



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on April 2, 2012

French Raid Nets 17, Including Released Terrorist

Among those captured in the raids on Lyon, Paris, Nice, Rouen, Le Mans, Nantes, Marseillie and Toulouse was [Willie Brigitte](#) (left), a terrorist convicted for his role in a plot to destroy the [Lucas Heights nuclear research facility](#) near Sydney, Australia.



The raids came eight days after French police killed Muslim terrorist [Mohammad Merah](#), who attacked a Jewish school in Toulouse, killing a rabbi and three children. He also shot and killed Muslim French soldiers in two other attacks.

"Kick The Ant Pile"

[According to](#) the *New York Times*, "The raids appeared to have two purposes. The first was to 'kick the ant pile,' as the French say — a preventive act to detain a variety of people and interrogate them, to try to ensure that there are no further plots under way and no copycat killings. The president said some Kalashnikov assault rifles had been seized."

The second seemed to be to reinforce [French President Nicolas] Sarkozy's image as tough on crime and on Islamic radicalism, an image that is expected to aid him in the presidential election less than a month away.

Sarkozy said "It's our duty to guarantee the security of the French people. We have no choice. It's absolutely indispensable," the [BBC reported](#).

One of the key finds, apparently, came in Nantes, the [BBC reported](#), "which is believed to be a centre for the Forsane Alizza (Knights of Pride) group, to which [Mohammed] Merah had been linked by some French media." [Reported BBC](#):

[Forsan Alizza] is a Salafist group that was dissolved by the interior ministry in an earlier investigation.

One of those arrested was the group's suspected leader, Mohammed Achamlane.

Police sources told AFP that three Kalashnikovs, a Glock pistol and a grenade were seized at his home.

[Salafi](#) is [a sect](#) of Islam.

The [Global Jihad website reports](#) that Fosan Alizza's purpose is "to trumpet the words of Allah" and "bring Muslims back to the kitab [the Qur'an] and the Sunnah."

According to the group's official source, its main objective is to support the Mujahideen throughout the world. To this end, the group clearly states its rejection of every "democratic" system, and its absolute refusal to ever consider supporting anyone during any kind of election.

The raid in Marseilles, [ABC News reported](#), uncovered a veritable military arsenal of rifles, pistols, and



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tear gas.

Authorities, who believe the suspects were planning a kidnapping, [ABC reported](#), released two of the 19 terror suspects.

All those arrested [were members](#) of Forsane Alizza.

Willie Brigitte

Muslim terrorist Brigitte, who was convicted by a French court in 2007 for conspiring to blow up the Lucas Heights nuclear power facility in Australia, [was released](#) from prison in 2009 for good behavior.

Sydney's [Daily Telegraph reported](#) that Brigitte "moved to Pakistan in 2001 following the September 11 bombings. It was there he began to train in earnest for jihad with other foreigners at a base run by the al-Qaeda-backed Lashkar-e-Toiba, as they all awaited for their instructions to attack the West."

Brigitte returned Paris, but the terror masters there sent him back to Sydney in May 2003 to "make make contact with an established terror cell and await further instructions," the [Telegraph reported](#). He married "unsuspecting army reservist and recent Muslim convert Melanie Brown" 10 days later.

She said she only became suspicious of her husband when he continuously questioned her about her time as a signaller in East Timor, the military equipment she used and her knowledge of army bases. She later sought to downplay the admission.

He moved about in Lakemba in Sydney's southwest, with authorities oblivious to his background or intent. He worked at a takeaway shop and attended a local mosque.

Then he made contact with Sydney architect Faheem Khalid Lodhi. The Pakistan-born architect was central to the plot to bomb a major icon such as the nuclear plant, Pine Gap spy base in central Australia, the national electricity grid or Holsworthy barracks.

Australian police collared Brigitte after French authorities sent word that he was in the country. The Australians nearly botched the collar because they ignored the first entreaty about Brigitte from Paris and then fumbled the second. They put the cuffs on the would-be bomber 10-days after the second request, arresting him on immigration violations and deporting him to France.

[According to](#) Reuters, "During his trial in France, prosecutors said that after converting to Islam in 1998, Brigitte joined a group conducting military-style training in Fontainebleau forest near Paris and later graduated to weapons and explosives training in camps on the Pakistan-Afghan border."

He spent 2-1/2 months in 2001/2002 in a training camp for Lashkar-e-Taiba, a group with ties to al Qaeda.

Prosecutors said Australian police had found in his pocket a printout of an Internet page on nuclear and military facilities in Australia. Brigitte's lawyers maintained during his trial that he was the victim of an Islamophobic witch-hunt.

In 2007, [he landed](#) in French prison with a nine-year sentence for plotting the attack at the power plant. But he was such a good sport in prison that authorities released him three years ago.

Last week, they captured Brigitte at his home in Asnieres, [Reuters reported](#), and seized a computer and cell phone.

Merah's Rampage

It appears as if French authorities are cracking down in the aftermath of Merah's terror attacks in



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March. [According to](#) the *New York Times*, Sarkozy promised that such raids “are going to continue” and will result in the deportation of some people from France.”

The action comes too late for the victims of Merah.

Mohammed Merah, a French Muslim of Algerian descent, launched a killing spree that shook the country to its core.

On March 19, at the school in Toulouse, Merah killed a rabbi and three children — six, eight, and nine years old. Such was Merah’s evil that he even killed the eight-year-old, a girl, after his gun jammed. [According to](#) the *Times*, Merah “pursued his last victim, an 8-year-old girl, into the concrete courtyard, seizing and stopping her by her hair...”

His gun appeared to jam at that point.... Still holding the girl, the killer then changed weapons, from what police have identified as a 9 millimeter pistol to the .45-caliber. He shot her in the head and left, never removing his motorcycle helmet.

Before his rampage at the Jewish school in Toulouse, [he killed](#) a soldier (a Muslim) on March 11 and two more soldiers on March 15.

But Merah went down in a hail of police bullets on March 22, during a raid in which more than 300 rounds were fired, the [Times reported](#).

[According to](#) the *Washington Post*, “Two gunshots were heard inside Merah’s apartment in the early hours of Thursday morning [March 22] ... generating speculation that the young extremist might have committed suicide.”

When police stormed the apartment, “Merah burst out of the bathroom, firing away.”

Armed with a Colt .45 pistol, he shot so fast “it sounded like an automatic weapon,” said Francois Molins, the chief Paris prosecutor.

After sweeping the apartment with gunfire, Gueant said, Merah jumped out of an open window “and he was found dead on the ground below.”

Molins, speaking later, said Merah was killed by a bullet that slammed into his head, fired by police as they returned Merah’s gunshots.

[Authorities arrested](#) Merah’s brother, Abdelkader, his mother, and Abdelkader’s girlfriend. They found explosives in Abdelkader’s car, the [Times reported](#).

Photo: Willie Brigitte



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