

MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT: THE EFFECT OF THE PRESS ON U.S.
FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

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by

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Abstract

This study looks into the relationship between the U.S. media and government with respect to U.S. foreign policy toward the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Based on quantitative and qualitative content analysis of selected items from the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the U.S.* and the *Congressional Records*, this research drew insights about concepts related to government–media relationship, media coverage of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, determinants of foreign policy formulation and decision-making as well as the media's role in this process. The analysis encompassed three periods reflecting turning points in the history of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, covering both crisis and non-crisis (relatively peaceful) periods. Analysis included press, and Presidential communications between the years 1977–1979, 1993–1994 and 2000–2001, as well as Congressional communications between the years 2000–2001. Consistent with previous studies, this research showed no media effect on U.S. foreign policy toward the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Rather, press coverage tended to conform to the President's tone and line in most parameters, including source of policy, frames, images, and attitudes on specific policy issues. Similarly, press portrayal of the antagonists seemed to have no effect on the government's basic policy, showing no correspondence with their image changes over time. In addition, the study implies that as U.S. policies toward international conflicts becomes more crystallized, supported by both the administration and Congress, media's influence becomes more marginal. Furthermore, foreign policy is determined by the interplay between the relevant political institutions (U.S. administration and Congress) and is more likely to be changed and adjusted according to the geo-political, international and U.S. national interest considerations, rather than a result of media coverage, criticism and portrayal.

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INTRODUCTION

On the first evening of the Jewish Passover holiday, 2002, a Palestinian suicide bomber walked into a Seder at the Park Hotel in the city of Netanya and blew himself up, killing twenty-nine people and wounding dozens more. This was the peak of a bloody month in Israel in which a wave of suicide attacks against civilians flooded Israeli cities. In response, Israel launched an extensive military operation whose declared intent was to strike at the terrorist infrastructure. Thus, within twenty-four hours, the army had issued emergency call-ups for 20,000 reserve soldiers and Operation Defensive Shield was underway. The next day, Israeli tanks and armoured bulldozers rolled into Palestinian cities in the West Bank, carrying out a major military operation—some say the largest since the occupation of the territories in 1967.

As the battles began, the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) closed the area of battles where they were taking place, declaring them closed military zones and barring both the Israeli and international media from most of the areas where troops were operated. The official reason for the closure was that the IDF could not guarantee the security of media practitioners in those high-risk zones. However, the underlying reason was the IDF's acknowledgment that real-time media coverage and pictures from the scenes would soon lead to pressure from the international governments to stop the operation.

These restrictions, however, turned out to be a grave mistake because they opened the way for disinformation as debris of information from unofficial sources flowed, fostering rumours, reporting on massacres, atrocities, and other “third-hand” reports. In response to the allegations of Israel's atrocities, the IDF and the Foreign Ministry formed a joint PR centre to perform damage control and convey Israel's official messages to the international community.

This example is only just one that illustrates the importance antagonists attribute to media coverage of international conflicts. In the last three decades, the news media became another arena for international conflicts, and governments have long acknowledged that pictures, words, and phrases are becoming effective weapons that might change the balance of power on the field and the subsequent political outcomes. The Israeli–Palestinian conflict is only just one example of how international adversaries turn to the international community, especially to the world’s superpower, the U.S., via the media in attempts to tip the balance of U.S. policy in their favour. This is effective, especially when dealing with high-profile geographic areas such as the Middle East, in which both American and European interests are at stake.

For more than a half of a century, the prolonged Israeli–Palestinian conflict has constitutes a major foreign policy challenge to the U.S. Being the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, this conflict has a potential to upset the stability in the Middle East and to jeopardize vital American interests in this region. Over time, as the nature of the conflict changed in its scope and prominence, U.S. involvement in this conflict grew deeper, leading to extensive media coverage of this confrontation. The advances in communication technology that enabled fast transmission of vivid, real-time pictures and information to the American public and to American politicians, created another challenge for both antagonists—to win the media war.

Whether justified or not, both the Israelis and the Palestinians acknowledged the importance of the media in creating and sustaining negative or positive associations toward them that, in turn, contributes to the approval or disapproval of their causes by the international community. Although mass public opinion counts less in the foreign policy equation, elite opinion does. As decision-makers and members of the policy elite get much of their information from the media, they become indirect participants in the process of

foreign policy formulation by contributing to the climate in which the policy is being made.

Understanding this concept, the Israelis and the Palestinians has been engaged with ongoing efforts to convey their desirable image to the international audience, establishing powerful public relations apparatuses that operate worldwide. Thus, in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, the media became another battlefield, while words and pictures are consistently added to the arsenal of weapons.

Bearing the potential to affect the attitudes and policies towards nations, the U.S. media became one of the major targets of the Israeli and Palestinian public and media relations efforts. With so many resources¹ directed at affecting the U.S. media coverage, it is imperative to explore the relationship between the government and the media in the realm of foreign policy, and more specifically, in the conflict. This analysis explores the direct media-government relationship without the intermediary factor of public opinion, because of the inherent difficulties to empirically discover how policy-makers perceive public opinion. By building a discussion of issues based on case studies, this analysis may provide insights about concepts related to the government-media relationship and the development of the media portrayal of nations, as well as foreign policy formulation and decision-making.

Chapter I provides an historical overview of both the origins of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and the U.S. foreign policy toward it. It shows how this conflict has evolved throughout more than half a century, growing to be the core of a larger concept, the Arab-Israeli conflict. Since the late 1970s, the U.S. began to acknowledge the linkage between the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the solution of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

1. Israel's foreign ministry established official programme named Hasbara to promote Israel's image and explain its policies throughout the world. The Palestinians assigned a Minister of Information who is responsible, among other things, to deal with the international media and to explain the Palestinian Authority's policies to foreign audience.

However, it took more than a decade until the U.S. administration took an active role in bringing the antagonists to the negotiations table. While the Israeli–Palestinian conflict fluctuated between violent confrontations, wars and peace negotiations, the U.S. policy grew more solidified. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the first Palestinian uprising in the territories were the two events that accelerated the process of formulating a distinct, proactive policy toward this conflict.

Chapter II discusses the importance of media images in defining the international image of nations. In turn, the prevailing international image can be converted into politically significant feelings and attitudes that have the potential to affect foreign policy toward a given nation. This chapter reviews various aspects related to the portrayal of the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the U.S. media. It shows how the portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians developed throughout the years. As such, until the 1970s the media showed a dichotomous portrayal, with positive images for the Israelis and negative images for the Arabs as a whole, while the Palestinians were marginal actors in the arena. During the 1970s, the Palestinians were mostly portrayed as terrorists, although the media started to show more understanding toward of the Palestinian problem. The Lebanon War and the first Palestinian uprising in the 1980s marked a turning point in the portrayal of the conflict. Thus, the Israelis were portrayed as aggressors, villains, and suppressors while the Palestinians became freedom fighters and victims of the Israeli aggression. Although the Oslo Agreement and the subsequent peace process contributed to an improvement in the images of both parties, the second Palestinian uprising did a great deal more to change the dominant images of both sides. This research intends to explore the media portrayal that predominated in the last decade.

The extent of the media's influence on American foreign policy has long been debated by scholars, politicians, and media practitioners. Chapter III reviews the roles the news media perform in the realm of foreign policy, including a source of information,

agenda setter, public-opinion generator, and diplomatic proxy. It also looks at the three central approaches to the media-government relationship. At one end of the continuum, there are those scholars who believe that the media play a highly active and influential role in foreign policy decision-making. At the other end of the continuum are scholars who view the media as a passive player in the foreign policy arena that simply echoes the decisions of the powerful Washington establishment. As such, the media serve as an instrument in the actual implementation of foreign policy. A middle ground is provided by scholars who have acknowledged the limitations of the two extremes in addressing cases that contradicted either approach. This middle approach argues that media's influence depends on various factors and conditions. This dissertation uses the "manufacturing consent" school of thought—which views the media as a passive player—as a departure point, from which the research is designed and the questions are formulated.

Chapter IV presents the methodology applied to conduct this research. Thus, attempts to explore the relationship between the press and foreign policy were made based on a content analysis of *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Public Papers of the Presidents of the U.S.* This study focused on the analysis of three case studies related to U.S. policy toward the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Case studies encompass the years 1977–1979, the Egypt-Israel peace process; 1993–1994, the Israeli–Palestinian peace process, and 2000–2001, the first year of the *al-Aqsa Intifada*.

Chapter V summarizes the results that emerged from processing the data from both the newspapers and the Presidential Papers. Results provided various parameters that imply on this study's central issues: The interplay between the news media and foreign policy, the portrayal of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in the U.S. press and the role of the media in the making of U.S. foreign policy toward this conflict.

While analyzing the *Post* and the *Times*' foreign policy coverage, the lack of daily reporting of Congressional foreign policy work became strikingly obvious. While U.S. Congress has long been an influential actor in the formulation of U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli and the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, it seems as if the media has neglected Congress. Chapter VI reviews the central concepts related to media coverage of the legislature in addition to its role in the realm of foreign policy. An analysis of *Congressional Records* shows that in contrast to the President and the media, the U.S. Congress developed an almost dichotomous sense toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in general, and toward the antagonists in particular. In addition, although being neglected by the media, this institution plays an active and influential role in determining U.S. policy toward this conflict.

Chapter VII discusses the conclusions that emerged from this study.

CHAPTER I

The United States and the Middle East: A Historical Perspective

American policy and Active involvement in the Middle East began after World War II (WW II). Until that time, the nature of the relationship between the Arab world and the United States was one of commercial concerns. The changing political conditions in the region encouraged the U.S. to become politically and militarily involved not only in the region, but all around the globe. The striking entrance of the U.S. into the international arena in general, and into the Middle East in particular, was a result of a combination of factors. These included the inability of Western allies to maintain their power in their Arab colonies, the Soviet Union's expansion ambitions and the emerging Cold War, as well as increasing dependency of the U.S. on Middle Eastern oil. All this was intensified by the rise of anti-West elements in Arab nationalism that increased with the establishment of the State of Israel. In addition, the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 led to the prolonged Arab/Palestinian-Israeli conflict followed by years of hostility and instability in the Middle East. The heart of this dispute resides in the conflicting nationalist claims of Palestinians and Israeli Jews to the area named Israel or Palestine.

These interrelated elements required the Americans to develop a firm policy to meet U.S. global interests and goals. In the core of its foreign policy, the U.S. strove to promote peace and stability and to recruit regional partners to reinforce its dominance over the Soviets in the Middle East. U.S. policy in the region was guided by the basic notion that radical political tendencies would endanger Western interests in maintaining access to facilities and resources in the region.

During more than five decades following WW II, U.S. Middle Eastern policy has shifted as a reaction to the ever-changing geo-political and strategic reality in the region. Although core American interests remained the same during this period, occasionally one interest overtook the others in terms of priority.

This chapter reviews the changes and developments in American interests and the resulted policy toward the Middle East, focusing on the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It covers the period between the administrations of President Truman to this of President George W. Bush, providing insights about the motivations, circumstances and constraints affecting each administration, and how these have led to the development of a specific policy. The chapter begins with a review of the history and origins of the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli conflict to draw a more complete picture that shows the relationship between all the major players.

The Origins of the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

Since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, Israel and its Arab neighbours have fought five major wars. A substantial historical background is required to thoroughly understand this prolonged dispute, from which the Israeli-Palestinian dispute developed.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the Zionist movement was organized to establish a Jewish national homeland in the land called Palestine. The Zionist ideological platform integrated the traditional religious yearnings of Jews to return to their ancestors' homeland with the effort to escape the increasingly hostile environment in Eastern Europe. By 1914 and the beginning of World War I, (WW I) there were approximately 85,000 Jewish settlers in Palestine (Groisser, 1982, p. 177). However, Arab opposition to Jewish immigration had already appeared at the end of the 19th Century with the first flows of Jewish immigrants, leading to sporadic attacks on Jewish settlements (Zilkha, 1992, p. 9).

In the aftermath of WW I, the Middle East was divided into several spheres of influence divided between Britain and France. As a result, the entire territory of Palestine was under British control. The Zionists welcomed the British takeover of the land—feelings that were strengthened with the declaration of British Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, in November 1917. According to British Foreign Secretary, Britain promised to support the establishment of Jewish national home in Palestine:

His majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish race and will use its best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed in any country by such Jews who are fully contented with their existing nationality and citizenship (as cited in Dasgupta, 1988, p. 45).

The period after WW I and the Balfour Declaration encouraged a massive flow of Jewish immigrants to Palestine, and the establishment of many agricultural settlements. The success of Zionism led to a collision with Arab nationalism, which intensified at that time. According to Avraham Zilkha, It was obvious that Palestinian nationalism began to crystallize as an opposition to Jewish immigration and land acquisition (1992, p. 11). Muhammad Rabie asserted that the Arab population in Palestine viewed these developments as a threat to their national aspirations and existence (1995, p. 2).

Arab opposition to the increased Jewish presence in Palestine resulted in riots, strikes and violent attacks on Jewish communities that reached their climax between 1937 and 1939. The British administration in Palestine, which realized the extent of Arab opposition to the Jewish cause, restricted Jewish immigration to Palestine as part of its policy. The Jewish reaction to these events fell into two camps—while the minority supported the idea of a bi-national state of Arabs and Jews, the majority continued to insist on the establishing an independent Jewish state. In order to confront the situation adequately, the Jewish people established their own defence force, which aimed to respond to Arab attacks and expel the British from Palestine.

In the wake of increased violence in Palestine, the British appointed the Peel Commission on April 1936 to investigate the motives of Arab resistance. The commission received testimony from both sides. The Zionists called for unlimited Jewish immigration

and purchase of land, while Arab representatives demanded the establishment of an Arab government in Palestine (Groisser, 1982; Smith, 1988; Tessler, 1994; Zilkha, 1992). The commission concluded that the situation in Palestine could be resolved only through the partition of Palestine into separate independent Arab and Jewish states. Whereas in general, the Zionists reluctantly accepted the plan, the Arabs unconditionally opposed the resolution (Bethell, 1979, p. 32). As such, neighbouring Arab governments joined the Higher Arab Committee in condemning the proposal, calling for united Arab resistance to world Jewry and their efforts to establish a state in Palestine (Smith, 1988, p. 98).

