military, police and defence officials Monday.

Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve stated that nearly 5,000 members of the security forces would be sent to protect France's 717 Jewish schools over the next two days. Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said additional troops would be in place from Tuesday evening in sensitive areas, and that "The mobilisation started this morning."

Le Drian continued: "This is the first time that our troops have been mobilised to such an extent on our own soil. The threats remain and we have to protect ourselves from them. It is an internal operation that will mobilise almost as many men as we have in our overseas operations."

Prime Minister Manuel Valls said synagogues would be protected, as well as mosques, some of which have already been hit by retaliatory attacks. Other measures in force or to be enacted include reinforcing electronic surveillance and anti-terror operations in schools and prisons. Valls spoke of new legislation to enhance surveillance powers that would be operational "in three or four months."

Cazeneuve said Sunday that the Hollande government would seek greater authority to monitor the Internet to counter activity in support of terrorist or subversive activities.

In addition, French law enforcement officers were instructed on the weekend to carry weapons at all times and erase their social media presence because "terror sleeper cells" have been activated, according to a police source quoted by CNN. The source claimed that Coulibaly had made several phone calls about targeting police officers in France.

The known threat used to justify these measures involves only a handful of people.

French authorities say they believe that the attackers had at least one accomplice, who has not been identified, as well as Hayat Boumeddiene, the partner of Coulibaly.

Boumeddiene is confirmed to have left France before the attacks. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has said she arrived in Turkey on January 2 via Madrid, Spain before proceeding to Syria six days later. Footage from Istanbul Airport shows her accompanied by one Mehdi Sabri Belhouchine, a North African male. Boumeddiene exchanged 500 phone calls with the wife of Cherif Kouachi in 2014, according to Paris prosecutor Francois Molins.

Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu, who came to Paris for Sunday's march, has played a key role in

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whipping up a climate of fear over the attacks, to the extent of placing him at odds with Hollande's government.

In a statement, Netanyahu said that he spoke by phone Friday with Celine Shreki, a hostage at the kosher market. The statement read: "To Celine and all French Jews, and to all European Jews, I would like to say: The State of Israel is not just the place to which you turn in prayer. The State of Israel is also your home."

Surrounded by heavily armed bodyguards, Netanyahu paid a visit to the supermarket. He said he was setting up a special cabinet committee to increase immigration from France, home to half a million Jews, and to oversee preparations.

Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon said Saturday that Jews "not just in France, [but also in] Belgium and other places, Sweden" were "under an attack, a combined Islamist, anti-Semitic attack," and that "The safest place for Jews is in the national home of Jews."

Israeli media reported that immigration of Jews from France more than doubled last year, with nearly 7,000 new immigrants in 2014. Parliamentarian Yodel Razvozov, head of the Knesset's Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora Affairs Committee, is to convene an emergency session to prepare to absorb European Jews. *Ha'aretz* reported that Hollande had appealed for Netanyahu not to attend the weekend demonstration over *Charlie Hebdo*, out of concern that he would take attention away from the message of French national unity. France's National Security Agency then decided to invite Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas to provide a counterweight to Netanyahu.

In a video, Coulibaly said he was working with the Kouachi brothers, who, for their part, claimed to be acting on behalf of the Yemeni branch of Al Qaeda (Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula—AQAP). The video, which was, in part, apparently shot by a third person, is the basis for the police identifying possible collaborators with the three gunmen.

Further evidence of the extent of official knowledge of all those involved in the terror attacks reinforces growing suspicions of possible French state involvement. Both of the Kouachi brothers were on British and US terror watch lists, and Coulibaly was previously convicted for plotting to free an Islamist militant from prison. Coulibaly met Cherif Kouachi in prison.

US intelligence agencies have said that Said Kouachi had been placed under surveillance by France in November 2011, but scrutiny was supposedly ended in June 2014 after he was, without explanation, deemed to be no longer dangerous. Surveillance of Cherif Kouachi was supposedly terminated at the end of 2013.

Said Kouachi travelled to Yemen in 2011 for three or more months, according to CNN, where he is believed to have trained with AQAP. "French intelligence officials believe there is a strong probability Cherif Kouachi also travelled to Yemen for a short trip in 2011," and again in 2012, according to US and Yemeni intelligence sources speaking to CNN.

Mourad Hamyd, the 18-year-old who was initially identified as a third suspect in the shootings at *Charlie Hebdo*, was quietly released without charge Friday night. His schoolmates had insisted that he had been in class that day.

A demonstration Sunday by the fascist Front National (FN) in the city of Beaucaire was sparsely attended by fewer than 1,000 people. Party leader Marine Le Pen was reportedly booed and heckled by bystanders.

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