

ISRAEL NEWS
A collection of the week's news from Israel
A service of the Bet El Twinning Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation

Commentary...

State and System Gone Mad By Ellen W. Horowitz

There is something unique and quite inconceivable about the Jewish people and its epic journey through time. Whenever we stumble and regress, we simultaneously take leaps forward.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's disengagement plan has caused an incredible awakening among our people. Much to the dismay of our antagonists this is hardly the death rattle of religious Zionism or the Land of Israel camp. On the contrary, our ranks and our enthusiasm are on the dramatic increase. Rather than splinter, we've become united despite our differences, and that may very well be the definition of true Jewish unity. There are those who simply don't get it. But in the face of adversity and tribulations, the Jewish spirit soars.

Revolutionary change is certainly in the air. We are not being destroyed. Rather, we are being born – and it's a painful birth. But the Land of Israel camp is alive, well and kicking, as is evidenced by our immense spirit, hope and efforts.

It also seems that as brilliant testimony to our individual efforts and labors, the children many of us have borne and raised have blossomed into extraordinary and exemplary Jewish youth. Indeed, it is the children who will be comforting and supporting their parents over the coming days. It is also our children who will be leading this struggle, and it is our children who will continue to plant, settle, return to and inherit the land.

At the end of the day, Israel will once again stand tall – but only after we have shed the corruption, lies and irresponsible leadership of a state and system gone mad.

A moral and ethical Israel will emerge once we have cut the cords of physical dependence on America and ceased our pathological quest for approval from the international community. The children of Jacob will assume the mantle of sovereignty and maturity when we recognize and internalize that our enemies want nothing more than to kill us, and when we realize that the pursuit of peace with murderers is a perversion of justice.

Make no mistake: We do face the prospect of intense mourning on an individual and national level. But a large part of the lament has more to do with the anguish and sorrow over our mistakes as a nation and the future human costs, rather than grief over shattered dreams – as our hopes and dreams are very much alive.

You'll see something quite extraordinary over the coming days. The government of Israel, police, and Israel's secular left wing society has no idea what they're up against. The Jewish soul unleashed is a sight to behold, and it doesn't accept the concept of defeat.

We are not so shortsighted as to think that our entire future hinges on the "success" or failure of a deranged disengagement plan. But we are obligated to resist this plan with all our hearts and with all the resources at our disposal, because we know that over the next few grueling weeks and months the Jewish people will be undergoing an important test of faith. And we know that there will be a miraculous deliverance sooner (God willing)... or later.

Welcome to the labor room where Israel is in the throes of a whopping contraction. Transitional labor is intense and painful but, thankfully, short. It's also a dangerous time, and we hope to avoid hemorrhaging and tears which will be difficult to repair. But we're in for revolutionary change, and after all our strenuous and excruciating efforts, there will be a baby delivered. (Jerusalem Post Aug 17)

The writer is the author of The Oslo Years: A Mother's Journal.

Blue, White, and Orange New York Sun Editorial

As Israel begins its great showdown over the Jewish retreat from Gaza and the West Bank, let us pause to say that this newspaper believes in a large Israel. These columns have come over the years to value the principles that

the Zionist prophet **ד"ר** Vladimir Jabotinsky stood for when he called for Jewish sovereignty on both sides of the Jordan. If this were a just world, the ones in retreat would be the ones who have rejected peace, the Palestinian Arabs.

The real world, however, is not always just, and even those with a just cause cannot always have all that is justly theirs - or have it when they want it. This is where the craft of statesmanship comes in: how and where

to draw the lines, how and when to make one's stand, when to fight, when to negotiate, when to retreat. And one of the things that Ariel Sharon surely knows as he contemplates the century and more since Herzl convened the first Zionist Congress is that it is a century peopled with Jewish giants.

And every one of them made compromises. To read Herzl's diaries is to read of a statesman's inner struggles that were almost psychiatric in their intensity, as the founder of political Zionism wrestled over tactics and strategies in quest of the dream of the redemption of the Jews in a Jewish state in the land of Israel. And we are neither frightened nor discouraged by the apocalyptic rhetoric coming out the contending factions within the Jewish state.