A mixture of events in the local and the international arena resulted in an escalation of violence between Arabs, Jews and British. These included the failure of the Peel Commission and other subsequent efforts to solve the problem, the outbreak of WW II, as well as the British insistence on implementing their policy of restriction. Thus, extremists on both sides directed organized operations to attack each other and the British. However, as the resistance to British rule increased, the struggle was extended to the general population, including moderate groups of Arabs and Jews (Bell, 1977; Porath, 1977; Smith, 1988; Zilkha, 1992).

In the international arena, the Nazis mostly succeeded to implement their plan to exterminate Jews in Europe, extending their objective to other parts of the world. Jews in Palestine and in the U.S. came to realize the extent of the Holocaust only by late 1942. In the light of the emerging horrors, they began to demand more vehemently that Palestine become a homeland for Jewish refugees. The extensive Zionist campaign against British restrictions on refugees' immigration made a strong impact, especially on American public opinion. Thus, in December 1945, U.S. Congress passed a resolution recommending free immigration to develop Palestine in the direction of a Jewish state (Zilkha, 1992, p. 18).

In 1945 the Arab League was established with the help of the British government to pacify the Arab nationalists and create a notion of Arab unity (Rabie, 1995, p.2). Since its establishment, the Arab League assumed responsibility for the Palestine issue, assigning delegates from several Arab countries to represent the Arabs of Palestine in various discussions (Zilkha, 1992, p. 19). Thus, Arab governments declared in 1946 that the Palestinian issue was not solely the concern of the Palestinian Arabs, but a pan-Arab problem (p. 19). This assertion is central to the understanding of the inseparable triangle of the Arab-Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Thus, from then on, Arab leaders often stressed the linkage between a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and that of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations (U.N.) adopted Resolution 181 that proposed the partition of Palestine into two states, Arab and Jewish. The resolution also called for the creation of an economic union to tie the two states together (Rabie, 1995, p. 3). In general, the Zionists reaction to the planned partition was favourable, though they were dissatisfied with the territory allocated to them. The Jewish leaders saw a great potential inherent in independence, and especially how this related to the free flow of immigrants to a secured land. However, the Arabs strongly resisted the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine regardless of its shape or size (Zilkha, 1992, p. 21).

The implementation of the partition was uncertain especially because of the violent Arab reaction, and the British refusal to ensure a peaceful transition. The Zionist leadership in Palestine realized that they should not rely solely on the U.N. to enforce partition, and therefore established quasi-military control of the zone granted to the Jews, attempting to expand the area to include Jewish settlements outside the partition lines (Lorch, 1968, p. 94).

Upon British withdrawal from Palestine on May 14, 1948, the Jewish National Council proclaimed the State of Israel. Shortly thereafter, the United States and the Soviet Union recognized the state of Israel. The declaration of independence opened the first Arab-Israeli war, which evolved into two phases. The first phase lasted from the U.N. partition resolution to the end of the British Mandate. In this period, the fighting escalated from guerrilla warfare to full-scale battles between the Jewish defence forces and Arab groups supported by volunteers from abroad. The second phase began with Israel declaration of independence and lasted until the signing of armistice agreement in July 1949. In this second phase, the war involved Israel's new organized army and the armies of several Arab countries (Zilkha, 1992, p. 21).

The first Arab-Israeli war ended in 1949, with Israel having gained 20 percent more land than was initially allocated by the partition resolution and was followed by a flow of Arab refugees out of the country (Groisser, 1982; Rabie, 1995; Smith, 1988; Tessler, 1994; Zilkha, 1992). Arabs and Israelis disagree on the circumstances under which the mass exodus of Palestinians occurred. Israelis claim that the Palestinians left voluntarily, because they did not want to live under Jewish rule or because they had been ordered to leave by their leaders. Arabs insisted that the Israelis ousted Arabs from the occupied territories, forcing them to move into Arab-held territory. Thus, approximately 470,000 Arab refugees entered camps in the territories of the West Bank of the Jordan River controlled by Jordan, and the Gaza Strip, controlled by Egypt. Other portion was dispersed mainly into Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, while 133,000 remained in the Israeli territory (Hurewitz, 1976; Peretz, 1958; Rabie, 1995; Tessler, 1994).

By the end of the war, the Jordanian Legion controlled the West Bank of the Jordan River and the Old City of Jerusalem. King Abdullah of Jordan chose to annex the West Bank to Jordan, and granted its Palestinian residents Jordanian citizenship (Smith, 1988, p. 155).

Similarly, Egypt controlled the Gaza Strip on the southern coast, as well as the freedom of passage for shipping to and from the port of Eilat.

The conclusion of the armistice agreements between Israel and the Arab states opened an era of no peace-no war. Israel's surrounding Arab neighbours not only boycotted the new state politically and economically, but Israel's borders were also vulnerable to their attacks. In addition, the U.N. ongoing efforts to negotiate a permanent peace agreement had failed (Rabie, 1995, p. 3). A major stumbling block was the question of the Palestinian refugees, whose return was tied, by Israel, to a conclusion of a peace agreement with its Arab neighbours, while the Arabs viewed this issue as a preliminary condition to peace talks. The situation grew worse when member states in the U.N. aligned themselves in blocs that reflected the Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

During the years between 1956 and 1973, Israel was involved in three additional wars with its Arab neighbours, against the backdrop of the Cold War between the West, led by the U.S., and the East, led by the Soviet Union. In late December 1956, Israel attacked Egypt Sinai Peninsula in an effort to stop Arab infiltrations into Israeli territory that were followed by guerrilla attacks. Israeli forces drove through the Gaza Strip and moved to the east bank of the Suez Canal. Coordinated with the Israeli attack, Britain and France attacked Egypt to regain control of the Suez Canal, which had been seized by the Egyptian President Nasser. However, extensive pressure from the Soviets and the Americans ended the war. Under the cease-fire agreement, Egypt maintained control of the canal and Israel withdrew from occupied Sinai and Gaza Strip (Groisser, 1982; Smith, 1988; Tessler, 1994; Zilkha, 1992).

At that time, being under Egyptian and Jordanian rule, the Palestinians had no influence on the course of events (Zilkha, 1992, p. 39). Palestinian attacks in the Israeli territory were mainly aimed to provoke Israel into a confrontation with its Arab neighbours

rather than to gain victories (p. 39). In 1964 the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was established by the Arab League to share the political and military responsibilities of confronting the Israeli challenge (Rabie, 1995, p. 4). Although declaring its intention of representing the Palestinian people and their ambitions to liberate Palestine, the desired defeat of Israel was not possible (Quandt, 1974, p. 66).

Nevertheless, pan-Arab and international awareness of the PLO was gained when power was transferred to its new chairman Yasir Arafat. In attempts to position the PLO as unequal to the Arab nations, the organization became engaged in both guerrilla and political activities. In the international arena, Arafat tried to turn the world's opinion in favour of the Palestinian cause (Zilkha, 1992, p. 39).

The 1967 war introduced a new era from which the Palestinians emerged as an independent force in Arab politics. The war was a shocking defeat for the Arabs and constituted an unprecedented triumph for Israelis and Jews all over the world. The friction on the Syrian border, which led to attacks on Israel, along with challenges imposed by the Egyptians, triggered the 1967 War. This war changed the map of the Middle East, with Israel more than doubling the territory under its control. By the end of the war, Israel occupied the Golan Heights, the West Bank of the Jordan River, the whole of Sinai, and the east bank of the Suez Canal, and had annexed the Old City of Jerusalem.

In the aftermath of the 1967 War, the Arab states took the position that the territories occupied in the war should be returned immediately without any corresponding concessions on their part, such as a peace agreement (Smith, 1988, p. 207). In contrast, the Israeli cabinet voted on June 19, 1967 to return Sinai to Egypt and the Golan Heights to Syria in return for demilitarization and peace (Zilkha, 1992, p. 33). The debate moved to the U.N. Security Council, which adopted Resolution 242. This resolution outlined the basis for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East and would follow future Arab-Palestinian-Israeli encounters.

U.N. Resolution 242 called for an Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967 in exchange for secured and recognized boundaries. It also called for an end to the state of belligerence between Arab nations and Israel, territorial integrity and a just settlement of the refugee problem (Laqueur & Rubin, 2001, p. 116). Israel rejected a complete withdrawal before the signing of a peace treaty, while Egypt and Jordan refused to conclude peace agreements until Israel withdrew. As for the PLO, it opposed this resolution until the end of the 1980s (Rabie, 1995, p.4).

The defeat of the Arab armies in the 1967 war motivated the Palestinians to take charge of the struggle against Israel. They viewed an escalation in guerrilla-style warfare as the best way to achieve their objectives. In the occupied territories, the Israelis monitored Palestinian activities and imposed harsh measures against those who tried to organize underground cells, while PLO activities against Israelis from Jordan resulted in Israeli retaliation (Zilkha, 1992, p. 40). These actions caused damage to the Jordanian infrastructure and economy, inevitably endangering King Hussein regime (Hussein, 1969, p. 27). Following two attempts to assassinate King Hussein, early on September 1970 and four airline hijacking carried out by a PLO subsidiary organization, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), King Hussein ordered his troops to bring down the Palestinian infrastructure on his land. After seven days of bloody fighting with the Jordanian Army, Palestinian guerrilla factions moved out of Jordan and established their base in Lebanon.

Nevertheless, the years between 1967 and 1973 saw extensive cycles of attacks on Israeli targets by Arab terrorist groups, followed by Israeli retaliatory attacks, as well as frequent encounters between the Israelis and Syrian and Jordanian forces. After six years of mounting confrontation, tempered somewhat by some degree of the superpowers involvement to ease the tension, another full-scale war between Israel, Egypt and Syria broke out in October 1973. In late October of that year, the U.N. Security Council passed

Resolution 338, calling for a cease-fire and a commencement of face-to-face peace negotiations. This resolution was strongly supported by both the U.S. and the Soviets.

The state of war between Israel and Egypt ended at the end of 1977 with Egyptian president visit to Israel. Anwar Sadat of Egypt decided to break the deadlock in the Israeli-Arab conflict, and in an unprecedented initiative went to address the Israeli parliament. After more than a year of intensive negotiations between Egypt and Israel, brokered by President Carter, the parties concluded a peace treaty in March 1979. Under the terms of the treaty, Israel agreed to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in return for a peace treaty and diplomatic relations (Tillman, 1982, p. 26).

In the early stages of the peace talks, President Sadat raised the Palestinian problem and strove to include its solution within the Egyptian-Israeli peace agreements. This was the first time that an Arab leader had insisted on the linkage between a peace treaty and the future of the West Bank and Gaza (Tillman, 1982, p. 28). In other words, to some extent, Sadat's demands made the Palestinian problem an inseparable part of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Nevertheless, as the negotiations proceeded, the parties decided to leave it to future negotiations that would include Jordan (Smith 1988; Tillman, 1982; Zilkha, 1992).

During the 1970s, the PLO initiated military activities from Lebanon, and later expanded their operations beyond the Middle East. These cross-border guerrilla forays fuelled the image of Palestinians as terrorists and destroyed the PLO's international legitimacy (Hudson, 1990, p. 8). However, the growing strength of the PLO in southern Lebanon and the continuation of the unrest in the West Bank often prompted Israeli attempts to destroy nationalist sentiments there (Smith 1988, p. 243).

Therefore, in June 1982 Israeli forces entered Lebanon to destroy PLO bases there and to open the way for a peace treaty between Israel and Lebanon (Zilkha, 1992, p. 42). After massive attacks on Beirut that included aerial bombardment, the PLO was forced to leave Lebanon and relocate to Tunis. It seemed as if Israel had achieved its objectives

related to PLO destruction in Lebanon. Moreover, Israel Defence Minister came from Beirut with a peace agreement signed by the Lebanese President, Bashir Jumayel. However, Israel's ambitions of peace with Lebanon encountered many obstacles, culminating in Jumayel's assassination by Muslim rivals (Smith, 1988; Zilkha, 1992). According to Muhammad Rabie, the aftermath of the war in Lebanon forced the PLO to transform itself from a revolutionary organization into a political one (1995, p. 5).

The political transformation of the Palestinians not only challenged Israel's rule in the territories, but also encouraged the PLO to make compromises that would initiate a peaceful diplomatic solution to the conflict (Falk, 1993; Hudson, 1990; Tessler, 1994). Thus, from June 1988 on, the PLO officials circulated a series of statements signalling their readiness to accept U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, as well as their recognition of the state of Israel (Tayler & Boustany, 1988, p. A1).

The outbreak of the first *Intifada*, the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, had given the PLO a new function in the Palestinian struggle against Israel—one of organization and movement. When mass street demonstrations broke out in the territories in December 1987, no one realized that it would turn out to be a popular, sustained uprising (Hiltermann, 1990; Rabie, 1995; Taylor, 1991; Zilkha, 1992). What began as protest demonstrations developed into riots, stone-throwing, and firebomb assaults on Israeli soldiers. Israel responded with harsh operations to put down the riots in which many Palestinian residents were killed.

Although the *Intifada* has not achieved a change in Israeli policy toward withdrawal, it has attracted international attention and increased pressure on Israel. For instance, the U.S. foreign policy-making and opinion-making elites, including influential news media turned in a pro-Palestinian direction (Hudson, 1990, p. 88). Members of Congress expressed concern about Israel's approach to containing the Palestinian uprising (Tessler, 1994, p. 712). Moreover, in March 1988, thirty senators expressed a bipartisan

support in the Palestinian struggle by forwarding the Israeli Premier a letter calling for a settlement based on an exchange of land for peace (p. 713).

