

American Marines by Muslim terrorists. These "disengagements" fueled anti-American terrorism, which intensified in 1993, 1995-96, 1998, 2000, and 2001 with the first attempt on the Twin Towers, the terror attacks on American GIs in Saudi Arabia, the explosions in the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the murder of 17 sailors on the USS Cole in Aden, and the terror blitz of September 11, 2001.

Mr. Bush is determined to avoid errors committed by former presidents, who preferred "disengagement" from - rather than head on military engagement with - terror regimes. They confined counter-terror to limited operations, and promoted negotiation and cease-fire with terrorist regimes. Their "disengagement" from a decisive battle against terrorism, facilitated the engagement of terrorists with the American mainland.

Since 1993, the Palestinian Authority has benefited from a sequence of American-encouraged Israeli "disengagements." Since 1993, America has been plagued by an unprecedented wave of Islamic terrorism, which has been energized by Israel's retreats in the face of Palestinian terrorists. Would America encourage Israel to persist in "disengagements" (retreats), thus learning from history by repeating - rather than by avoiding - costly errors? *The writer is a former minister at Israel's embassy in Washington, and a former consul general of Israel in Houston.* (New York Sun Aug 3)

Nazi Echoes in the Gaza 'Disengagement?' By Jeff Jacoby

A reader e-mails a link to a news item from Gaza, where some Jewish residents have "tattooed" their national ID numbers on their arms, Auschwitz-style -- a bitter gesture of protest against their forthcoming expulsion. My correspondent's comment is blunt. "Misusing Holocaust language and imagery," she writes. "Utterly disgusting -- makes me have less sympathy for them."

In just over two weeks, tens of thousands of Israeli troops are scheduled to carry out Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's "disengagement" -- the forced evacuation of every Jewish resident in Gaza and parts of the West Bank. In a country deeply scarred by Holocaust memories, it was inevitable that the wholesale transfer of more than 9,000 Jews from communities where some of them have lived for decades would trigger angry -- and anguished -- comparisons to Nazism.

In the village of Elei Sinai, some residents plan to wear concentration-camp uniforms or yellow stars with the word "Jude" on the day they are expelled. A Likud Party faction opposed to disengagement calls it "an order the likes of which were last signed in German." A member of Israel's parliament set off a storm when he said, "Maybe we killed Eichmann for no reason, because he was also just following orders."

Such Nazi allusions have been sharply condemned. The Anti-Defamation League called them an "inexcusable perversion of history," and Yad Vashem, Israel's renowned Holocaust research institute, warned that they "damage the memory of the Shoah." Some of Sharon's allies on the left, oblivious to such niceties as freedom of speech, even proposed making the non-historical use of Holocaust terminology an offense punishable by up to seven years in prison.

Let's be clear: You don't have to support disengagement to agree that this Nazi-talk is grotesque. The Israeli army is not the Gestapo. The peaceful Jewish residents who will be forced from the homes and land they love are not being sent to gas chambers. Sharon's plan may be delusional -- instead of enabling Israelis to "disengage" from Palestinian violence, it will bring them more of it, and in deadlier forms -- but it isn't the Final Solution.

And yet . . .

And yet there is no getting around the fact that Israel is about to become the first modern, Western nation in more than 60 years to forcibly uproot a whole population -- men, women, children, babies -- solely because they are Jews. There is no getting around the fact that the forthcoming expulsions are rooted in the belief that any future Palestinian state must be Judenrein -- emptied of its Jews. And while it goes without saying that Sharon and every member of his government abominate the Nazis and all they stood for, there is no getting around the fact that disengagement is meant to appease an enemy that has always regarded the genocidal hatred of Jews in a very different light.

Long before there were "occupied territories," Haj Amin El-Husseini, the grand mufti of Jerusalem and leader of Palestine's Arabs, urged Hitler to "solve the problem of the Jewish elements in Palestine and other Arab countries . . . by the same method that the question is now being settled in the Axis countries." When five Arab armies invaded the newborn Israel in 1948, the secretary-general of the Arab League vowed to wage "a war of extermination and a momentous massacre, which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades."