On the contrary, we are rather encouraged by it. The Orange camp, full of idealists whom we admire, is ensuring something extremely important. This retreat should not be permitted to be made easily, even if a Jewish democracy has decided, as it has, that it needs to be made. It is not certain that the lines to which Israel is withdrawing - or as Mr. Sharon might put it, the lines that Israel is straightening - will become permanent, but they might. The stakes are, therefore, incredibly large.

And it is not the first time there has been violent confrontation - if that is what we are going to have -- among the Jews themselves. On the wall of the editorial room of this newspaper hangs a painting of the shelling of the Altalena, the war surplus ship that carried refugees and arms to Israel, running, on behalf of the right-wing faction, the British blockade in the face of Ben-Gurion's call for such vessels to keep their distance. When, under orders from Ben-Gurion, the Altalena came under shelling by a unit commanded by a young Yitzhak Rabin, there was aboard a young hero named Menachem Begin.

Begin wouldn't get off the vessel, even when it caught fire with explosives still in its hold. To save his life, his own men had to force him off his own ship and into the Mediterranean. Many were the compromises. There are those of us who feel that for all Begin's great decisions, from the attack on the Osirak A-bomb-making reactor, to the decisions for which he won the Nobel Prize, to the invasion of Lebanon, the greatest was his decision, after the sinking of the Altalena, to abjure the temptation of civil war, bow to a Jewish democracy, and consign himself to a life in the opposition.

For years after that, Ben-Gurion refused to call Begin by his own name. Ben-Gurion wouldn't even recognize him by name in the Knesset, referring only to "the member sitting next to so-and-so." The passions, the bitterness have always been very high. Those who will be dressed in Orange next week are part of a long and honorable tradition. But so is Prime Minister Sharon. He knows that the architects of Israel, of which he is one, offered compromise at every turn, and that it was the Jews who ended up with a state and the rejectionists who remained stateless.

This newspaper cares nothing - less than nothing - for the opinion of the Europeans and anti-Semites. In the post-World War II history of continental Europe, there has not been a single act of statesmanship in respect of the Jewish struggle, with the possible exception of Adenauer's bow to Nahum Goldmann on the question of German reparations, and the protests from Israelis that greeted Israel's decision to accept were every bit as fraught as what we're seeing today. At this moment, those we find ourselves thinking of are the Israelis who are unfolding this drama in blue, white, and orange. They are reaching for a dream that has endured for millennia, and we have no doubt they will find the right way through this crisis, while the rest of the world will react to their daring. (New York Sun Aug 12)

Misuse of the Army By Moshe Arens

What is the army for? That sounds like a rhetorical question. Obviously,

Readers are requested to please mail contributions to: BAYT - re: *Israel News*, 613 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill, Ontario. L4J 5V3
Annual Rates: Friend - \$36, Supporter - \$50, Benefactor - \$180. Dedications are welcome at \$120/week.

Call (905) 886-3810 for further info. *Israel News* can be viewed on the internet at www.bayt.org and www.frumtoronto.com

Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of BAYT. Thank you to Continental Press for their ongoing support.

the answer is to defend the country and its citizens. That is also the only justification for asking our young men and women to devote years of their lives in obligatory service to their country. No other reason, no matter how lofty, can justify forcing young people in a democracy to postpone their own plans to work or study or travel.

But this seemingly compelling logic has been called into question when the Knesset, at the government's initiative, passed "the law for the implementation of the disengagement plan." Paragraph 25 states that the security forces will act so as to expel those who are present in the areas to be evacuated in contravention of the applicable paragraphs of the law, and bring them to a population center in Israel, and that it is permitted to use reasonable force for this purpose. Security forces as defined in the law include the Israel Defense Forces, no exception being made for the men and women doing their compulsory military service.

For the past few weeks, we have witnessed a good part of the army, which over the years had become the symbol of the unity of the people of Israel, preparing to force Israeli citizens out of their homes. Even the Israel Air Force has been mobilized for this task, and the navy commander has proudly announced that the navy, as well, will share part of the burden.

Some have questioned whether it is permissible for a soldier to refuse to follow the order to pull Israeli citizens out of their homes. Of course it is not permissible. In the army you have to follow orders, or else it ceases to be an army. But what about the order itself? Employing the army not against the enemy but rather against the citizens of the country is hardly consistent with a modern democratic society.