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has traditionally revolved around the disputed territories captured in 1967; however, Zilkha recognized another point of disagreement. This was the refusal of each side to recognize the other as a nation (1992, p. 44). The Israelis found a contradiction between the claim, on one hand, that the Arabs are a single, unified nation, and the demand, on the other hand, that a separate Palestinian national identity be recognized (p. 44). The Palestinians and the other Arab nations disputed the validity of Jewish nationalism, ignoring the strong historical link between nationalism and religion in Judaism and stressing that the Jewish people are citizens of the states from which they initially came (Harkabi, 1979, p. 78). The 1993 Declaration of Principles signed in Washington between Israel and the Palestinians, finally confirmed that there was nothing about the essence of either Zionism or Palestinian nationalism that made a solution of the conflict impossible (Tessler, 1994, p. 756).

Between the summer 1990 and the summer of 1991 the world's attention shifted from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the crisis in the Persian Gulf as Iraq invaded Kuwait. Many Palestinians supported Iraq and its leader during the crisis, holding the view that an Arab military challenge was the only way to force the Israeli government to the negotiating table (Tessler, 1994, p. 737). While the Palestinians response to the Gulf crisis generated anti-Palestinian sentiment among a substantial number of Israelis, there also continued to be widespread Israeli support for territorial compromise in return for peace and security.

The conclusion of the Gulf War and the emerging international situation created an opportunity to end the deadlock in the Arab-Israeli dispute. As such, the Americans worked to convene an international conference in the Middle East, obtaining tentative commitments from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon and Israel to attend a summit

meeting. After settling the dispute over the Palestinian delegation, the Madrid Conference opened on October 1991 co-sponsored by the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Although it was a landmark in the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli conflict, this conference was far from successful. As such, Arab delegates were disappointed with Israel refusal to offer proposals based on U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, while Israel was dissatisfied by the Arabs failure to recognize Israel's security concerns. Nevertheless, the conference paved the way for further meetings between the Palestinians, Jordanians and Israelis (Kaufman, 1996, p. 173).

Hopes for progress in the peace talks, which started in the Madrid conference and continued in Washington, increased with the Israeli elections of 1992. The newly-elected premier, Yitzhak Rabin, explicitly committed his government to a successful resolution of the peace process. During the following months, secret meetings between Israeli and Palestinian representatives took place in Norway. Finally, the Israelis and Palestinians signed the Declaration of Principles (DOP) on September 1993 at a ceremony at the White House. Under the PLO-Israeli accords (the Oslo Accords), both parties agreed to end the enmity, to recognize their mutual political rights and to begin a peace process. More specifically, this agreement included Israeli withdrawal from the cities of Jericho and Gaza, and the exertion of Palestinian administrative authority in these cities, which was later extended to other parts of the West Bank.

Since the signing on the DOP on September 1993, until the Israeli elections of May 1996, the Israelis and Palestinians signed two additional agreements. These included the Cairo Agreement signed on March 1994 and set the modalities for applying the DOP, notably in Gaza and Jericho, as well as the Oslo II Agreement signed on September 1995, which extended the Palestinian autonomy to the West Bank.

After the recognition of Israel by the PLO, a number of Arab countries expressed their willingness to deal with Israel. As a result, Israel started building relationships with

Morocco, Qatar, Oman and Tunisia. The DOP also opened the door for developments in the Israeli-Jordanian arena. Thus, after a year of meetings, summits and discussions, Israel and Jordan reached an agreement that led to the signing of a peace treaty between the two countries on October 26, 1994.

However, the assassination of Israel Prime Minister Rabin on November 1995 by a Jewish extremist cut off the peace euphoria. The following year and a half were characterized by slow implementation of the agreements, as well as several Palestinian terrorist acts against Israeli civilians. The 1996 Israeli general elections shifted political power to the right-wing Likud government led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The delays in the implementation of the Oslo II Agreement, and especially Israel withdrawal from the city of Hebron, followed by Israel opening of an archaeological tunnel running under the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in East Jerusalem-all led to Palestinian demonstrations that escalated into violent armed clashes.

Faced with the possibility of a total collapse of the peace process, President Clinton summoned Arafat and Netanyahu to Washington to get the two sides back to the negotiating table. Thus, an active American involvement in the negotiations complemented by new and strong assurances of American commitment to Israel security, led to the signing of the Hebron withdrawal agreement in January 1997 (Laqueur & Rubin, 2001; Quandt, 2001). This agreement reaffirmed Israel's redeployment in Hebron, transferring administrative and security responsibilities to the Palestinian authorities. However, the responsibility for the Jewish inhabitants in Hebron remained in Israeli hands. This agreement also established Netanyahu's reciprocity concept, whereby the Palestinians failure to adhere to the Oslo Agreements would become an excuse for not implementing further withdrawals (Quandt, 2001, p. 27).

The path from the Oslo to the Hebron Agreement and beyond has been full of both euphoria and heartbreak for both Israelis and Palestinians. Agreements, withdrawal, and hope have been matched by assassination, violence, and bitterness. Israel delays in implementing further withdrawals, the continuous expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank as well as several suicide bombings in the City of Jerusalem by Palestinian terrorists, further threatened the fragile peace process. In mid-October 1998, President Clinton invited Arafat and Netanyahu to meet at the Wye River Plantation in an attempt to bring the parties to agreement. Under the Wye Agreement, the Palestinians committed to further steps on security and nullification of parts of the National Charter and Israel committed to make a series of gradual withdrawals from 13% of the areas fully controlled by Israel (Laqueur & Rubin, 2001, pp. 529–534).

The Israeli elections of May 1999, which brought the Labour party back into power, brought new hope for progress in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Known as a criticizer of the Oslo Agreement and the step-by-step approach, newly-elected Prime Minister Ehud Barak sought to reach an agreement on basic principles that would leave the details for later resolution (Quandt, 2001, p. 29). As Clinton approached his last year in office with no major achievement in the Israeli-Palestinian front, he invited Arafat and Barak to Camp David in July 2000, hoping to achieve major progress and reach a final status agreement.

On leaving for Camp David, Barak's position called for a united Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty, no withdrawal from all settlements, but the creation of settlement blocs under Israeli sovereignty, no withdrawal to the 1967 borders, no recognition of a right of return for Palestinian refugees, and no militarization of the West Bank and Gaza (Laqueur & Rubin, 2001, p. 550). Arafat insisted on full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories including East Jerusalem, the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital and the recognition of the right of Palestinian refugees to return to

their original homes and to compensation (Quandt, 2001, pp. 31–32). As the negotiations proceeded, Barak appeared to be ready to accept some of the Palestinian demands. These included the return of 90 percent of the West Bank and Gaza, the return of a predetermined number of Palestinian refugees, and recognition of a Palestinian state. Nevertheless, the 14 days of intensive negotiations at the Camp David summit ended with no agreement, with Jerusalem as the main obstacle that prevented an agreement.

Since September 29th, Israel and the Palestinians have been engaged in a violent confrontation referred to as the *al-Aqsa Intifada*. While triggered by the visit of the Israeli right-wing opposition leader Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount, opinions as to the reasons for the outbreak of the confrontation vary. Some believed that the reasons for the *Intifada* were the failure of the Camp David summit and the Palestinians frustration with the seven-year peace process that had still not ended the Israeli occupation (Christison, 2000, p. 295). Others asserted that this was a planned, orchestrated Palestinian strategy to obtain international support for their positions and to force Israel to make concessions to achieve the Palestinians political goals (Granot, 2002; Shay & Schweitzer, 2001).

During the first weeks of the crisis, Clinton worked extensively to end the violence and resume the negotiations. To these ends, he convened the Sharm al-Sheikh summit in mid-October 2000, attended by Barak, Arafat, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, King Abdallah of Jordan, Egypt's President Mubarak, and other European representatives. The summit resulted with an agreement by the adversaries to concentrate efforts to end the violence and a decision to assign a commission of inquiry into the crisis. Towards the end of December 2000, shortly before leaving office, Clinton made his last attempt to bring an end to the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation and to bridge the gaps between the parties. In his plan, Clinton proposed a Palestinian state on 95 percent of the West Bank and Gaza; Palestinian sovereignty over the Arab neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem, to limit the right of return to the Palestinian state and to employ an international force along the future

Israeli-Palestinian border (Laqueur & Rubin, 2001; pp. 562–564). However, neither Barak nor Arafat were ready to accept Clinton's proposal and he left office while the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation was consistently intensifying.

The first phase of the *Intifada*, which lasted from September 2000 until August 2001 was characterized by a Palestinian armed struggle combined with a popular civil uprising with a number of suicide bombings on Israeli civilians. This was followed by Israeli assaults on Palestinian towns and terrorist infrastructure, as well as restrictions on the Palestinian population and closures of the West Bank and Gaza areas. The violence continued for a year with no major conclusion. The escalating lethal violence, followed by heavy pressure from the Americans and Europeans, compelled Arafat to declare a cease-fire in June 2001. At the same time, the Americans dispatched CIA director George Tenet who formulated a cease-fire agreement that has never been implemented by the adversaries.

In the wake of more than two years of deadly confrontation, a total collapse of the peace process was an inevitable outcome. The people who led the Oslo talks and the following agreements on both sides seemed to lose their power. While almost daily suicide attacks by Palestinian terrorists became part of routine civilian life in Israel, the Israeli army and tanks became part of the view in the Palestinian cities. At least for the foreseeable future, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is insoluble.

The American Interests in the Middle East—An Overview

In September 1946, Low W. Henderson, Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs of U.S. State Department stated:

The main objective of the United States in the Near and Middle East is to prevent rivalries and conflicts of interest in that area from developing into open hostilities which eventually might lead to a third world war. This part of the world is of tremendous strategic value...as a common highway by sea land and air between the

East and West; it possesses great mineral wealth and it has potentially rich agricultural resources. ("Documents," 1947).

According to Bernard Reich, the concept of national interest, though flawed, provides the basis for a nation's policy and legislation. There are varying perceptions in the American executive branch, in Congress, and among the general public of what is or what is not the national interest (1980, p. 53). In general, the national interest of the U.S. is the continuation of its existence as an independent state, safeguarding and enhancing its institutions, values, and people welfare. Thus, it is essential for the U.S. to encourage a world environment that is supportive of these goals (p. 53). While the general national interest is usually permanent, the means to achieve this superior goal might change over time, depending on specific regions in the world, methods of achievement, and the perceptions of decision-makers (p. 54).

The American involvement in the Middle East took shape following WW II. Until that time, U.S. interests remained primarily private and limited to certain parts of the region. Furthermore, American interests mainly constituted those of private individuals or groups that represented particular interests, without involving official policies, or political, economic, or military matters (Grabill, 1971; Groisser, 1982; Lenczowski, 1968; Stookey, 1975).

During WW II, the strategic importance of the Middle East in terms of geographical location and petroleum resources became apparent. The war created a new political structure in the international order, whereby the United States and the Soviet Union became the dominant superpowers, competing for influence in this part of the world. In addition, the British and French gave up their dominance and leadership in the Middle East to the Americans, who lacked extensive experience in Middle Eastern affairs (Chomsky, 1983; Cottam, 1993; Falk, 1993; Lenczowski, 1968; Rubenberg, 1986).

Russian expansionism after WW II led to America's first political, economic, and military involvement in the Middle East. The Soviet Union took advantage of the power vacuum created in Europe and Asia by the defeat of Germany and Japan, and by the American withdrawal from Europe. By keeping forces in Eastern and Central Europe and the Far East, the Russians helped Communist parties to take control of governments in these areas. These developments led to a growing American involvement in world political affairs, breaking its pre-war policy of isolation and marking the beginning of the Cold War between the Communist world and the non-Communist blocs.

Since it became directly and officially involved in the Middle East, the United States has had several fundamental interests in this area. Over the years, the U.S. developed a generalized view of its interests that focused on a number of themes—all being repeated in governmental statements, referred to in legislation, and voiced by observers and analysts (Reich, 1980, p. 58). The American interests in the Middle East include the avoidance of nuclear proliferation and confrontation, the preservation of access to the region's oil at tolerable prices, the survival and security of the state of Israel, the preservation of peace and stability in the region, and fulfilment of people's right to self-determination. Taken together, these interrelated interests make the Middle East the most important and dangerous region from the standpoint of the American interests.

The Middle East as a Strategic Asset

Situated at the hub of Europe, Asia and Africa, the Middle East is a key strategic region, providing a crossroads and a bridge between these continents. By virtue of its geographical position, the Middle East became significant to American dominance because of its potential for land, sea, and air communications, linking major parts of the world (Lenczowski, 1968; Reich, 1980; Taylor, 1991).

The geographic position of the Middle East has made it an ideal area for military bases and staging posts as it provides a convenient point for military activity on three continents, and convenient accessibility to the Soviet Union (Reich, 1980, p. 61). Even though technological developments have increased the range of aircraft and intercontinental missiles, the need to retain military bases in the area has not diminished (p. 61). This need was reasonable especially because Turkey and Iran bordered the Soviet Union. Therefore, policy makers in Washington were determined to secure access to and control over these facilities in the light of the Soviet expansion.

The Significance of Middle Eastern Oil

An adequate supply of oil is essential to the American standard of living. Oil in increasing quantities will be required in the future to meet the needs of our expanding economy. A prime weapon of victory in two World Wars, it is a bulwark of our national security (as cited in Hoskins, 1976, p. 105).

The Middle East has long been valued for its vast petroleum reserves. This became an increasingly important aspect of the superpower rivalry, especially because of the dependence of America's European allies on Middle Eastern oil. U.S. interest in Middle East oil made the security and stability of the Persian Gulf area the most critical priority in the region, as it possesses at least 60 percent of the world proven oil reserves, along with the potential for future discovery (Hoskins, 1976; Lenczowki, 1968; Nisan, 1982; Reich, 1980; Stookey, 1975).