More than half a century later, how much has changed? The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, is the author of a book denying the Holocaust and claiming that Zionists collaborated with the Nazis against the Jews of Europe. Palestinian Authority TV broadcasts poisonous diatribes, like one Friday sermon by Sheik Ibrahim Mudeiris. "The Jews are a virus resembling AIDS, from which the entire world suffers," he preached. "The Jews will not enjoy a life of tranquility under our rule, because they are treacherous by nature and have been throughout history."

Israel's withdrawal from Gaza changes nothing, the senior Hamas leader Mahmoud al-Zahard said recently. He told an Italian newspaper that Israel's existence would be unacceptable even if it were to retreat to the armistice lines of 1949. "In the end, Palestine . . . must become Muslim," he insisted. "And

in the long term Israel will disappear from the face of the Earth."

The abandonment of Gaza and northern Samaria plays directly into the hands of the haters. The sight of Jewish troops expelling Jewish families from their homes and schools will do nothing to promote Arab-Israeli peace. It will reinforce instead the notion that any Jewish presence is intolerable on land the Arabs claim for themselves. And if that is an argument against Jewish life in Gaza, it is also an argument against Jewish life in Israel. (Boston Globe July 31)

The Three Weeks and the Disengagement By Rabbi David Milston

Once again (unfortunately) we have arrived at the time of the year known as "Bein Hametzarim", the three weeks between the 17th of Tammuz and Tisha BeAv. Once again we have proven ourselves unworthy of a Bet Mikdash. Chazal tell us that if the Mikdash is not built in our generation then it is as if it were destroyed in our generation.

I don't know about you all, but I get very depressed when we arrive at this period in our calendar - it is not meant to be there, and we are certainly not meant to view these days as a fixed asset on our balance sheet. The very reason that we do not say "shechecheyanu" during these weeks is based on the fact that we are not happy to once again have reached this time without a Mikdash.

On the one hand we have been zocheh, we have merited to return to Israel, we have merited to return to Yerushalayim and Hebron, but we cannot and must not take these things for granted. I know that there are many who follow the view of former first Chief Rabbi of Israel Rabbi Herzog (of blessed memory), that there will not be a third chorbán, but at the end of the day, as religious Jews we also know that if we are not worthy, then we will not be allowed to stay here, this world is a world of free choice, none of us have a 'blank cheque'. Even Yaakov who had a direct promise of protection from Hashem, feared that maybe that protection would be removed because of sin.

Irrespective of ones political views, giving up parts of the Land of Israel, throwing people out of their homes of thirty years must be perceived as chorbán. One might feel that this is the correct political move, and who knows maybe it is (even those of us who are sure that this is not the correct political move can never be 100% sure, we are after all only human beings), but one cannot and must not be happy about it - bottom line we are regressing, we are having to hand over land that has become ours, substantial portions of the Land of Israel in the North of Shomron and in Gaza. The fact that Hashem has brought us to this situation should be flashing red lights in our faces.

Nothing in life is coincidental, and it cannot be ignored that the day after mourning over the destruction of the Mikdash, (a Mikdash that was destroyed because of pointless hate and inner conflicts within the Jewish people), a new chorbán will be enacted, this is not an overstatement it is for real.

Dear reader, in 1948 we were given the most wonderful gift from the Almighty, the importance of that gift was only emphasized by its historical context - being just three years after the Holocaust. Nineteen years after that we received a further unparalleled beracha - Yerushalayim and Hebron. We interpreted those gifts as signs of redemption, and who in their right mind wouldn't? Now however, when, for whatever reason, we find ourselves on the verge of having to give up substantial parts of Israel, we cannot ignore the religious implications.

We can never know why things happen, and it is a very dangerous and damaging derech to try and rationalize events of history, but I feel that to totally ignore the reality of Israel today, could be compared to an addictive smoker who has been told by his doctor that if he doesn't give up smoking he will die, yet at the very same time that the doctor offers his diagnosis, the patient removes a new packet of cigarettes from his pocket and begins to smoke.