Some try to depict the current confrontation between supporters of the disengagement plan and its opponents, as pitting the supporters of democracy against those trying to subvert the democratic process. Presumably, the decision taken by the Knesset is sufficient to justify the enforcement of this draconian law, regardless of the means being used to enforce it, and to turn the whole process into a paragon of democratic procedures. But in most democracies nowadays, it would be viewed as a blatant violation of the principle of the separation of the military and civilian spheres of activity, generally considered one of the fundamental precepts of the democratic form of government.

This subject has received considerable attention in the United States in recent years in light of the discussion about the possible use of the armed forces against U.S. citizens that might be engaged in terrorism. The defining law on the subject in the U.S. is the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, which forbids the use of the armed forces for the enforcement of laws unless expressly authorized by the Constitution or an act of Congress. In discussing the possibility of utilizing the armed forces for anti-terrorist law enforcement, Tom Ridge, who became the director of homeland security after the terrorist attack against the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, said, "It goes against our instincts as a country to empower the military with the ability to arrest."

Just what the instincts in Israel are on this matter, seemingly depends on whether you are for or against the disengagement plan. No legislation similar to the U.S. act proscribing the use of the armed forces for law enforcement purposes exists in Israel. With the multitude of legislation being rushed through the Knesset on an almost daily basis, no one seems to have considered the need for such legislation.

That presumably is the reason that the Knesset, under government pressure, authorized the use of the Israel Defense Forces against Israeli citizens in Gush Katif, the settlements south of Askelon, and northern Samaria, without taking into account the full implications of this move. The use of soldiers doing their obligatory military service, in addition to regular army personnel, to remove citizens from their homes makes the matter particularly problematic.

It can only be hoped that following the traumatic events of the coming weeks, it will be generally recognized that the separation of military and civilian spheres of authority should be one of the foundation stones of our system of government, and that the IDF should at all costs continue to be maintained as a symbol of unity of the people living in Israel. (Haaretz Aug 15)

A Democracy Killing Itself By Daniel Pipes

The Israeli government's removal of its own citizens from Gaza ranks as one of the worst errors ever made by a democracy.

This step is the worse for being self-imposed, not the result of pressure from Washington. When the Bush administration first heard in December 2003 that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had unilaterally decided to pull all soldiers and civilians from Gaza, it responded coolly. Months of persuasion were needed to get the White House to embrace the initiative.

The harm will be three-fold: within Israel, in relations with the Palestinians, and internationally.

Sharon won the prime ministry in early 2003 by electorally crushing an opponent who espoused unilateral withdrawal from Gaza. Sharon declared back then: "A unilateral withdrawal is not a recipe for peace. It is a recipe for war." For unknown reasons, in late 2003 he adopted his opponent's policy of leaving Gaza, thereby renegeing on his promises, betraying his supporters, and inflicting lasting damage on Israeli public life.

To Palestinian rejectionists, an Israeli retreat under fire sends an

unambiguous signal: Terrorism works. Just as the Israeli departure from Lebanon five years earlier provoked new violence, so too will fleeing Gaza. Palestinians ignore all the verbiage about "disengagement" and see it for what it really is, an Israeli retreat under fire. Indeed, Palestinian leaders have already broadcast their intent to deploy Gaza-like aggression to pry the West Bank and Jerusalem from Israeli control. Should that campaign succeed, Haifa and Tel Aviv are next, after which Israel itself disappears.

The Sharon government has also defaulted on its obligations to its allies in the war on terror. As other states, such as Great Britain, finally show signs of getting more serious about counterterrorism, Israel's politicians release hundreds of convicted terrorists and retreat under fire from Gaza, encouraging more terrorism.

Israel's mistakes are not unique for a democracy – French appeasement of Germany in the 1930s or American incrementalism in Vietnam come to mind – but none other jeopardized the very existence of a people. (USA Today Aug 15)

A Paralyzing Syndrome By Frank Dimant

During these very charged and trying times for the Jewish people in Israel, the North American Jewish community is abnormally quiet.

It is a quiet that has taken on the sound of a soul-piercing silence. It is not a silence of agreement or acquiescence, nor is it a silence of apathy as some would have us believe. It is much worse.