The U.S. remains heavily dependent on foreign energy sources, especially these of Saudi Arabia. As the Congressional Budget Officer estimated in 1977, the loss of Saudi Arabian oil for one year would significantly reduce the gross national product of the U.S., increase the unemployment rate by two percent, and radically accelerate inflation—and all this, while imposing even greater damage to the European and Japanese economies (“Global Security,” 1977).

Historically, the federal government has reluctantly intervened in the U.S. oil industry, and only ever for reasons of national security or intolerable disruption of the economy (Stookey, 1975, p. 67). By the end of WW II, a stable pattern for the relationship between the government and the oil industry had been established. As such, the industry demanded that oil would remain primarily in private hands under general public supervision. The government was expected to support the industry in diplomatic actions, through legislation, by providing tax benefits, and by encouraging economic stability (p. 70).

In the 1950s, the American interests in the Middle East, and especially in the Persian Gulf area, began to develop as a result of commercial activity involving oil. Nevertheless, military and economic cooperation between the U.S. and the Gulf states were relatively modest. By the late 1960s, U.S. interests in and contacts with the region increased involving the oil industry and commercial enterprise. Although the U.S. itself made little direct use of Middle East oil, assurance of supply to its Western European allies was of primary importance in its policies (David, 1997; Reich, 1980; Rubenberg, 1986; Stookey, 1975).

From 1973 until today, the uninterrupted flow of oil from the Middle East to Western countries became the primary American interest. Furthermore, American officials have consistently seen the security of the U.S. and the operation of the Middle East petroleum industry as being closely linked (Gamlen, 1993; Nisan, 1982; Stookey, 1975). The Arab-Israeli war of October 1973 provided the trigger that linked U.S. efforts in the Arab-Israeli conflict with U.S. concerns regarding the availability of oil in reasonable prices for its own use.

The 1973 Oil Embargo following the American aid to Israel during the war revealed the Arabs ability and willingness to employ oil to advance their political interests. The conflict itself, the potential for confrontation between the superpowers, and the

increase in oil prices—all contributed to a reassessment of U.S. interests and policies (Gamlen, 1993, p. 216). The embargo remained in effect for five months, and was removed only after Secretary of State Henry Kissinger convinced the Arabs that the U.S. had moved toward a less partisan position in the region (Reich, 1980, p.64). As a result of the international circumstances and the strategic/economic role of oil, the U.S. became a central extra-regional power in the search for a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict (Nisan, 1982, p. 108).

Peoples Right to Self-Determination

The American interests of adhering to the peaceful settlement of international conflict and the preservation of international order are closely related to the principle of people's right to self-determination. As an international norm, the principle of self-determination is largely an American contribution that has its roots in the American Declaration of Independence, which states that governments derive "their just powers from the consent of the governed" (as cited in Tillman, 1982, p. 229). The origins of self-determination are both ethical and pragmatic. They stem from the historical experience of nations and from the need to maintain good order in international relations (p. 229).

As an ethical principle, the premise of self-determination is that it is immoral for larger or more powerful national groups to impose their rule on smaller or less powerful groups (Tillman, 1982, p. 58). This proposition underlies the traditional anti-colonialist position of U.S. policies. According to Tillman, although it did not discourage the U.S. from acquiring overseas territories, it prevented these acquisitions from achieving legitimacy in American minds and contributed to the early decision of the U.S. to give up these territories. Furthermore, it contributed to the imposition of American pressure against European colonial empires after both world wars (p. 58).

As a modern pragmatic premise, self-determination grew out of the experience of the nineteenth-century Europe and WWI, from which it became overwhelmingly evident that unhappy subordinate nationalities are “a chronic source of instability and conflict” (p. 58). Therefore, the Americans concluded that the world would be safer, and peace more secured, if as many people as possible could be permitted to practice their political rights independently.

Nevertheless, the United States has been ambivalent toward the application of self-determination regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Shadid, 1981, Tillman, 1982). Although the U.S. has acknowledged the Palestinians’ right to self-determination, at least partially, U.S. administrations have traditionally shown unwavering commitment to Israel’s interests. For example, while applying the principle of self-determination for the Jewish people after WW II, for a long time the American government refused to recognize the Palestinian right to self-determination in the West Bank and Gaza. This right, which was advocated enthusiastically by President Wilson, included all the peoples of the former Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires, of which the Palestinians were a part (Shadid, 1981 p. 40).

The first time the Americans seriously considered the fulfilment of the Palestinians’ right to self-determination, was early in President Carter term of office. President Carter expressed understanding of Palestinian claims and proposed that “there has to be homeland provided for the Palestinian refugees who have suffered for many, many years” (Marder, 1977a, p. A4). However, a concrete decision was postponed until the early 1990s with the signing of the Oslo Accords, and the establishment of Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza.

The American-Israeli Connection

American Policy-makers downgrade Israel's geographical importance as a stabilizing force, as a deterrent to radical hegemony and as a military offset to the Soviet Union. The fall of Iran has increased Israel's value as perhaps the only remaining strategic asset in the region on which the United States can truly rely; other pro-Western states in the region, especially Saudi Arabia and the smaller Gulf kingdoms, are weak and vulnerable" (Reagan, 1979, p. A25)

The American interests related to Israel and its surrounding Arab neighbour states revolve around the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the commitment to Israel's survival. Traditionally, the Americans were convinced that if the conflict continued, it would lead to a nuclear confrontation involving the superpowers that would threaten vital American strategic and economic interests (David, 1997; Reich, 1980). Therefore, American presidents from Truman to George W. Bush have devoted substantial efforts to adequately deal with this issue, considering peace as the primary means to ensure the American interests in the region.

The American commitment to Israel's strength and survival began at the state's establishment in 1948. Yet, in time, the relationship between Israel and the U.S. developed into what came to be known as the "special relationship." Scholars and political analysts argued that the American interest in the well-being of Israel stemmed from a combination of factors, including strategic, political, ideological, and affiliation-oriented considerations (Groisser, 1982; Handel, 1983; Nisan, 1982; Reich, 1980; Tillman, 1982).

The strategic factor is related to Israel's central geographic location. As such, it serves as an ideal base for operations in the Middle East, providing an easy access to all parts of the region. Israel can also provide all necessary logistical support to the American forces in their defence operations against external threats (Handel, 1983, p. 80). In the Cold War era, Americans believed that in any major confrontation with the Soviets, mainly

over Middle Eastern oil, Israel could be a key defence point for the United States. In addition, the Americans could rely on Israel not only in cases of superpowers confrontation but also as a player that facilitates stability in the region (Groisser, 1982; Handel; 1982; Nisan; 1982; Reich, 1980). Historically, Israel served as a stabilizing power that limited destabilization actions in the Middle East. For instance, Israel's actions helped reduce Syrian intervention during the Jordanian civil war in 1970 and in the Lebanese civil war in 1975.

Israel's high educational, scientific, and technological standards made it a strong and advanced member of the Western world. Moreover, its military experience and sophisticated military industries turned Israel into a significant part of NATO's (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) strategic framework to respond to the Soviet threat (Nisan, 1982, p. 141). Admiral Elmo Zumwalt summarized Israel's military value to the U.S., stating that:

Israel's military value to the United States derives not only from its location adjacent to the oil-rich Persian Gulf region...but also from the sophistication and prodigious efficiency of its defence forces. More important...is the reliability of the state of Israel as a comrade-in-arms on behalf of the essential interests of the Western world (as cited in Churba, 1977, p. 4).

Even without the Soviet threat, the U.S. has a major stake in helping to stabilize friendly states in the face of fundamentalist movements in the Middle East (Lipson, 1997, p. 143). The end of the Cold War and the proliferation of nuclear weapon among radical groups have brought about an increased American reliance on the strategic value of dependable allies. The decline in the U.S. defence budget, resulting from the end of the Cold War, has meant more emphasis on utilizing facilities and forces of friendly states such as Israel (David, 1997, p. 104).

Nevertheless, some scholars have asserted that neither Israel's strategic value nor its geographic location justified the American support and commitment to this state. They have often argued that from an historical viewpoint, America derived no advantage from its relationship with Israel. According to Tillman, Israel's strategic service of acting as a barrier to Soviet penetration into the Middle East was necessary primarily because of the existence of Israel (1982, p. 52). Furthermore, Arab states would have been much less amenable to Soviet influence if the American support had stopped. Kissinger further emphasized this point by stating that Israel's strength is needed for its own survival rather than preventing the spread of Communism in the Arab world (Khoury, 1968, p. 43). In fact, preventing Soviet influence could be achieved by strengthening the American alliance with the Arab states and abandoning Israel rather than supporting her (Tillman, 1980, p.52). Furthermore, Israel's stability neither influenced nor prevented the occurrence of events conflicting with American interests, such as the Iranian revolution (1979), the Iran-Iraq war (1980), and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (1990). These arguments brought scholars to view the strong American-Jewish lobby as the principal reason for the special American-Israeli relationship (Newsom, 1996; Taylor, 1991).

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) became the most successful and powerful lobby group in influencing U.S. foreign policy towards Israel. The lobbyists work included persuading or pressuring the American executive and legislative branches to support Israel both politically and by extending economic and military aid. Since the creation of the state of Israel, AIPAC and other Jewish organizations that make up the Israeli lobby have played a significant role in Washington on behalf of Jewish/Israeli interests (Newsom, 1996; Taylor, 1991).

The Jewish community in the U.S. saw in the creation of the state of Israel the ultimate security for the Jewish people and believed that Israel's future depended on strong, continuous support from Washington. Effective support for Israel is viable because

of the high visibility of the American Jewish community in U.S. domestic affairs and their complete integration in American society. They have been also deeply involved in the political process, either directly or through funding various campaigns for public offices. The focus of AIPAC efforts has been mainly, but not exclusively, on the U.S. Congress. The influence came both from contributions to candidates (through Political Action Committees) and counter-activities directed at those who have voted contrary to the positions of the lobby (Newsom, 1996, p. 186).

AIPAC has also benefited also from the lack of significant competition. Although an Arab lobby group (the National Association of Arab Americans) was organized in 1972, it has never matched the power of the Jewish lobby (Newsom, 1996, p. 186). The Arab world is itself divided, and those divisions are reflected in the Arab American community. In addition, the American public found it easier to identify with Israel in terms of cultural similarities, while Arab countries, however important to U.S. interests, have always been seen in the U.S. as undemocratic. Thus, the lobby has been making extensive efforts to promote themes that enhance a sense of identification of the American public with Israel. These included themes referring to Israel as a “strategic asset” in the confrontation with the Soviet Union, a “reliable ally,” and as “the only democracy in the Middle East surrounded by implacable enemies” (Newsom, 1996, p. 189).

Unlike most of the other formal and informal allies of the U.S. in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America, Israel is a Western-style democracy (Handel, 1980, p. 81). Promoting the democratic theme is compatible with a fundamental American interest in ensuring and encouraging the American way of life by supporting like-minded states (Reich, 1980, p. 73). Preservation of the American way of life requires that other free societies exist for a mutual reinforcement of the democratic ideal (p. 73).

In addition, there was an element of cultural identity between Israel and the U.S. that led to the view of Israel as a free, open, democratic, “Western” state. This positive sentiment has been reinforced by the similarities in the national experience of both states, which included the immigrant and pioneering stage, and the commitment to democracy. Israel was always perceived as a state that enjoyed fundamental political stability rooted in a deep national consensus to support an open, multi-party democratic regime. Its system of values is maintained no matter which specific policy platform is advocated and which party is in power. (Handel, 1980; Nisan, 1982; Reich, 1980; Tillman, 1982). These predominating perceptions of Israel made it easier for a democracy such as the U.S. to collaborate with its leaders and people.

Whereas most other cultures appear to have accepted the United States leading cultural role, only the Islamic world has shown signs of determined resistance. As such, cultural and religious attacks on Islam often came from individuals and groups who were directed by the notion of the West as the standard for enlightened modernity (Said, 1997, p. xxix). The notion of cultural similarity raised questions regarding the way in which Western society treats and perceives Islam and Muslims. As Edward Said criticized, “malicious generalizations about Islam have become the last acceptable form of denigration of foreign culture in the West; what is said about the Muslim mind, or character, or religion, or culture as a whole cannot now be said in mainstream discussion about Africans, Jews, other Orientals, or Asians” (1997, p. xii).

A main pillar in U.S. support for Israel was its tradition of sympathy for victims of persecution and for people striving for nationhood. Tillman emphasized that the American commitment to Israel is rooted in strong Biblical and historical emotions, stimulated by feelings of guilt and obligation arising from the Holocaust (1982, p. 53). Thus, supporting the establishment of the state of Israel was an American effort to save the remnant of the Jews through maintenance of a sanctuary (Reich, 1980, p. 73). Furthermore, the extensive

American involvement in the creation of the state of Israel generated a feeling of moral responsibility for the preservation of this state (p. 73).

Political stability and reliability, scientific and technological sophistication, military strength and strategic location make Israel an attractive asset highly significant to the Western alliance system. However, the most direct American concern in the Middle East is related to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Every American administration since Truman saw the devastating potential of the conflict to damage vital American interests. First, the conflict has been already been used as an excuse for stopping oil supply to the U.S. and its Western allies in 1973. Such an action could easily generate adverse economic and military effects, inviting the superpowers intervention. Second, during and after the Cold War an explosion of the conflict could have led to a global war involving unconventional weapon. In such a volatile region, in which the threat of war is so high, the possibility of accidental or unauthorized usage of nuclear weapon is high (David, 1997, p.99). Such a confrontation could also lead to a worsening of the world economic situation. In order to prevent these catastrophic outcomes, American administrations have long invested ongoing efforts to promote and mediate peace in the Middle East.