Whether disengagement will happen or not - time will tell - it certainly looks set to happen. What we have to do as religious Jews is cheshbon nefesh. How did we get to this situation? How can we reignite the waves of redemption, what is there for us to do?

I am no politician, and my writing this letter is more for myself than for anyone else, but I do think that there are many things to be done to get back on the right track:

1: The time has come for us, as religious Jews to react properly to the gift given to us 57 years ago. How can there be a reality where so many religious Jews still live in the Diaspora? If the State of Israel is so important and so central to us all then it is not enough to support from without, the time has come to come home. We seem to be reliving Shir HaShirim where the Almighty knocks and knocks at the door, but by the time Israel gets up from her bed to answer the call, the Almighty is no longer there. If we as religious Jews do not show a willingness and love for our homeland by living in it, then why should we deserve to keep it. If we prefer to live in the 'midbar', then G-d forbid maybe we will become the generation who also has to die in the 'midbar'. How can we honestly complain even fight for our rights to a land that is not even important enough to live in. The left wing politicians and their followers in Israel want to trade Land for peace, but at least they want to live in the Land. Anti Zionists refuse to serve in the Army, but they still love Eretz Yisrael - they still live here.

I know that these are hard words, but we also know that they are true. In three weeks time religious Jews around the world will sit on the floor in mourning for Yerushalayim, they will ask G-d to return - but G-d has returned! It is they who sit in the Diaspora waiting. Every seder night people say next year in Jerusalem, whilst at the same time having no real intention to be in Jerusalem next year. If we don't want to have to give up the Land maybe we should show the Almighty that we really want it. Maybe Jews in the Diaspora should put their orange away (*leave the demonstrations to those of us who live in Israel), and start demonstrating about aliya, start signing up for nefesh benefesh, start making real plans to come home.

I honestly cannot fathom how a Jew in the Diaspora can demonstrate against Israel. Firstly, Baruch Hashem there are plenty of Jews in Israel involved in demonstrations, and unfortunately plenty of non-Jews in the world who spend their entire lives criticizing Israel. When I lived in Chutz Laaretz I saw it as my role to unequivocally support my country, now that I am here I demonstrate.

I also find it hard to see how a person not living here can criticize our Prime Minister, after all he will have to live with the repercussions of his decisions, a Jew in the Diaspora will not. Arik Sharon in Sdeirot is much nearer Gaza than Yossi of Brooklyn. How can a Jew who has lived his entire life in chul honestly attack men and women who have dedicated their whole lives to the State of Israel? We may well disagree and that is our right, but whilst living in chul, the only colors that I would ever wave were the blue and white of the Israeli flag.

2: Am Yisrael is a prerequisite for Eretz Yisrael. In the same way that we could not receive the Torah without unity, we cannot be in Israel long term without unity. Over the years I have seen demonstrations about Shabbat, about cemeteries, and of course countless demonstrations about the Land, but I have seen very few demonstrations about unity. We have given out thousands of orange cloths for cars, but we have not stood at junctions with flowers shaking our brothers hands. It is true that the Gush Katif demonstrations have been on the whole very much about reaching out to people in their homes, but I am talking about demonstrations whose sole purpose is to bring together a totally divided people, a people who cannot fathom or even begin to understand how the other half of its people think.

If we do not deal with our problem it will be the end of us - Heaven forbid. There is no real point to the State of Israel if we are not a united people. Unity does not mean compromise it means tolerance and understanding. I have lost hours upon hours of sleep thinking about what will happen when our soldiers start to remove our brothers from their homes in a few weeks time. A moment does not pass in the day when I do not think about this issue.

What would happen if half the Army refused orders? the next day the other half would refuse to serve in Yesha - essentially it will be the end of the Army, and one shudders to continue in this train of thought.

What will happen when thousands of people refuse to move? when demonstrators stop the Army from acting out Government policy? What are the repercussions if by force protestors are able to stop the Government from carrying out laws passed in Knesset?