Academics studying the behaviour of the North American Jewish community will find it fascinating to examine how and why this once vocal component of world Jewry chose to silence itself during this most crucial point of the history of the modern state of Israel, the planned withdrawal from Gaza.

Numerous theories will be advanced as to why those organizations, which had been in the forefront of opposing the disastrous Oslo accords, have now taken an untraditional vow of silence, and why pulpits, which once thundered with emotion and the heartfelt convictions of those who speak from them, now quietly accept events as they unfold.

Leaders, who once thunderously proclaimed that the Jews are one people and our destiny is interwoven, and thus we have a responsibility and a moral right to speak out on issues that affect the very survival of the Jewish state, now appear to be sitting on the fence.

First and foremost in those debates were the modern Orthodox, the knitted kipot, the religious Zionists, the people who continued to flock to Israel during the worst days of the Intifada. The people who make up the largest number of immigrants to Israel from North America and are the same people whose children generally spend time studying in Israel. They are also the people who often have family members living throughout Israel. They, too, have chosen the path of silence.

Scholars will attempt to analyze the reasons that motivated individuals, who were outspoken against Oslo and who felt they had every right to engage in the debate at that time, now appear to choose a path of public indifference.

Numerous theories will be advanced and I, too, propose to state my own theory for the historical record.

I still vividly recall the aftermath of the war in Vietnam and the impact it had on the US. So powerful was the Vietnam Syndrome that for decades it appeared that the United States would be incapable of resuming its role as the preeminent international power. Often, it virtually abandoned its leadership in the world arena and in some cases even sought an isolationist position. The Vietnam Syndrome became a critical factor in US decision making.

The eternal question was always posed: "What if it turns out to be another Vietnam?"

In a similar way, the Yigal Amir Syndrome has taken hold of the North American religious Zionist community, a community that would naturally be passionate and vocal on the issues of unilateral withdrawal, especially now as Israel comes under heavy attack daily from Palestinian terrorists. The leadership, however, has continually been reminded that Yigal Amir was raised in the Orthodox tradition, and therefore, a collective guilt was ascribed to the Orthodox community.

Who remembers Avishai Raviv, the agent provocateur paid by government sources, who goaded Amir into action? Never is there a mention of Avishai's part in the tragedy of the murder of Yitzhak Rabin of blessed memory.

In fact, the religious Zionist movement has now been paralyzed by the memory of Yigal Amir. His hideous act went beyond the pale and had no relationship to any form of Judaism. However, a deranged individual who committed an atrocious murder should not be used as a weapon to silence free debate, and yet it has indeed been used most effectively for that purpose. So afraid is modern Orthodoxy that there might be some crazy individual out there, perhaps goaded by another agent provocateur, that they have done a 180-degree turn on their previous ideological positions regarding the need to speak out on the security and safety of Eretz Yisroel.

The scare tactic has worked. No one asks how many Avishai Ravivs have been actively placed among the protestors who oppose unilateral

disengagement, although troubling stories are slowly leaking out about such agent provocateurs.

For the Yigal Amir Syndrome to persist and paralyze people into silence, even when human rights are challenged, is undeniably wrong. Left-wing human rights organizations in Israel are the ones effectively trying to defend the right to free speech, the right of assembly and the right of free movement of those that oppose unilateral disengagement. What an ironic twist of history.

Vibrant Jewish communities need debate and the exchange of ideas to maintain that vibrancy. Vibrancy is an anathema to silence and acquiescence and the notion that it is only necessary to pass "checkbox Judaism" from generation to generation. The slogans of 'We are one' and 'Israel and Diaspora Jewry are partners in the future' never carried a trailer that said Diaspora Jewry would be the silent partners.

Those North American secular community organizations that regularly lobby for their causes such as changes to the laws in Israel on who is a Jew - even flying delegations to Israel to influence members of Knesset - have now taken the position that the government knows best and there is to be no discussion of the evolving situation.

Freedom of speech, diversity of opinion and open forums should be the order of the day. Whether one agrees with withdrawal or unconditionally opposes withdrawal there must be recognition that the vitality of the community can only be sustained through open discussion and dialogue. As we know only too well, silence is not a formula that has ever worked for the Jewish community. (Jewish Tribune Aug 18)

The Democracy Deficit By Jonathan Rosenblum

Democracy is the best system yet devised for allowing people of widely divergent views to live together in one polity. That is true, however, only so long as citizens perceive the playing field to be level. For that reason, the success of a democracy depends to a very great degree on the process of decision-making - i.e., the rules of the game. The original United States Constitution, for instance, dealt almost entirely with powers of the various branches of government and the relations between them. The first 10 amendments forming the Bill of Rights were only ratified two years after the Constitution itself.