*U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East—
From the Arab-Israeli Conflict to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*

The United States emerged from WW II as the most powerful nation in world. Since then, it has become politically and militarily active in every region of the globe. By virtue of the new global perspective, policy-makers considered the Middle East an area of vital importance because of its oil reserves, geo-strategic location, and its potential commercial advantages. Scholars asserted that the American policy in the region was bound up with balance between the great global powers in the post-war era (Aruri, 1993; Kaufman, 1996; Rubenberg, 1986; Taylor, 1991). After the war, only the U.S. and the Soviet Union possessed significant great power status. Furthermore, the wartime alliance between the two countries turned into a cold war with global effects and consequences. As

a result, since the end of WW II, the U.S. establishment viewed the world, in general, and the Middle East, in particular, through the prism of the Cold War and East-West relations.

The basic American policy in the Middle East was to maintain the status quo and prevent change. According to Alan Taylor, American policy makers believed that the prevention of radical change in the Middle East would minimize Soviets involvement and facilitate the American dominance there (1991, p. 51). Similarly, the American doctrine of recruiting regional allies had also served the purpose of maintaining the territorial status quo in the Middle East (Aruri, 1993; Taylor, 1991).

Researchers have often divided the period between 1947 to the present according to the dominant characteristics of American Middle Eastern policy. In general, American policy evolved through three phases. The first phase (from Truman to Kennedy) was dominated by extensive attempts to build a chain of security agreements around the Soviet Union to contain Communism. These included military alliances with NATO, SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization), and the Baghdad Pact (a military agreement among Britain Iraq, Turkey, and Iran with limited American participation) (Aruri, 1993, Kaufman, 1996). During the second phase (from Johnson to Reagan), U.S. policy was focused on forming an alliance network consisting of Arab and Islamic states, as well as Israel. The third phase began in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and continues until the present day with the dual strategies of achieving peace and fighting terrorism to achieve stability.

The break-up of the Soviet Union ended the Soviets' economic, military and diplomatic backing of Arab clients, and therefore led to the formation of a large group of Middle Eastern states that were explicitly pro-American (e.g. Egypt and Jordan), or sought American support (e.g. Syria). These developments not only allowed the U.S. to extend its former policy of forging alliances with Arab countries, but also to initiate multilateral negotiations regarding peace arrangements in the Middle East. Normalization in the

Middle East, especially with respect to the Arab-Palestinian-Israeli conflict, is a policy that the U.S. strove to apply ever since it became involved in world politics.

As previously described, the American policy in the Middle East was not focused only on Israel and its immediate Arab neighbours, but also included countries such as Iran, Iraq, Greece, Turkey and others. This study, however, is focused on the Arab-Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and therefore reviews the American policy pertaining this particular context.

In the aftermath of WW II, the American government faced growing pressure to support and facilitate the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. This demand became more immediate and important than dealing with the Cold War (Kaufman, 1996, p. 4). Scholars disagree on the circumstances that led President Harry Truman (1945–1953) to support the Zionist cause. Some of them asserted that the reason was a genuine humanitarian initiative. The misery of the refugees who survived the Nazi death camps made a powerful impression on the President who became an active ally of Zionism (Kaufman, 1996; Lenczowski, 1990; Zilkha, 1993). In contrast, others claimed that domestic political pressure, especially from the American Jewish community, exercised a decisive influence on the President thinking (Grose, 1983; Snetsinger, 1974; Taylor, 1991).

Obviously, a combination of internal political dynamics directed the U.S. to support the U.N. partition solution in 1947. Similarly, in spite of critical voices within the administration, Truman did not hesitate to recognize the state of Israel immediately after its proclamation (Lenczowski, 1990, p. 26). Truman, however, was firm on opposing U.S. military intervention in the Arab-Israeli war that followed Israel's establishment and even proclaimed an embargo on arms exports to both sides of the conflict (p. 26). U.S. policy-makers contended that any military intervention in the conflict would destabilize the region, and would invite Soviet intervention (Lawson, 1990; Taylor, 1991).

According to Joe Stork, the combination of Israeli military victories and Truman refusal to dispatch forces to the region led to a policy of recognizing the prevailing balance of power and the recruiting of Israel as an American ally (1993, p. 130). In contrast, George Lenczowski asserted that by recognizing Israel, Truman had not yet determined the exact nature of American-Israeli relations (1990, p. 30).

As for the issue of the Palestinian refugees resulting from the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, American officials saw the problem as part of a general resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict (Shadid, 1981, p. 43). The American policy with respect to the refugees revolved around two principles. First, the U.S. continued supporting the refugees financially through relief organizations such as the Red Cross and UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Work Agency). Second, it attempted to find a solution to the refugee problem through an inclusive solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute (Tessler, 1994, p. 313).

President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953–1961) adopted an approach that viewed the Middle East issues as subordinate to the global problem of the Cold War. Thus, the establishment of a series of security agreements to block the Soviet threat was central to his foreign policy (Aruri, 1993; Kaufman, 1996; Lenczowski, 1990; Taylor, 1991). In addition, during his term, Eisenhower became fully aware of the growing dependence of Western Europe and Japan on Middle Eastern oil, and therefore he focused his attention on the Arab countries that controlled the oil supply. Because the Palestinians had no direct control of oil, or any significant military or political power that could attract the Soviets' attention, their cause was invisible from this standpoint (Gerner, 1990, p. 72).

Eisenhower was more concerned with building a Middle East alliance system to contain Communism. He believed that in order to achieve this goal, the U.S. should take a neutral stand befriending each side of the conflict and respecting Arab interests (Christison, 1998, p. 22). In an attempt to demonstrate this impartial policy, his administration was more detached and pragmatic towards Israel. Moreover, Eisenhower

often criticized Israel's retaliatory actions against Arab infiltration (Aruri, 1993; Groisser, 1982; Taylor, 1991). By virtue of this neutral approach, the U.S. refrained from providing Israel with arms to counteract the growing Middle East arms race during the 1950s, while during the Suez crisis in 1956, America threatened with sanctions against Israel (Eisenhower, 1965, p.28). Not surprisingly, this attitude was later reflected in the U.N. Security Council Resolution of January 1956, condemning Israel for the size and intensity of the attacks on Arab targets (Kaufman, 1996, p. 25).

Nevertheless, the Egyptian seizure of the Suez Canal on July 1956 was a direct challenge on Britain and France interests in the area. The action also jeopardized the oil supply to Europe because the canal was a major route for oil supply. Israel, whose own interests were at stake as a result of various circumstances, joined the secret French and the British talks about a joint military venture against Egypt. Consistent with his conciliatory policy, Eisenhower asserted that the U.S. would not tolerate the use of force to resolve the Suez Crisis until other options had been exhausted. He further called for the establishment of an international authority to operate the canal in cooperation with Egypt (Lenczowski, 1990, p. 43).

Eisenhower's intervention in the Suez crisis was his closest involvement with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although the Middle East became a focal point in terms of the American-Soviet rivalry, the administration never became genuinely involved in the problem or its resolution. The series of crises in the Middle East between 1955 and 1958 not only affected Arab political dynamics, but also made the "Palestinian question" a major part of the Arab-Israeli conflict (Stork, 1993, p. 132). However, at that time, neither Israel nor the Palestinians were part of Washington's political agenda in the Middle East (p. 132) and no progress was made toward achievement of Palestinian self-determination mainly because the administration failed to understand the nature of the conflict (Gerner, 1990, p. 67).

The American administration continued to view the Palestinians, who were spread throughout lands controlled by Israel, Jordan and Egypt, as a refugee population that need to be resettled, repatriated and rehabilitated. After his visit to the refugee camps in the spring of 1957, Senator Hubert Humphrey concluded that resettlement with compensation and a programme for economic development was the only effective way to solve the refugee problem (Shadid, 1981, p. 67). Therefore, the U.S. took steps to improve the Palestinians conditions through economic activities rather than promoting the repatriation of the refugees (Gerner, 1990; Shadid, 1981).

By the end of Eisenhower's presidency, U.S. policy, which encouraged formal alliances to contain Soviet influence and Arab nationalism, had suffered a serious failure. The Middle East was polarized between conservative pro-Western monarchies and radical Arab regimes led by Egypt. The decade of the 1950s saw several developments that were seen as a genuine threat to U.S. interests in the region. These included the Yemen crisis and the uprising in Iraq. However, Western interventions in Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan had little effect on the increasing strength of Arab nationalism. Although U.S officials began to identify U.S. security interests with a militarily strong Israel, this concept had not yet been translated into an official policy.

Like Eisenhower, President John Kennedy (1961–1963) was sensitive to the rising tide of nationalism in the Middle East; however, he did not equate it with Communism. During his brief presidency, Kennedy had very little contact with the Arab-Israeli conflict. He never really developed a concrete policy regarding the problem, but rather continued the impartial policy of his predecessor. Moreover, he tried to build a friendly relationship with Egypt; however, his concern with the Soviets military aid to Egypt led him to authorize the sale of defensive weaponry to Israel. During Kennedy's term, initial steps toward the "special relationship" between Israel and the U.S. were established (Aruri, 1993; Kaufman, 1996; Lenczowski, 1990; Taylor, 1991).

Nevertheless, the years of Kennedy's administration were encouraging to the Arabs. In a letter to several Arab leaders, he stated his intention to work fairly and seriously to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and the refugee problem (Shadid, 1981, p. 68). Thus, the administration's influence for just and peaceful solutions, mainly in the form of resettlement and repatriation, helped to reconcile much of the antagonism between the U.S. and the Arab world (p.70). Despite the sincerity of Kennedy's efforts to solve the refugee problem, his initiatives in this matter remained secondary to other American interests in the region (Bustami, 1990, p. 113).

President Lyndon Johnson's administration (1963–1969) and the 1967 war marked the beginning of the second phase in American Middle Eastern policy. As such, the Americans began to rely on Israel as a major regional power to contain both radical Arab nationalism and Soviet expansionism. On taking up office, President Johnson became extremely concerned about the intervention of Gamal Abd-al Nasser of Egypt in the civil war in Yemen backed by Soviet support (Groisser, 1988; Taylor, 1991). Johnson was especially concerned about Nasser's expansionist foreign policies, which became a threat to the more cooperative Arab countries. Thus, he decided to cease American economic assistance to Egypt, and at the same time to continue supplying arms to Israel (Groisser, 1988; Kaufman, 1996; Taylor, 1991).

The Arab-Israeli war of June 1967 was an inevitable result of the prolonged Arab-Israeli conflict and the inter-Arab feud, generally known as the Arab Cold War. Throughout the fighting, American and Soviet policy was to end the hostilities as quickly as possible (Kaufman, 1996, p. 58). Nevertheless, the Americans welcomed Israel's victory enthusiastically especially because Egypt, a Soviet client, had suffered political and military defeat.

Johnson's main contribution to constructive American involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict was his effort to promote peace between Israel and the Arabs (Taylor, 1991,

p. 78). As such, his administration supported U.N. resolution 242, which constituted the guiding principles for an overall Middle East peace settlement. The resolution regarded the Palestinian problem as a minor one referring to them as only refugees whose solution would be included in the settlement of the larger Arab-Israeli conflict. However, being preoccupied with the war in Vietnam, the Americans lost their interest in engaging in efforts to promote peace in the Middle East (Kaufman, 1996, p. 63).

The 1967 war produced an additional massive exodus of Palestinians from the Israel-occupied West Bank. However, Johnson showed little interest in this problem, and the U.S. position on the refugees remained that of the pre-1967 period (Bustami, 1990, p. 116). The administration did not consider the Palestinian problem as part of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and their problem remained one of resettlement and integration (Bustami, 1990; Shadid, 1981). Equally important, the Americans neither viewed the Palestinians as a political actor in Middle Eastern affairs, nor viewed the newly-formed PLO as their representative.

The aftermath of the 1967 war enhanced the American foreign policy of relying on the ability and willingness of certain countries in key regions of the world to play the role of police under U.S. direction (Aruri, 1993, p. 99). In designing his Middle Eastern policy, President Richard Nixon (1969–1974) was determined to reduce Soviet influence in the Middle East (Groisser, 1982; Kaufman, 1996; Lenczowski, 1990). To this end, he sought to improve U.S. relations with Arab states such as Syria and Egypt, which were considered Soviet clients (Kaufman, 1996, p. 70). Moreover, Nixon viewed the roots of the Arab-Israeli conflict as the result of a Soviet intrigue, and was determined to achieve peace in the area (Lenczowski, 1990, p. 121).

As the fighting between the Egyptians and the Israelis, known as the “war of attrition,” escalated, the Americans initiated talks with the Soviet Union, Britain and France. In these talks, a framework of peace between Israel and the Arabs was developed,

based on the general outlines of U.N. Resolution 242. The failure of the talks led to another American initiative to achieve an Arab-Israeli peace, known as the Rogers Plan. The plan upheld the principle that Israel should return the occupied Arab territories in exchange for Arab pledges to end the state of war with Israel, and respect its territorial integrity (Grosser, 1982; Kaufman, 1996; Lenczowski, 1990; Shadid, 1981). However, the Israelis and all Arab leaders except King Hussein of Jordan rejected the plan.

The civil war in Jordan in September 1970 led to a major review of U.S. Middle East policy, and a transfer of responsibility for the region to National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger. Working under the assumption that the Soviets were using the Syrians and the Palestinians as surrogates in a move to unseat King Hussein, Kissinger concluded that Arab radicals would not come to the peace table until they were persuaded that it was in their best interest to do so, and that the Soviet Union was behind most of the trouble in the Middle East (Kaufman, 1996, p. 76).

Reliance on Israel was compatible with the American strategy to counter local and regional aggression. Under the new policy, often referred to as the Nixon Doctrine, Israel was provided with a massive supply of arms and financial assistance, which further increased during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war (Kaufman, 1996; Taylor, 1991). The 1973 war and the consequent Arab oil embargo led to a reassessment of American policy in the Middle East. The issue of international dependency on Middle East petroleum resources became important, especially among Western allies. Therefore, the Americans became more sensitive to the Arab position with respect to the Arab-Israeli dispute. Ending the oil embargo and resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict became America's highest priority. As such, during the first five months after the 1973 war, Kissinger spent most of his time travelling between the capitals of the Middle East in a quest for military disengagement and an end to the oil embargo, coining the phrase "shuttle diplomacy" to describe his well-publicized journeys.