I am opposed to disengagement with all my heart with all my soul, but I cannot oppose it with all my might because I believe that to do so would bring a bigger churban. This is not a game, the ramifications of our actions are impossible to perceive. Like it or not half the people in Israel support Mr Sharon, how will they react to us if we ignore police, ignore army. I came home to live with my brothers not fight with them. I believe that our cause is just in every sense, I can in no way understand why this act makes sense politically, I have enormous reservations as to how this decision was made - but it was made, it was made in Knesset. Knesset may have its problems, but that is all that I have at present. The Israeli Army, the Israeli Police force are mine too, I do not want to destroy them, and I don't want them to destroy me.

I know that the key to our merit in this Land is our unity. When all is said and done the Egyptian exile and the current exile came about because Jews fought Jews. We must not do this again. we must find a way to our brethren. If so many Jews in Israel are anti-religious, we must ask ourselves why, we cannot excuse ourselves every time by blaming the press. We cannot pray everyday for unity and then block roads stopping traffic for hours and causing suffering to so many innocent people. Two wrongs don't make a right.

As a religious Jew I have to know that Mr Sharon is not the address, the Almighty is. I need to look at myself and see what I can do to improve the situation. I will demonstrate as much as the law allows me to, but I will also accept the ultimate decisions of Knesset Yisrael. I do not believe that the current Government decisions are tantamount to breaking Shabbat (if they were I would have no choice but to disobey). I am therefore forced to acquiesce.

Aliya and unity they must be our goals. We must obviously strive to serve our Creator, to learn more Torah, to improve our observance of Mitzvot in every way. But if you like me, really would like to be celebrating Tisha Be Av in three weeks time then we know what we must do.

Let us pray as hard as we can that this decree be annulled and that these days of sadness once and for all become days of eternal simcha!

The writer is the head of the foreign students section of Midreshet Harova in the Old City of Jerusalem.

It's become the vogue among pundits to forecast that the nation is heading toward a civil war over disengagement and that the prime minister will have to face his own "Altalena."

They are by implication conjuring up the Altalena myth of a revolt that was never planned and never took place, a fiction woven by a great but unscrupulous politician at the cost of a score of innocent young lives and the loss of a valuable ship and an invaluable store of arms. It's time to set the record straight.

David Ben-Gurion bluffed his way through the whole meticulously organized episode in June 1948 against Menachem Begin and the Irgun Zvai Leumi. He was supported by a press largely hostile to Begin and the Irgun; thus the fiction held long enough to undermine the popularity of a courageous patriot and to bolster Ben-Gurion's campaign for the then forthcoming first parliamentary elections in the new state.

To the provisional government, Ben-Gurion explained blowing up the boat by the assertion that there had been no warning of its coming and no permission asked of the Israel defense authority (which was Ben-Gurion himself). He had heard of the expected arrival of a boat with arms, he said, only on the day of its arrival. Every word of this story was false.

Ben-Gurion and his staff had known about the Altalena and its purpose at least five weeks before it arrived on June 20, 1948. At midnight on May 15, Begin, leader of the Irgun and three members of its high command - Ya'acov Meridor, Haim Landau and myself - met with Yisrael Galili, the head of the Hagana and Ben-Gurion's deputy, who came with Levi Eshkol and David Cohen.

Begin informed Galili and his companions that the Irgun had several months earlier acquired an American WWII ship which would be bringing from France hundreds of volunteer soldiers and a substantial quantity of arms. We wanted to bring the ship prior to the Arab states' attack, but bureaucratic difficulties delayed the delivery of most of the arms. As soon as these were overcome, we explained, the ship would sail for Israel.

What is more, on June 15, while the ship was on its way, Begin met with Galili to reinforce the national authority's approval for the venture. The United Nations had declared a cease-fire - which disallowed the introduction of arms and men into Palestine. In fact this was applied only to Israel; supplies of arms to the Arabs never ceased - by Britain through Iraq. Galili raised no objection. He did however make one demand - that the boat should land not at Tel Aviv but at Kfar Vitkin near Netanya. Kfar Vitkin was not a convenient spot; the boat would have to anchor some 40 meters from the shore. The captain of the Altalena, Monroe Fein - a US naval lieutenant, veteran of the war in the Pacific - had intended bringing up the ship, a Tank Landing Vessel, square to a shore.