While formal adherence to the rules of procedure is a necessary condition for democratic legitimacy, it is not by itself sufficient. When a large body of citizens perceives the rules to have been manipulated to thwart their will or to foreclose public debate, legitimacy plummets. That was the case, for instance, with the first Oslo Accords. Knesset support for the accords was secured only by offering substantial blandishments to two obscure MKs elected to the Knesset on the platform of the hard-right Tzomet Party. The basic democratic principle of majority rule surely does not require a national referendum on every major issue. Because referenda offer only two options - yes or no - formulation of the questions is notoriously difficult. And removal of particular issues, particularly budgetary ones, from the legislature can wreak havoc on the entire legislative process.

Yet given the bitter divisions sure to be aroused by the Gaza withdrawal and the irreversible nature of the withdrawal once undertaken, the failure to conduct a national referendum was a major mistake. And that mistake was compounded by the total lack of a focused public debate.

From the first, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon offered only the sketchiest of outlines of the strategic and tactical thinking behind "unilateral" withdrawal. He did not explain what changed from the time of his overwhelming electoral victory over Amram Mitzna, who had campaigned on a platform of unilateral withdrawal from Gaza.

Even the truism offered to explain why prime ministers elected on right-wing platforms invariably move to the center - "the view from here (the prime minister's chair) is not the same as the view from there (leader of the opposition)" - does not suffice. Sharon was already prime minister when he proclaimed Netzarim to be no less a part of Israel than Jerusalem. In any event, assurances that matters look different from the prime minister's office form a poor basis for public debate.

THE TASK of explaining the Gaza withdrawal was left to a series of unofficial surrogates, such as Ehud Olmert and Dov Weisglass, and done in a piecemeal fashion. Most glaringly, answers were never offered to the many concerns raised about post-withdrawal security.

In part, the prime minister's reticence is understandable. Whatever he revealed of his strategic thinking to the Israeli public he would have also had to reveal to the Palestinians. Even more important, to the extent that the withdrawal is predicated on various diplomatic understandings with President George W. Bush, the latter surely insisted that those agreements remain secret.

To say that the prime minister never made the strategic case for the withdrawal is not to suggest that he has no long-range plan or that the Gaza withdrawal was devised to keep him out of the legal hot soup. A man who has devoted his life to the defense of the State of Israel cannot be suspected now of endangering the state out of narrow personal interests.

Nor is it to argue that Sharon could not have prevailed in a referendum after a full public debate. Quite likely he would have. Others, notably Hillel Halkin, have advanced plausible scenarios under which the diplomatic gains of the withdrawal arguably outweigh the short- and long-term security threats.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the crucial issues were never joined in an open public debate, either in the Knesset or via a referendum. That democratic deficit was exacerbated by the mainstream media, much of which answered Amnon Abramovitz's call to protect Sharon "like an etrog." Rather than fulfilling its role in a democracy of providing citizens with the information necessary for informed judgment, the media consistently downplayed the crucial security concerns raised by senior military and intelligence personnel, as well as evidence casting doubt on the firmness of the hypothesized diplomatic understandings with the United States. Opposition to the withdrawal was portrayed as driven exclusively by religious messianism.

The failure to conduct a full debate over the Gaza withdrawal has frayed Israeli society to the breaking point. It pushed the debate from the Knesset and the ballot box into the streets. Sure there are some who would have taken to the streets even in the face of defeat in a referendum, but their support and legitimacy would have been dramatically reduced.

By failing to provide his own narrative for the withdrawal, Sharon left the way open for others, like Yossi Sarid, to project their own narratives onto the withdrawal: Withdrawal as the first step towards redemption for Israel's original sin of expanding beyond the 1949 Armistice Lines, or the "Auschwitz borders," as Abba Eban used to call them.