The guiding principle of this shuttle diplomacy was to avoid dealing with the crucial issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict until the last stage of the negotiating process to prevent these toughest issues from breaking up the peace efforts (Kaufman, 1996; Taylor, 1991). Thus, between the end of 1973 and 1975 Kissinger attempted to convene a conference in Geneva involving all the parties of the conflict and also orchestrated a series of Israeli-Egyptian negotiations over disengagement in Sinai (Sinai I, and Sinai II).

Committed to Kissinger's step-by-step strategy, President Gerald Ford, (1974–1977) who replaced Nixon after his resignation, was determined to prevent the renewal of war in the region by pulling Egypt out of the Soviets' orbit (Lenczowski, 1990, p. 148). President Ford tried to reactivate the peace process on a comprehensive level, and therefore, was willing to pressure Israel. However, internal divisions in the Arab world, and the continued Israeli refusal to give up the occupied territories or to deal with the Palestinian issue, ensured the failure of the step-by step diplomacy with respect to the Arab-Israeli conflict (Kaufman, 1996, p. 97).

During the years of Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy, the U.S. excluded the Palestinian issue from its policy considerations as the main U.S. focus moved from the refugee problem to the search for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute. Although the Rogers Plan recognized that there could be no lasting peace without a just settlement for the Palestinian refugees, he insisted that the problem should be discussed with the relevant parties, including Egypt, Jordan and Israel (Shadid, 1981, pp. 82–85).

The American step-by-step approach in the Middle East precluded any Palestinian involvement in the negotiating process. Following a trend that began in 1967, only the Arab states and Israel figured in the American efforts to achieve a resolution to the conflict. Although there were some voices in U.S. Congress calling for recognition of the Palestinian problem as the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict, this notion was absent from the administration's policy (Aruri, 1993; Christison, 1998; Neff, 1990; Shadid, 1981).

Furthermore, in the crisis in Jordan, Nixon was determined to crush the Palestinians, and reportedly requested the Pentagon to order bombing of guerrilla camps (Stork, 1993, p. 133).

The principle of ignoring the Palestinian issue and their involvement in the peace process was reflected in the Geneva peace conference of December 1973. Israel agreed to attend the meeting only after being given absolute assurance by the U.S. that the Palestinians would not be present or represented at the conference (Kaufman, 1996; Taylor, 1991). Moreover, the U.S. committed itself to the “memorandum of understanding” in return for Israel’s consent to pullback its forces from the Sinai Peninsula (Sinai II). Among the key points of the memorandum was an American pledge not to recognize or negotiate with the PLO until the PLO formally recognized Israel's right to exist and agreed to adhere to UN Resolution 242 and 338 (Aruri, 1993; Kaufman, 1996; Stork, 1993; Taylor, 1991).

President Jimmy Carter’s (1977–1981) political philosophy with respect to the Middle East was different from that of his predecessors. During Carter’s first years as President, oil and the Soviet threat did not appear to be his primary concerns in the Middle East (Kaufman, 1996; Lenczowski, 1990). In contrast, settling the Arab-Israeli dispute was one of his highest priorities (Kaufman, 1996, p. 103). During his candidacy, he often urged Israel to withdraw from most of the occupied territories, and endorsed the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank (Kaufman, 1996; Taylor, 1991; Tillman, 1982). However, at the same time he asserted that “the PLO is not the group to deal with in solving the Palestinian problem...[because] the PLO’s stated aims...opposed to any peace which envisions the continued existence of Israel” (as cited in Aruri, 1993, p. 104).

President Carter abandoned Kissinger’s step-by-step policy and favoured a comprehensive peace settlement encompassing all the major players in the Arab-Israeli

conflict (Lenczowski, 1990; Tillman, 1982). As such, he believed that a comprehensive peace would be based on U.N. Resolution 242, which called for an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories in return for peace that would ensure justice for the Palestinians (Lenczowski, 1990, p.160). However, U.S. efforts either to renew the Geneva conference or to bring Israel and its neighbours to the peace table were unsuccessful. The main obstacle to Carter's goal of reconvening the Geneva conference was the question of Palestinian representation.

The window of opportunity was opened with President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, offering Israel recognition and a permanent peace that would not be limited to a bilateral Egyptian-Israeli agreement. The administration concluded that the U.S. should become more involved with Sadat's peace initiative, otherwise the initiative would collapse (Kaufman, 1996, p. 108). Accordingly, between January and August 1978, the Americans worked persistently to bridge the gap between the Israeli and Egyptian positions (Kaufman, 1996; Lenczowski, 1990; Tillman, 1982).

As the diplomatic negotiations between Israel and Egypt reached an impasse, Carter invited President Sadat and Menachem Begin, the Israeli Premier, to Camp David in order to reach an agreement. The American position included the view that the entire agreement should be based on U.N. Resolution 242, and that a comprehensive peace would be applied both to Egypt and to the West Bank-Gaza area. As such, Israel would withdraw from the territories and ensure some form of a "homeland" for the Palestinians, while involving the Palestinians and the Jordanians in the peace process. The Americans also called for Palestinian autonomy (not statehood), Palestinian participation in determining the future of the area, arrangement for return of the refugees and a link of the Palestinian entity with Jordan (Aruri, 1993; Lenczowski, 1990). As for the Jewish settlements in the occupied areas, Carter strongly opposed Israeli building there, pronouncing the settlements illegal.

According to the American proposal, the Israeli-Egyptian part included a complete Israeli withdrawal from Sinai and military arrangements to provide security to Israel in return for normalization of diplomatic, trade, and cultural relations (Lenczowski, 1990, p. 172). Eventually, the negotiating parties accepted Israel's proposal, even though it was at odds with the stated policies of both the U.S. and Egypt, especially with respect to the Palestinian issue. According to William Quandt, Middle Eastern advisor, accepting the Israeli option was inevitable because the choice was between accepting an Egyptian-Israeli agreement or abandoning the peace process altogether (1986, p. 193). In addition, Carter was determined to bring about at least an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, to prevent the Soviets benefiting from its failure (Brzezinski, 1983, p. 277–278).

Carter's political philosophy was novel in the extent of its explicit dealing with the Palestinians' right to a homeland, and with its perception of a comprehensive peace process rather than a step-by-step process. Furthermore, "as the behind-the-scenes negotiations with the PLO indicate, the administration also came close to recognizing that the PLO was the sole legitimate political representative of the Palestinians, although it did not make the fact public knowledge" (Terry, 1990, p. 162). However, with the Camp David accord, Carter was, in effect, consistent with Kissinger's legacy, reaching only a bilateral peace agreement that isolated the Palestinians (Stork, 1993, p. 139).

The American efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East continued throughout Ronald Reagan's administration (1981–1989). President Reagan approached the Middle East from the perspective of the Cold War, viewing Israel as a critical element in the struggle against the Soviet Union (Kaufman, 1996; Lenczowski, 1990). Thus, the American strategy in the Middle East emphasized strategic cooperation with Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and other conservative Arab countries, rather than formal alliances with them (Aruri, 1993; Lenczowski, 1990). Moreover, the central assumption of the strategic consensus was that it was necessary to subordinate the Arab-Israeli conflict and its

comprehensive solution to the Soviet threat (Aruri, 1993, p. 109). Reagan did not consider the Palestinian problem to be anything other than a refugee problem, while the PLO was considered a terrorist organization that did not necessarily represent the Palestinian people (Peck, 1984, p. 16). Major crises in the Middle East, such as the Iranian Revolution, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the war in Lebanon, only strengthened this philosophy.

Although initially Reagan's administration had no specific policy toward the Arab-Israeli dispute, it continued reinforcing the commitment to Israel's strength and superiority. Furthermore, when Washington learnt about the Israeli attack on Lebanon in June 1982, the reaction was mild and indecisive. The war in Lebanon proved that the Palestinians could no longer be dismissed as major players in the Middle East conflict and that there could not be a permanent peace or true security for Israel as long as the Palestinian problem remained unsolved (Peck, 1984, p. 83). As the war advanced, and Israel's seizure of Beirut generated a massive evacuation of the PLO from Lebanon, the Americans saw an opportunity for a peace initiative.

In September 1982, President Reagan presented his peace plan which called for negotiations to settle the fate of the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza. In his plan, President Reagan went beyond any other American action taken since the Camp David negotiations with respect to the Palestinian issue. He viewed the Israeli occupation as an unacceptable permanent solution, calling for a freeze on settlement and Palestinian self-government/autonomy in the territories that would be associated with Jordan (Hudson, 1990; Peck, 1984). Although the Reagan plan referred to the Palestinian problem, for the first time, as more than a question of refugees, it still considered an independent Palestinian state unacceptable (Kaufman, 1996; Stork, 1993; Taylor, 1991).

The Reagan proposal, though it rejected an independent Palestinian state, called for Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza, which would be federated with Jordan.

Israel would be expected to relinquish most of the occupied territories, as well as to freeze Jewish settlements there. In return, the Israelis would gain secure and defensible borders and Arab recognition of Israel's right to exist (Shultz, 1993, pp. 21, 40). Although Reagan came to acknowledge the Palestinians' political aspirations, his administration excluded the PLO from the peace process. Reagan himself announced that he did not believe the organization was representative of the Palestinians and that he would not talk to it even if it accepted U.N. Resolution 242 (Christison, 1998, p. 31). The plan never became an effective peace initiative; however, it was revived in 1988 in a modified form.

During Reagan's second term, the U.S. still held the position that Jordan should represent the Palestinians in the peace process (Kaufman, 1996, p.137). However, the first Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza forced Secretary George Shultz to call for U.S.-Israeli-Jordanian cooperation in establishing Palestinian self-rule in the territories (Kaufman, 1996; Lenczowski, 1990; Taylor, 1991). In general, Shultz proposed to base the negotiations on U.N. Resolution 242 and 338, suggesting Palestinian autonomy even before reaching a final settlement on the occupied territories (Kaufman, 1996, p. 147). The peace initiative was rejected by both the Israelis and their Arab counterparts.

The American policy towards the Palestinians changed as a result of a dramatic change in the PLO's attitudes. As such, in the summer of 1988, the Palestinians were ready to recognize Israel's right to exist based on U.N. Resolution 242, and expressed their rejection of terrorism (Lenczowski, 1990, p. 278). Though reluctant to drop the self-imposed ban on negotiating with the PLO, Shultz responded to this change by announcing that the U.S. was ready to engage in a substantive dialogue with PLO representatives (Kaufman, 1996; Taylor, 1991). By agreeing to contact with the PLO, the U.S. took an important procedural step in its search for peace. This step actually started the third phase of U.S. policy in the Middle East, during which the administration played a major role in Middle Eastern affairs, extensively promoting peace in the region.

Major changes in international affairs during the 1990s facilitated the realization of U.S. objectives in the Middle East. The collapse of the Soviet Union crystallized U.S. hegemony in the area and ended Soviet economic, military and diplomatic backing for its Arab clients. As a result, Arab states, such as Syria, sought to establish a friendly relationship with the U.S.—a change that opened the door for American negotiations with individual Arab countries. This move enhanced American endeavours to achieve a comprehensive peace to resolve the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

When President George Bush (1989–1993) assumed office, he strove to promote a peace process that would break through the impasse left by the Reagan administration. Bush reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to Israel's security and called for an end to the Arab Israeli dispute on the basis of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338. According to President Bush, Washington's goals were "security for Israel, the end of the occupation, and the achievement of Palestinian political rights" (as cited in Lesch, 1990, p. 183).

The principal aim of James Baker, Bush's Secretary of State, was to encourage negotiations between Israel and the PLO. Yitzhak Shamir, the Israel Premier, presented Bush with a proposal to establish a self-governing authority in the territories during an interim period to be followed by additional discussions. As a result, Bush launched five-point plan based on the premise that trilateral talks should take place, including the U.S. Israel and Egypt with an acceptable Palestinian delegation (Taylor, 1991, p. 107).

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2nd August 1990 overtook the Arab-Israeli dispute as Bush's main concern in the Middle East. The U.S., however, emerged from the war against Iraq as the sole military superpower and the unquestioned diplomatic leader in the region (Aruri, 1993, p. 117). Furthermore, the Gulf War effectively diminished the official Arab consensus over Palestine, and softened their rhetoric against Israel (Aruri, 1993; Peretz, 1998). Soon after the war, the Americans sought to resume the peace talks more

extensively, declaring that America's "commitment to peace in the Middle East does not end with the liberation of Kuwait" (as cited in Kaufman, 1996, p. 170).

During his trips to the region, Baker gained tentative commitments from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Israel to attend a meeting cosponsored by the Soviet Union and the U.S. A Palestinian delegation was also among the participants with the PLO being unofficially represented (Kaufman, 1996, p. 172). Baker's shuttle diplomacy paved the road to the Madrid peace conference, which was convened in October 1991. In the opening statement, Bush declared that the purpose of the conference was to end the state of war in the Middle East and achieve a real peace including diplomatic relations, tourism and cultural exchanges (p. 172). Thus, the peace talks, which started in Madrid, continued in Washington and elsewhere on an intermittent basis throughout 1992 and 1993. Although no agreement was reached on significant matters, the fact that Israeli and Arab representatives met face to face and discussed substantive issues was in itself a major development (Kaufman, 1996; Tessler, 1994).