Galili, however, explained that aerial surveillance by the UN was less likely to cover a small place like Kfar Vitkin. (This proved to be wrong: a UN plane almost immediately found the boat.) What he did not mention was that Kfar Vitkin was important because it was a Labor Party village and certainly not friendly to the Irgun. Begin, however, not suspecting anything, accepted the condition. To him, what was important was that the provisional government was cooperating in the landing.

Begin raised the question of the apportionment of the arms. Jerusalem had not been included in the Jewish state as recommended in the UN partition scheme, so its defense against the Arab attack was being continued by the pre-state Hagana and the underground Irgun and Lehi organizations - coordinated under the overall command of the Hagana.

But the Irgun was particularly short of arms. As it was the Irgun that had negotiated for the arms to be dispatched on the Altalena - and that, before the state was declared - Begin wanted a portion to be set aside to make up the severe shortages of the Irgun in Jerusalem.

He also wanted to be able to present their personal arms to the Irgun members who were now enlisting in the IDF. Galili indicated that the request for Jerusalem would be considered favorably, and added that he would send men to help unload the arms. Thus, the order was given from Tel Aviv, and the ship sailed off - to Kfar Vitkin.

AT SOME point thereafter Galili withdrew his offer of men to help in the unloading, so a call was sent out to members of the Irgun to come and help.

With the arrival of the ship, the passengers, 940 of them - including more than 100 women - were taken off the ship and sent straight off to an aliya camp at Netanya, where they would be able to rest before being inducted into the army. Begin and perhaps a score of Irgun members were on the shore. Begin was surprised and disappointed to find that Galili was not there. He was surprised also to see a large number of soldiers filling the area. Then the unloading of the arms began - rifles still in their grease.

This then is the scene for the "revolt" which Ben-Gurion invented. The ship brought to a place where the population was known to be basically hostile; the "manpower" sent to sleep in Netanya; the arms all in grease in their boxes.

Soon after the unloading began, a soldier arrived with a note for Begin. In it was an order signed by the local divisional commander of the army to surrender the ship and its contents within 10 minutes! Begin was dumbfounded. This was impossible. There must be some mistake, he thought (as he told me the next day). He decided he must go to Tel Aviv to find Galili or somebody else to talk to. Nobody prevented him from leaving the shore for the ship.

The captain, Fein, who had volunteered because he wanted to help the Jewish people in its War of Independence, gave the order for full speed to Tel Aviv. He soon discovered that there were two Corvettes tailing him. They even fired a couple of shots across his bow. They remained in the vicinity when the Altalena went onto the rocks off the Tel Aviv shore.

Begin sent one of the boxes of rifles to the shore, which by then was also filled with soldiers. He evidently wanted to show the rifles – in their grease – to whichever representative of the government he would be meeting. The box was taken out of the motorboat and then an army officer refused to allow it to go back. The Altalena was thus cut off from the shore, as was Begin. On board ship was its crew and perhaps a score of Irgunists, all unarmed, who had accompanied Begin from Kfar Vitkin.

Against the ship and the handful of people aboard and the arms it carried in its hold beneath, there was now directed a fusillade of bullets. Several people were hit. By the end of the day 16 members of the Irgun were killed. Three soldiers were also killed by retaliatory shots from the crew who had been armed for the voyage from France. Fein called to shore by radio for a doctor. A doctor was promised but never came. Then came the bombardment from mortars that had been emplaced a little further up the coast at Kfar Yona. Fein, in desperation, ordered the raising of a white flag and the men on the deck waved white handkerchiefs – but the shooting did not stop, and Fein, who protested, was told on the radio that the officer in charge had not been able to inform "all the fronts."

The shelling continued, and the ship burst into flames. Fein ordered abandonment of the ship. All aboard jumped into the sea and swam for the shore. Lankin – the commander of the volunteers – and Fein, were the last to do so. Begin demurred, but Fein ordered him off. It was the swimmers who were now shot at by the soldiers on the shore.