Nothing could do more to undercut Sharon's own strategic vision than the renewed currency of Sarid's narrative. (Jerusalem Post Aug 15)

The ISM-London Bombing Connection By Lee Kaplan

Among the less publicized details of the July 7th London bombings is the connection of one of the possible terrorists, Muhammad Sadique Khan, to the preeminent group of the pro-terrorist "solidarity" movement, the International Solidarity Movement (ISM).

Consider the available information: Khan is suspected of delivering the explosives that were used to carry out the London attacks. Recent evidence shows that the explosives used in the London subway attacks were found by British and Israeli intelligence officials to be remarkably similar to those used in a 2003 bombing of the "Mike's Place" pizzeria in Israel. Related to this, Israel National News recently reported that British and Israeli intelligence reports show that Khan, who had a British passport, arrived in Israel on February 19, 2003, and stayed for only one day. During his stay, he may have met with Asif Hanif and Omar Sharif. Both of the men, with the assistance of Hamas, would later become suicide bombers. Hanif and Sharif traveled from Britain to Israel under the auspices of the ISM's Alternative Tourism Program. One of their final acts, just prior to departing on their murderous mission, was to meet with ISM activists in Gaza. This connection is only one measure of the unheralded threat posed by the self-proclaimed "peace" group, ISM.

At present, Israel is the only nation to have recognized the danger the ISM presents to Western democracies. Sadly, it took a tragedy and a maiming injury as the last straw for the Israelis finally to start clamping down on ISM activities within their borders. These were, respectively, the death of an Ethiopian Jewish Israeli soldier, killed by a rock hurled during a "peaceful demonstration" conducted by the ISM in the village of Bi'lin; and another Israeli soldier, who lost an eye to a stone thrower shielded by the ISM elsewhere in the West Bank.

On July 19th, 130 ISM anarchists from around the world were stopped at the Jordanian border and refused admittance into Israel. My organization, Stop the ISM, had advised Israeli authorities months in advance that an ISM-sponsored "Caravan for Palestine" was in the works. For once, Israel acted proactively and stopped these radicals from entering its borders. They have learned the hard way that ISM members intend to create havoc and provide cover for terrorism, vandalism, and violence under the guise of being "peace activists." The organizers had their passports specially stamped by Israeli authorities, meaning that they cannot use them to enter Israel for five years. Meanwhile, the ISM caravan went back to Syria.

Why Syria? Syria is the main support base for Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the PLO's Communist Party wing. The PFLP's General Command affiliate is believed to have between 500 and 1,000 members there as well, maintaining offices in Damascus and the Yarmouk refugee camp outside the Syrian capital, as well as several major military bases around the country. That the ISM caravan turned around and headed to Syria is telling: it hints at a possible collaborative connection between the PFLP and the ISM.

That would not be altogether surprising. After all, the ISM was created with the assistance of PFLP activists, with the blessing of the late Yasser Arafat, during the second Intifada in 2001. Significantly, the PLO is not a single organization. Rather, it is an umbrella group of organizations sharing the same ultimate goal: the dismantling of Israel. While Hamas (one wing of the PLO) blows up innocents in Israel, Fatah (another wing) pretends to be the negotiator and peacemaker so as to exact concessions. The PFLP is one of the more violent factions of the PLO and has also inspired other groups in the PLO umbrella such as the "Democratic" (as opposed to Communist) PFLP and the PFLP General Command. The largest segments of the PFLP are communists/anarchists who have allied with American and

European anarchists.

Like the PLO itself, the PFLP organizes an international conglomerate of smaller radical communist/anarchist cells on behalf of the PLO, particularly on U.S. college campuses. No central organization exists in any one place: Al Awda (Arabic for the right of return); SUSTAIN (Stop U.S. Taxpayer Assistance for Israel Now); Middle East Children's Alliance; Duke Divest; Students for Justice In Palestine; the Alternative Palestinian Agenda; and many differently named groups prevent our government from defining any centralized authority. Its leadership and guidance comes from the PFLP, with the aid of Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and other terrorist groups. Whatever the names used, the central goal of the ISM is the destruction of the democratic state of Israel and its replacement with an Arab-dominated state, "by any means necessary."