In the aftermath of the Gulf War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Soviet cooperation, rather than traditional Cold War opposition, allowed the Bush administration to negotiate a settlement for the prolonged Arab-Israeli dispute. Moreover, the first *Intifada* gained the Palestinians a great deal of sympathy in the U.S., forcing policy-makers to accept the Palestinians as a national entity. As a result of the events in the Middle East, the administration approach to the Israeli-Palestinian dilemma changed towards a more balanced perspective (Lesch, 1990, p. 186). Eventually, by the end of Bush's administration, a combination of circumstances led Palestinian and Israeli negotiators to meet and discuss the provisions of an agreement for Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza.

During President Clinton's 1992 election campaign he presented himself as a candidate mostly concerned with domestic issues, placing international affairs in general

and the Middle East in particular at the bottom of his policy agenda (Dumbrell, 1997; Hadar, 1994; Hames, 1999). Nevertheless, Clinton acknowledged that foreign policy could not be ignored (Dumbrell, 1997, p. 178). As such, during his first term in office (1993–1997), Clinton’s Middle East policy was characterized by ad hoc measures that involved no major military or diplomatic resources. Thus, when this limited involvement led to a desirable outcome, it would enhance Clinton’s international or domestic standing; however, when it led to an unfavourable outcome, the responsibility fell on the regional players (Hadar, 1994, p. 64).

Therefore, not surprisingly, American diplomats had been only “aware of the secret discussions” (Christopher, 1998 p. 77) between the Israelis and the PLO in Oslo, rather than involved in them. Nevertheless, Clinton agreed to host the signing of the Declaration of Principles (DOP) at the White House in Washington, and to be engaged in worldwide fundraising activities for the Palestinians in the West bank and Gaza.

Scholars and foreign policy specialists widely believe that Clinton’s limited success in achieving genuine breakthroughs in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during his first term rests on the fact that Clinton’s administration did not act as an impartial and unbiased broker (Christison, 2000; Hadar, 1994; Quandt, 2001; Zunes, 1994). As such, Clinton’s team turned out to be more amenable to Israel’s basic policies than any other previous administration. For example, until Oslo, the Clinton administration had refused all contacts with the PLO and even after Oslo refused to speak positively of the possibility of a Palestinian independent state (Quandt, 2001, p. 26). Similarly, Clinton’s administration termed the Jewish settlements as a “complicating factor” in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations rather than an “obstacle to peace” or “illegal,” as previous administrations had referred to them (Hadar, 1994; Noyes, 1997). Moreover, when asked about the construction of Jewish housing in the occupied territories including East Jerusalem, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs replied: “There is

some allowance for—I wouldn't use the word 'expansion' but certainly continuing some activity—construction activities in existing settlements” (Neff, 1993, p. 42). In addition early in Clinton's first term, the U.S. began to de-emphasize U.S. reliance on U.N. Resolution 242 as the starting point for negotiations, a policy that was compatible with Israeli preferences (Christison, 2000, p. 297).

As for the other fronts in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Americans assisted in setting a positive context for Israeli-Jordanian negotiations. As such, in early August 1994, King Hussein of Jordan and the Israeli Prime Minister came to the White House to sign a peace agreement. However, the Clinton administration's most significant contribution was in the Israeli-Syrian arena. During both of Clinton's terms, both Secretaries of State and the President himself were highly engaged in diplomatic activities to broker a peace agreement between Israel and Syria (Hyland, 1999; Kaufman, 1996). The negotiations revolved around a wide range of issues including the return of the Golan Heights to Syria and maintaining a multinational peacekeeping force there.

In contrast to Clinton's first presidential term, during his second term in office (1997–2001), the U.S. took a much more direct and active role in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process (Sicherman, 2002, p. 161). During Prime Minister Netanyahu's Premiership, Clinton acted vigorously to move the peace process forward, intervening personally to bring both Netanyahu and Arafat to the negotiating table. In addition, in order to reach a notable achievement during his second term, President Clinton seemed to shift from a pro-Israeli posture to a more neutral stance.

In February 1997, Clinton brought Netanyahu and Arafat face to face to renegotiate the provisions concerning withdrawal from the town of Hebron and to reconfirm withdrawals from other areas in the West Bank. Similarly, in mid-October 1998, Arafat and Netanyahu were invited to meet with Clinton at the Wye River Plantation to agree on security commitments and gradual withdrawals from areas of the West Bank (Hyland,

1999; Quandt, 2001). The period between the Hebron and Wye agreements marked an improvement in U.S.-Palestinian ties, and erosion in U.S.-Israel relations.

A window of opportunity was opened with the election of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, who sought to begin negotiations with the Palestinians on a final status agreement. Clinton made his last major attempt to reach substantial progress in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process by inviting the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Yasir Arafat to Camp David in July 2000. At Camp David, Clinton emerged as a strong facilitator, urging both sides to reach compromises by themselves, while avoiding taking stands on many controversial positions (Quandt, 2001, p. 31). Nevertheless, the Camp David summit ended without an overall agreement.

The failure of the Camp David summit to achieve the ultimate settlement was one of the catalysts for the second Palestinian uprising, the *al-Aqsa Intifada*. President Clinton publicly blamed Arafat for the summit's collapse, threatening to reassess U.S. relations with the Palestinian Authority and to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem (Sichrman, 2002, p. 166). As Clinton's term came close to its end, Clinton engaged, however unsuccessfully, in several attempts to bridge the Israeli and Palestinian positions. In his last attempt, Clinton proposed to create a Palestinian state in about 95 percent of the West Bank and Gaza, with Palestinian sovereignty over the Arab neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem, to allow refugees to return only to the Palestinian state itself, and to deploy an international force along the future Israeli-Palestinian border (Lancaster, 2000, p. A17). Nevertheless, Clinton left office with no major achievement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but with escalating violence that collapsed the fragile peace process.

As a presidential candidate, George W. Bush (2001-) and his foreign policy advisors often criticized Clinton's close involvement in the search for Middle East peace (Sipress, 2001a, p. A1). The Bush campaign said that Israelis and Palestinians were pushed towards a deal that neither side was ready for (Sackur 2001, ¶ 2). On several

occasions Bush emphasized that his government would not force a peace agreement, but would facilitate it when both sides were ready.

As such, President Bush began his term by distancing himself from the obvious failure of Clinton's approach, advocating a hands-off policy with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While Secretary of State Colin Powell showed a more balanced attitude towards the parties, the rest of Bush's administration, including the President himself, showed unequivocal support for the Israeli view (Ben-Horin, 2002, p.26). As a result, the Palestinian leader has not been invited to the White House. In addition the administration supported the Clinton-Barak statements that the last U.S. proposals were no longer on the table. President Bush assured Israeli Prime Minister Sharon that the U.S. would not impose a peace agreement on the Middle East, giving him the latitude to pursue his own approach toward negotiations with the Palestinians. (Sipress, 2001b, p. A22). Nevertheless, the administration strongly criticized the Israeli decision to expand Jewish settlements including those in East Jerusalem (A22).

Nevertheless, since May 2001, the U.S. has become more involved in the Middle East. It began with the adoption of former Senator George Mitchell's report, which proposed a resumption of security cooperation and confidence-building steps between the Israelis and the Palestinians, among other concrete recommendations. Stepping deeper into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, President Bush began sending high-profile U.S. envoys to the region, including William Burns, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for the Middle East, CIA Director George J. Tenet, and finally, Secretary of State, Colin Powell.

The escalating violence, along with other concrete ambitions in the Middle East, especially concerning Iraq, led to a transformation from the initial U.S. hands-off policy toward a deeper involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the first year of the *al-Aqsa Intifada*.

Conclusions

From the end of World War II until the 1990s, the U.S. establishment viewed the Middle East through the prism of the Cold War and East-West relations. Truman's doctrine to keep the balance in favour of the U.S. set the pattern of direct and indirect American involvement in the Middle East. The American policy of maintaining hegemony in the region was characterized by two approaches that were implemented consistently. First, containing the Soviet Union through military alliances and second, establishing informal alliances with supportive Arab states.

From Truman to George W. Bush, American vital interests in the Middle East included ensuring free access to the area's petroleum, and reinforcing the security of the state of Israel. This preoccupation led U.S. policy towards seeking stability, and supporting conservative tendencies that oppose radical movements threatening the status quo. Since the 1970s, the American administration has understood that solving the Arab-Israeli conflict was the key to preserving U.S. strategic, economic and geopolitical interests in the region, and therefore started reinforcing a peace process between Israel and Arab states.

Brokering the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel has opened more than two decades of continuous direct and indirect American endeavours to achieve peace in the Middle East. Throughout the years, the administrations invested ongoing efforts to facilitate peace between Israel and the Arab states, including Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. However, the 1990s saw a shift in focus toward solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, understanding that this was the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Over the years, U.S. interests in the Middle East have not changed, but the means to achieve these ends have been constantly adjusted. While remaining committed to the security and strength of the state of Israel, U.S. policy toward specific issues related to the conflict has gradually been modified to cope with an ever-changing reality.

CHAPTER II

Media Portrayal of the Arab-Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

U.S. Media Coverage of the Middle East—An Overview

As one of the focal points of U.S. foreign policy, the Middle East, and especially the Arab-Israeli conflict, receive considerable media coverage in the U.S. Scholars have long asserted that there was some kind of link between U.S. media portrayal of nations and U.S. policy toward them. This chapter provides a review of the nature of U.S. media coverage of the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli conflict over more than 50 years. It shows how, through the years of conflict, media portrayal has shifted from a pro-Israel coverage to a more neutral and even negative portrayal. In addition, attempts will be made to show the connection between these shifts in media portrayal and the developments and shifts in American foreign policy toward the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as discussed in the previous chapter.

The unsolved Arab-Israeli conflict makes the Middle East the single most important and dangerous region in the world from the standpoint of American interests. Moreover, the Arab-Israeli conflict dominates other U.S. interests in the Middle East because of the potential for violence that is inherent in the conflicting interests and emotions surrounding it (Quandt, 1974, p. 264).

During the last three decades, the news media have become the central arena for international, political conflicts. Scholars have argued that antagonists' competition over the news media became a major element in modern political conflicts (Pollock, 1981; Wolfsfeld, 1997). Wolfsfeld has described the relationship between the news media and the parties in conflict (antagonists) as a "competitive symbiosis" in which each side of the relationship attempts to exploit the other at the minimum cost (1997, p. 13). Moreover, this relationship is built on a set of cultural interactions in which the antagonists promote their own perspectives on the conflict, while the news media attempt to package a story

that can be understood by their audience (Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson., 1992; Gitlin, 1980; Neuman, Just & Crigler, 1992; Parenti, 1993; Wolfsfeld, 1997).

By packaging a story in a certain way, communicators can create the desired impression without resorting to explicit advocacy and without departing from the appearance of objectivity. Framing is a term used to describe how media, by using certain phrases or images, can construct a particular kind of social reality for a reader or viewer. By putting things in a certain context, journalists create ideas for their audience, helping them to arrange their perceptions of reality (Dorman, 1993; Neuman et al., 1992). For media practitioners and their audience, frames guide the selection, interpretation, and evaluation of new information by slotting the new into familiar categories (Norris, 1997, p. 276).

According to Wolfsfeld, in political conflicts, the media serve as public interpreters of events, providing a narrative fit between incoming information and existing media frames (1997, p. 54). Although in unequal conflicts, the side referred to as authorities is more powerful in promoting its frames to the media, “the news media have various frames for those activists who are skilled enough to construct an effective package and lucky enough to be promoting them at a time when the authorities are vulnerable to attack” (p. 55). In these cases the news media can play a critical role by legitimizing oppositional frames, which increases the power of the party considered the challenger in the conflict (p. 55). For instance, during the first *Intifada*, the Palestinian uprising, the U.S. media played a major role in turning the Palestinian riots (the challenger) into a legitimate struggle for self-determination and freedom from colonial power.

Pippa Norris argued that the frame for the mainstream U.S. media can be expected to reflect and reinforce the dominant frames in U.S. culture. This has significant consequences for the presentation of news in terms of the priority given to international news, regional coverage, and thematic coverage (1997, p. 277). As such, international

conflict perceived to affect U.S. interests can be expected to be given greater priority in news coverage than unrelated global events (Chang, Shoemaker, & Brendlinger, 1987; Norris, 1997).

In their coverage of political conflicts around the globe, the U.S. media, at least theoretically, adhere to the principles of the libertarian theory, requiring objective, straightforward descriptive presentation of reality (Dennis & Merrill, 1991). However, critics have argued that even though U.S. media operate under the objective rhetorical formula of ‘letting the facts speak for themselves,’ the facts are often subject to many crucial alternative means of presentation through language and images (Barton & Gregg, 1982, p. 172).

For a long time, scholars have been claiming that the U.S. media did an inadequate job of informing the American public about the Middle East (Chafets, 1985; Christison, 2000; Curtiss, 1982; Ghareeb, 1983; Karentzky & Frankel, 1989; Suleiman, 1988). Those who believe that U.S. Middle Eastern coverage has been inadequate describe deficiencies ranging from insufficient or incomplete coverage of events to biased reporting and commentary (Curtiss, 1982, p. 145). However, scholars’ criticism of the U.S. media coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Middle East has varied. At one end of the continuum, there are those who have argued that the media has been pro-Israeli, while at the other end, there are those who have asserted that the media tend to promote the Arab causes more forcefully, showing Israel’s misdeeds.

Former Vice President Spiro Agnew and General George Brown argued that the media is pro-Israeli because of a “national conspiracy” of Zionists who control the media (Rubin, 1977, p. 54). Roland Koven, a former foreign editor of *The Washington Post*, argued: “There were and there are disproportionate numbers of Jews in the American media, relative to the population” (as cited in Curtiss, 1982, p. 149). A study conducted by *More* magazine refuted these charges, showing that Jewish people own only about 3.5

percent of the American newspapers. Furthermore, the fact that many American Jews hold important positions in the media does not mean that they are Zionists. The study concluded that some of the more balanced articles and TV reports were authored by Jewish-American correspondents. Similarly, there are more non-Jewish media practitioners whose anti-Arab bias exceeds that of most of the pro-Israeli Jewish reporters (Ghareeb, 1983, p. 21).