YITZHAK RABIN himself, the head of a Palmach unit, who commanded the Altalena operation, described in his memoirs how it was the soldiers on the shore who spontaneously started the shooting at the swimmers when they heard that Begin was among them. He explained the soldiers' action by the deep hatred that existed in the Palmach toward the Irgun and the Lehi. Another eyewitness, Azriel Karlebach, editor of Maariv, the next day agonized over the horror in his newspaper.

Why did Ben-Gurion order the wanton insensate behavior in Kfar Vitkin and then at Tel Aviv? What was he trying to achieve? There was no quarrel about the arms. He could have compromised on the percentage or he could have simply seized them and argued afterwards. Why did he prevent his soldiers from taking part in unloading the arms, so important for the army? All the power was in his hands.

That night Begin, in a lengthy impassioned speech on the Irgun radio, accused Ben-Gurion of simply wanting to kill him. There was indeed no other reasonable explanation for the murderous attack on the Altalena. Among the Irgunists it was thought that the explosion, the shooting (even though none of it came from the Irgun) helped Ben-Gurion create an atmosphere that would support his silly story of a putsch.

YEARS LATER, on August 20, 1971 Galili admitted in Maariv: "We agreed to the boats coming to Kfar Vitkin... We made technical preparations... I reported to the prime minister and the minister of defense on all the stages, verbally and in writing, on meetings with the Irgun leaders including the midnight meeting."

Ben-Gurion, by then out of office, did not react to Galili's admission, nor did he react to questions put to him even by the Labor paper, Davar. This however was 1971 – four years after the Six Day War. Begin by then had been a cabinet minister under Levi Eshkol, and Israel had more pressing problems on its agenda.

I wanted to set the record straight because the memory of the Altalena is being manipulated for political purposes to facilitate the expulsion of the Jews from Gush Katif. (Jerusalem Post Jul 29)

The writer, who co-founded the Herut Party with Menachem Begin and was a member of the first Knesset, is a biographer and essayist.

Terrorist Propaganda Outlet? By Lee Kaplan

The Internet giant Google will give news agency status to the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), according to an anonymous source at Google.

If true, the ISM-an affiliate of the anarchist/communist wing of the PLO-would be on par with professional news services such as CNN, Fox, and Associated Press. In addition, the Palestinian Authority has announced through its Wafa news agency that the ISM will be given an official license as a separate news agency, according to the same media status as the news giants.

It is not for balanced news coverage that the ISM is known. Although styling itself as a "peace group," the ISM is in fact a vigorously anti-Israel group, notorious for bringing anti-Israel activists from around the world to the Holy Land. By its own admission, the ISM has plainclothes Palestinian "handlers" guiding ISM activities against anti-terror operations in the West Bank and Gaza, including providing cover for stone throwers. (An Ethiopian Jewish-Israeli soldier was killed in a stone throwing incident just three weeks ago, and another Israeli soldier lost an eye.) The ISM's ill-concealed mission, meanwhile, is to provide cover for Palestinian terrorist activities while frustrating the anti-terror operations of the Israeli army. (More detailed information on the ISM and its support for terrorism can be found here.)

StoptheISM has further learned that the North Carolina chapter of the ISM,

which last year hosted an anti-Jewish and anti-Israel hatefest at Duke University, has received confirmation from Google News that the ISM website palsolidarity.org will be included in Google News "in the near future" or "within four to six weeks."

According to our source, this was confirmed by Google for Dave Reed, who is in charge of website development for the ISM. The correspondence also thanks the ISM for providing "articles" to Google News.

The ISM's work is apparently well-received by the Google News staff, which e-mails news "alerts" to people on a regular basis. A review of the ISM's past media stunts offers a window into the kind of alerts that Google is likely to dispatch under ISM influence:

* Purporting to be a neutral "peace group," the ISM frequently invents tales of atrocities by Israeli soldiers against Palestinians that it sends to its members and tries to get into US and European newspapers.