Similar motives propel the ISM. Among some ISM members' long-term goals is dismantling the democratic, capitalist government of the United States. This was confirmed at the Duke University National Palestine Solidarity Movement Conference in 2004. At that event, Abe Greenhouse -- an ISM activist from Rutgers University who smashed a pie in the face of former Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky -- explained that the International Solidarity Movement's activities are the training ground for the American Anarchist Movement. Stop the ISM once intercepted an ISM message discussing effective methods of public relations. One proposal was that the American branch of the ISM should adopt the moniker ISM-USA, in order to invoke patriotic sentiments. The proposal was roundly rejected: the discussants decided they hate the United States too much to feign patriotism.

It should come as no surprise, then, that the ISM has never been shy about making common cause with terrorists. A parallel example may help shed light on the ISM's sinister motives. In July, Ali Al-Timimi, a Virginia-based imam, was sentenced to life in prison by a U.S. federal court for inspiring and urging his Islamic students to train as jihadist warriors. His disciples trained in the United States with paintball weapons. The purpose of that training was to go to Afghanistan and fight American soldiers. Even as he was conspiring to kill Americans, however, Al-Timimi maintained that he was against violence and terrorism. The ISM favors a kindred strategy, deploying its dissembling rhetoric in precisely the same way as Al-Timimi. Listen to Paul LaRudee, the Northern California head of the ISM. LaRudee's recent interview with an al-Jazeera interviewer on public radio was a classic form of ISM doublespeak--affirming a commitment to non-violence while cutting a loophole for terrorism. Explained LaRudee:

We believe in the application of international law. Although we are totally dedicated to nonviolence, we recognize not everyone in the Palestinian community is dedicated to nonviolence and under international law we recognize that violence is necessary and it is permissible for oppressed and occupied people to use armed resistance and we recognize their right to do so.

International law, of course, proscribes blowing up women and children on buses or in subway trains in Jerusalem and London. The fact that LaRudee is a piano tuner by trade and not an international attorney does not allow him to plead ignorance. It was LaRudee, after all, who once boasted of sleeping in the bed of a suicide bomber. Then, too, it is LaRudee who recruits ISM "volunteers" to go to the Middle East and provide cover for terrorists. (This writer has attended ISM training sessions where ISM volunteers are trained to provide cover for stone throwers of the PLO.)

Huwaida Arraf, one of the leaders of the ISM (even though they always claim they have no leadership), has been even clearer in elucidating the ISM's policy toward terrorist groups. At last October's national Palestine Solidarity conference at Duke University, she was recorded as she explained that the ISM engages in "collaborative efforts" with Palestinians aimed at "encouraging more people to believe again that civilian resistance can overcome an international military force." Stipulating that, "We only engage in and actively support the unarmed resistance," Arraf admitted that in actuality the group goes much further:

There are elements out there that try to say, you know, we support terror. We don't refuse to work with anybody. So, often times I am asked if, you know, "What's our position on Hamas or the Islam Jihad?" We're willing to work with anybody, but we're not willing to engage in military assistance. We're not going to win that way, but Hamas are some of the key forms of organizers, the PFLP, anyone who wants to organize and help us in our struggle really is our friend and we'll work with.

All this is in accordance with the ISM's policy of obstructing the demolition of bomb making factories by the Israeli army. The reason: they double as the homes of known terrorist groups. Nor should one make much of the ISM's claims that "peace" will come with the end of the Israeli "occupation." Having attended ISM meetings, both undercover and openly as a reporter, I can attest that the word "occupation" is used to describe all of Israel and its Jewish population, the American liberation of Iraq--and, incredibly, even the United States government itself.

So what does the U.S. government make of the ISM's activities? There are laws on the books about conspiring to break laws against allies like Israel overseas and consorting with terrorist organizations. And yet, with the exception of Sami al-Arian's high-profile arrest as the U.S. head of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, few terror-supporters have actually been brought up on charges. (Indeed, Stop the ISM was created to remedy this paucity of prosecutions.)

Part of the problem is that our government looks upon ISM activities in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute as separate from our fight with terrorism. The same PLO leadership that receives U.S. tax dollars to ostensibly create another Middle East democracy works in the same coalition as the ISM to perpetuate unending war with Israel and dismantle that state to set up another Muslim Arab theocracy.

Every ISM rally for "Palestine" is also a rally against U.S. forces and goals in Iraq. The ISM openly supports the Ba'ath Party terrorists who kill U.S. troops, Iraqis, and even children. With its ceaseless demonstrations, divestment programs at colleges and churches, fundraising to send money abroad that is never accurately accounted for, and the enlistment and training of college radicals as "volunteers" to assist terrorist goals overseas, the ISM is not a "peace" movement but a war movement adept at subterfuge and subversion. What's more, it can count on a broad base of financial support: The "solidarity" movement benefits from Saudi largesse and has learned to exploit such left-wing funding sources as the Ford Foundation, the Davis-Putter Scholarship program, Echoing Green, and other foundations.

Those funds, in turn, bankroll some of the most extremist elements of the "solidarity" movement. Take Fayyad Sbaihah, the lead organizer of the Palestine Solidarity Movement on U.S. campuses and a chemical engineering major at the University of Wisconsin. The government knows that all of Fayyad Sbaihah's brothers are members of the PFLP. Jetting all over the United States and Canada, he organizes yearly conferences at major universities. At one campus in Canada, Hisham Jam Joun, a PFLP trainer, was flown in to lecture to conference attendees. Although the U.S. State Department considers the PFLP an illegal terrorist group, nothing has been done to curb the recruitment efforts of its ISM allies at American universities (although the government insists that it is "watching" the PFLP).

Then there is George Rishmawi, a Canadian-Palestinian who was one of the co-founders of the ISM with Adam Shapiro, husband of and pictured above with the previously mentioned Huwaida Arraf. Rishmawi has home bases in Pasadena, California, as well as the West Bank, where he works to get students college credit in Arabic for their ISM activities. Rishmawi also supports the PFLP mantra of dismantling Israel and has been a communist/anarchist revolutionary for years.

Huwaida Arraf is an American citizen of Palestinian-Arab ancestry from Michigan. Her father has Israeli citizenship as an Arab-Israeli, so she can travel to Israel. There she goes to the West Bank and, as an ISM leader, provides cover for the PLO, vandalizes the Israeli security fence, or stands between Israeli soldiers and those who throw stones (like the one that killed an Israeli soldier). Arraf has been in and out of Israeli jails because Israel's democratic government is just as befuddled as America's when it comes to defining lawful dissent as opposed to intentional subversion that jeopardizes the lives of law-abiding citizens. Only recently, Arraf refused to be released from jail "in solidarity" with a PLO terrorist who was jailed along with her at one of the ISM's activities in the West Bank village of Bi'lin. That too is part of the ISM's training: to be arrested with violent criminals, then refuse to leave jail unless they are accompanied by the terrorists brought in with them. She was offered freedom with the proviso that she stay out of the West Bank for 15 days. She refused before eventually relenting. Doubtless she will not be kept away for long.

The relative impunity by which activists like Arraf seemingly aid the terrorist cause demands action from authorities. Some proactive steps are in order. Fayyad Sbaihah and George Rishmawi are not American citizens. Huwaida Arraf is a U.S. citizen. However, if she and other ISM activists collaborate with terrorists, that would be against the law of the United States and subject to prosecution. Federal law (18 U.S.C. § 2339A(b)) stipulates that aiding terrorists by giving them any form of lodging, training, expert advice or assistance, providing safe houses, or false identification is illegal. Arraf, heedless of the law, has already told her acolytes at Duke University that the ISM is willing to do--and already has done--many of these things: In the past, the ISM has prevented the Israeli army from demolishing bomb-making factories and weapons smuggling tunnels located in Palestinian homes. Hisham Jam Joun was flown in to Canada for a Palestine Solidarity Conference and the former PFLP terrorist who served in Lebanon also trains ISM volunteers in the West Bank. How much longer can it be before our security services take action?

If the United States government can give a life sentence to Ali Al-Tamimi for training paintball warriors in the War on Terror, why are the so-called "solidarity" foot soldiers still free to invade U.S. campuses, enlisting college students as "volunteers" to go the West Bank and assist Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the PFLP? And why are they doing this with the aid of college administrators who, evidently, know no better in time of war? Why aren't the leaders of the ISM in the United States indicted for aiding and abetting terrorist organizations?

Wiser to the ways of ISM activists, Israel is starting to arrest or deport ISM members and ban their activities. Our own government might be wise to follow in their footsteps. (FrontPageMagazine.com Aug 16)