* The ISM routinely sends out "news reports" in which armed terrorists arrested for attacking or murdering Israeli civilians by the Israeli army are described as "innocent Palestinians" arrested for no reason at all, or labeled "peace activists."

* The ISM falsely claims that Israeli soldiers use Palestinian children for "target practice." Uda Walker, "Education and Political Coordinator" for the ISM's Middle East Children's Alliance, made such claims when debating me at Diablo Valley College in California. When challenged she could not cite any specifics. Reporting false atrocities, however, is part of the ISM's mission to destroy Israel "by any means necessary," a common subject of the group's activities, meetings and seminars. The ISM still sends out dispatches and "news items" in which it claims thousands of Palestinians were "massacred" in Jenin, despite acknowledgement by the Palestinian Authority that most of the 56 Palestinians killed were armed combatants.

Clearly devoid of credibility, such "news reports" as sent out by the ISM seldom appear in the mainstream media. Yet Google News has decided to afford the ISM equal credibility by posting its propaganda missives alongside genuine news stories from major news agencies - a dangerous precedent. Another troubling sign is that Google News' acceptance of the ISM's submissions will get ISM material out to a wide audience unfamiliar with the tactics and goals of the ISM.

Reports indicate that the Palestine Authority is eager to capitalize on the opportunity to improve its image. Among the PA's plans is a new Palestine News Network (PNN, like CNN). Licensed by the Palestinian Authority, PNN will work alongside the ISM to broadcast the official Palestinian line to the outside world under the guise of objective news coverage.

Taken together, these developments pose a major threat to any objective newsgathering about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Palestinian Authority already boasts nineteen propaganda ministries and a controlled press. And thanks to the sympathetic spirits at Google, international anarchists in the ISM will now be given considerable influence over media reportage by the PLO. Indeed, the ISM's bid to attain "news agency" status seems to be part of a new effort by the PLO to infiltrate mainstream news agencies to generate a new image for terrorists from the PLO. As the "peace process" drags on due to unending attacks by terrorist groups, the PA is hoping that an added dose of fulsome media coverage will save it from taking steps to crack down on terror.

For that very reason, radical activists have wasted no time taking part. For instance, Kristen Ess, a longtime ISM activist and broadcaster for the worldwide radical news website system Indymedia, will now be heading the PNN's English language division. Previously, one only heard Ess's reports on Indymedia or Pacifica Radio, another leftist news source that some have called the Voice of Palestine. (Readers can get an idea of the kind of material Kristen and the PPN will be creating to report by clicking here.) Ess is certainly suited for her new job: radical broadcasting services like Indymedia and Pacifica inveterately accuse American troops in Iraq and Israeli anti-terrorist forces of attacks on "innocent civilians and children." In the same way, the PNN habitually airs fabrications about American soldiers murdering innocent children and civilians on a regular basis.

To be sure, the relationship between journalists covering the conflict and Palestinian terrorist factions has always been uncomfortably close. Nothing illustrates that more starkly than a recent YnetNews.com report about journalists from Reuters who, during a going-away party for a fellow Reuters correspondent, screened a video featuring Zakaria Zubaidi, an Al Aksa Martyrs Brigade terrorist who has been named by security officials as a key figure in organizing terror attacks on Israeli civilians. Sitting in Reuters' Jenin office, the terrorist posed as a Reuters executive. Reuters' staff who attended the screening described Zubeidi's impersonation as "very funny." A Reuters spokeswoman confirmed the video's existence, but said the London-based news organization is "not associated with any group or faction in any conflict."

The same cannot be said of the ISM or the PNN, both of whom have a stake in demonizing Israel. As for the ISM's collusion with Google News, it does not bode well for the peace process. If anything, the amplification of anti-Israel propaganda is likely to encourage terrorist organizations and their supporters to continue their war for Israel's destruction.

If you'd like to contact Google News, email them at source-suggestions@google.com. For Reuters write editor.reuters@reuters.com. If you would like to help Stop the ISM, email them at stoptheISM@att.net. (FrontPageMagazine.com Aug 3)