Responding to the accusations from Vice President Agnew, Walter Cronkite, television news anchorman, emphasized in a highly publicized speech in 1971 that “In my nine years as managing editor of the CBS Evening News, the CBS management has not once...suggested to me in any manner whatsoever...that I include in the CBS Evening News, or delete...any item. Nor have they suggested any particular treatment of any story” (as cited in Bell, 1980, p. 55). Scholars have pointed out that though owned by people of Jewish descent, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* have published editorials critical of the Israeli government, particularly since Sadat’s peace initiative in the late 1970s (p. 56).

Chafetz suggested that it is not Jewish control of the media but America’s dependency on Arab oil that affects media coverage of the Middle East. According to this view, it is within the U.S. interest to strive for positive relations with the Arab world. This analysis became prevalent during the Carter administration and was adopted by the American economic establishment, which includes those who control the American press (1985, p. 21). Although the Arabs never “bought out” the American media, they were able to make those who own and run news organizations more sensitive to their causes (p. 21).

The Arab oil embargo of 1973–4, for instance, generated substantial changes in American attitudes towards the Arabs. Scholars have asserted that one significant result of the embargo was a ‘rediscovery’ of the Arab nation by the American media (Belkaoui, 1978; Curtiss, 1982; Ghareeb, 1983). General George S. Brown, former Chairman of Joint

Chiefs of Staff, addressed the influence of oil on public opinion, asserting that “You can conjure a situation where there is another oil embargo and people in this country are not only inconvenienced and uncomfortable, but suffer. They get tough-minded enough to set down the Jewish influence in this country and break that lobby” (as cited in Curtiss, 1982, p. 119). However there are those who have asserted that the power of the oil companies is unequal to the impact of ethnic politics led by Israel’s powerful American constituency (Sheehan, 1976, p.58).

Throughout the years of the conflict, Arab and Israelis have made extreme efforts to mobilize the support of the mass media and public opinion by exercising political power. Since the creation of Israel, the popular American perception of the Arab-Israeli conflict has been that of the Jewish David repeatedly vanquishing an Arab Goliath (Curtiss, 1982, p. 113). This perception was nurtured especially by the political groups that worked to promote the Israeli cause amongst the American public and decision-makers. The Israeli lobby was not only powerful with respect to politicians, but also when it came to the media (Dorman, 1993, p. 302). The influence of the Israeli lobby proved that interest groups’ influence over the American information and entertainment media was not necessarily achieved by owning and dictating it.

Throughout the prolonged Arab-Palestinian-Israeli conflict, there were several instances of the Jewish lobby’s influence over the media. As a result of its efforts, the lobby has been directly or indirectly responsible for killing or delaying several important documentaries on the Palestinians and the *Intifada* (Emerson, 1989, p. 25-30). Similarly, following the overwhelming criticism of Israel after the invasion of Lebanon, the American Jewish Congress sponsored a conference chaired by the chairman of the American advertising agency responsible for the Miller Lite beer ads. Among the conference participants were also the literary editor of the *New Republic* and the former vice-president of public relations for Pepsi Cola (Dorman, 1993, p. 302). In addition,

during the Second *Intifada*, Felicity Barringer of *The New York Times* reported that U.S. media coverage of the events led to boycotts of *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Washington Post* by Israel's supporters. They also levelled harsh criticism at broadcast news operations such as CNN and National Public Radio (2002, p. A12). The general manager of public radio station, WBUR-FM in Boston complained that he had lost more than \$1 million in underwriting and pledges in 2002 because some supporters of Israel had encouraged people not to deal with the station (Barringer, 2002, p. A12).

Nevertheless, a new challenge was imposed on the pro-Israeli lobby with the emergence of the Arab lobby, especially the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA). According to Ghareeb, these organizations are concentrating on combating stereotyping of the Arabs and on improving relations between the U.S. and the Arab world (1983, p. 180). In recent years, the pro-Arab lobby has been working closely with Arab embassies in the battle to increase pro-Arab sentiment in the U.S. As such, many of the Arab embassies now have sophisticated press relations personnel who offer information and assistance to American journalists in the same way that the Israelis have always done (Bell, 1980, p. 57). Similarly, since the 1980s, the Arab cause has been supported publicly by a growing group of businesses and business people who have mutual interests with Arab countries (p. 57).

According to David Kopel, a researcher in the *Independence Institute*, the U.S. media is neither dominated by a pro-Israel perspective nor by a pro-Arab perspective, but by a middle viewpoint that Israel has a right to exist, but that Israeli policies, such as building settlements and invading Lebanon, have been too aggressive. "The middle, moderately critical view contends that the Oslo peace process was a great idea, and blames many of the current problems in the Middle East on Israeli refusals... to make sufficient concessions for peace" (2001, ¶ 9). As opposed to either one of the extreme views, Kopel asserted that the middle view is the frame for most network news coverage of Israel,

especially from CNN, National Public Radio, and ABC's news. Similarly, it is pervasive in *The New York Times* and thus in other newspapers that use the *Times* for their foreign coverage (§ 10).

Ronald Koven, former foreign editor of *The Washington Post*, suggested that the difference between the impact of the Arab lobby and that of the Israeli lobby on the American media is culturally oriented, asserting that "the Israelis are of European origin and they have an advanced public relations sense. They know how to speak our [the Americans] language...they understand how we reason, and they are able to use that to their advantage. The Arabs as a group have not even really played the public relations game" (as cited in Ghareeb, 1983, p. 121). Similarly, he suggested that the Arabs have traditionally faced a cultural barrier when approaching the media. "It has taken a long time for the American and European press to realize that in Arab culture rhetoric is often just rhetoric, something which exists by itself and does not necessarily imply actions"(Ghareeb, 1983, p. 121).

Social scientists have further developed this concept, suggesting that cross-cultural communication between the West/U.S. and the Middle East is especially difficult because of a whole host of communicative and cultural barriers. These cultural differences are a major factor in the U.S. media perception of the Middle East. Accordingly, Islamic culture presents concepts that are foreign to Western thinking and that are viewed as being non-legitimate. These concepts include traditional society, theocracy, and a lack of social equality (Malek, &, Wiegand, 1995, p. 201). The media treat the Islamic world in terms of what is newsworthy and this helps to contribute to the misrepresentation of Islamic culture. Hence, the Islamic world has been discussed in the West almost entirely within a framework of either prejudice or political interest (p. 204).

The Middle East consists of a large number of countries that are diverse in terms of territory, culture, religion, and linguistics. However, Haque Mazharul recognized two broad components of culture, religion and values, which may be regarded as cultural universals (1995, p. 17). According to Mazharul, these components are central to the comparative understanding of people and cross-cultural communication. Traditionally, Islam has been an alienating factor between the Arabs and the Christian West. Edward Said emphasized that “the general basis of Orientalist thought is an imaginative and yet drastically polarized geography dividing the world into two unequal parts, the larger ‘different’ one called the Orient, the other, also known as ‘our’ world...called the West” (1997, p. 4). Suleiman summarized this idea stating that European viewed Arabs and Muslims as pagans, worshipping Mohammad and other gods (1988, p. 257). Furthermore, the lack of understanding of the modern public relations techniques necessary for working with the U.S. media perpetuated this perception of the Islamic world (Mazharul, 1995, p. 20).

For Americans as well as for Europeans, the media are actually the branch of the cultural apparatus through which Islam has been delivered. According to Said, the mass media convey shared basic interpretations, providing a certain image of Islam that actually reflect the interests of the society served by these media (1997, p. 47). For Americans and other Westerners, Islam represents a revived atavism that threatens to return to the Middle Ages and distract the democratic order in the Western World (p. 55). The Western media promote and intensify these perceptions by their monolithic, narrow coverage of “the other.”

Different values constitute the greatest potential for cross-cultural misunderstanding (Mazharul, 1995, p. 21). To most American capitalists, free enterprise democracy enjoys the status of a primary value. However, for people in the Middle East, national honour and justice may be of highest value (p. 21). The framework of national

honour might explain Iraq's suicidal choice to fight the Gulf War rather than comply with the allied nations' ultimatum. Moreover, while in the U.S. individuality has primary importance, it is a peripheral value in the Middle East where the opposing value of collective responsibility ranks much higher. Similarly, equality for all human beings, as well as gender equality are primary values in the U.S., but are of tertiary value in the Middle East. And there are many examples that convey the differences between these value systems (Hall, 1973; Mazharul, 1995; Sitaram & Cogdell, 1976).

Ghareeb integrated this view with the concept of media coverage of the Middle East, claiming that cultural similarities and differences have an impact on the policy-making process. Thus, communication is facilitated and good rapport is easily attained between two friendly states whose peoples have similar cultural backgrounds (1983, p. 7). In situations where nations pursue antagonistic goals or belong to different cultural heritages, the antagonism is likely to be intensified and to arise more quickly (p. 7).

This perspective may provide a social explanation for the favourable media coverage of Israel as compared to the Arab world. On one hand, Israel has a democratic regime and shares the same cultural characteristics and values as Western countries. In addition, U.S. strategic interest is to maintain Israel's strength among less friendly countries (Tillman, 1982, p. 52–53). The combination of cultural similarities and political interests is more likely to be reflected in supportive media coverage that advocates maintaining the status quo.

According to Dorman, Middle Eastern people (other than Israelis) are portrayed as Indo-Europe's slow learners, people who can survive only in the custodial care of a Western power. Moreover, they are portrayed in a racist context that alludes that they do not have the capacity for self-rule, for consensus politics or for peaceful coexistence. In addition, Arab countries are often portrayed as having inherently violent and unstable cultures, as having fates rather than politics (1993, p. 293).

Other scholars have explained the imbalance in U.S. media coverage of the Middle East in terms of countries' perceptions of friends versus enemies. Thus, countries determine what their national interests are and define which states are allies and which constitute a definite or potential threat to their interests. Once a country identifies and categorizes states on this continuum, its leaders develop a basic orientation of friendliness or hostility. Allies are then perceived as having generally positive and favourable characteristics, whereas those that are seen as a threat are perceived in a more negative way (Buchanan & Cantril, 1953). Traditionally, Arabs and Arabism have been viewed by the U.S. as a clear and definite threat to its interests in the Middle East. This can somewhat explain the negative tone toward Arabs in news reporting (Ibrahim, 1986, p. 23).

U.S. Media Portrayal of the Middle East—A Shift from the Arab-Israeli Conflict to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Whether the reason is strategic, economic, or political, American involvement and dependence on the Middle East is a fact for the people of this complex region. This region attracts the attention of not only the American government, but also of the American media that have focused primarily on the Arab-Israeli conflict. As a result, Middle East news has become synonymous with news of the Arab-Israeli conflict and stories that were not directly related to this conflict have tended to be screened out as less newsworthy (Adams, 1981; Pipes, 1984). Some have argued that the media's overemphasis on one geopolitical region damages people's ability to appreciate and understand the region's complexity (Barranco & Shyles, 1988, p. 255).

Scholars have noted that the vision most Americans hold of the Middle East is unbalanced as a result of biased media coverage (Chafets, 1985; Christison, 2000; Ghareeb, 1983; Kamalipour, 1995; Karetzky & Frankel, 1989; Suleiman, 1988).

According to Chafets:

The Middle East is an area that produces a great deal of news—but very little real information...A national debate on the wisdom of American involvement and the parameters of American policy in the Middle East depends upon the flow of reliable, comprehensive and balanced information from the area. It is the job of the American press to provide that information...anything less will distort Americans' view of the region (1985, p. 322).

The proliferation of media coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict has attracted scholars who have attempted to explore, compare, contrast, and analyze the portrayal of Arabs and Israelis in the media. A review of previous studies and related literature showed that the media portrayal of Arabs and Israelis evolved through four stages. From the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 up to the 1970s, Israel enjoyed favourable treatment from the American media. During the 1970s, media coverage, especially press coverage, became less pro-Israeli and more neutral. However, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 caused the content of the reporting to become more negative toward Israel. Most of the U.S. media portrayed Israel as an aggressor. According to Melman and Raviv, "It was as if Israelis and Palestinians had swapped hats" (1994, p. 366). Media coverage of the first *Intifada*, the Palestinian uprising, received considerable media attention that enhanced the negative portrayal of Israel and media criticism. This tone, however, lessened as a result of the Oslo Accords and the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The following section reviews the U.S. media portrayal of Arabs as compared to Israelis since the creation of the state of Israel.

The Portrayal of Arabs and Israelis—The early years.

Arabs often point to Israel as the cause of their alienation from the U.S. and charge the press with being partial toward Israel (Suleiman, 1988, p. 15). Kathleen Christison, argued that the distinct portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinian-Arabs was already

rooted in the pre-state period where the press played a critical role in building a framework of thinking that would endure for decades afterwards (2000, p. 80). An analysis of *The New York Times* in the 50 days following the U.N. vote on the 1947 Partition Plan showed how central this story became in U.S. thinking. As such, the day after the vote, *The New York Times* ran 18 separate stories on the issue and more than seven articles per day in the following period (2000, p. 78).

A study of three U.S. journals showed that at that time, the *Nation* and the *New Republic* showed an explicit emotional bias towards the Jews in Palestine with no item published in either journal showing sympathy to the Arabs. Most articles used value-laden words and phrases to describe Arabs and Jews—terms such as “feudal,” “violent,” “fanatic,” and “murderous,” were used to refer to Arabs, while terms like “American-like,” “heroes,” “clean,” “courageous,” and “peace-loving” were used to describe the Israelis (as cited in Christison, 2000, p. 81).

Similarly, throughout the 1948 war, the Israeli forces were portrayed as outnumbered and outgunned and as “having a near-miraculous show of grit” (Christison, 2000, p. 81). An analysis of leading U.S. and West European magazines, the *Times* and *The Economist* from 1948 to 1988 showed that during the 1948 war the coverage of the Palestinians tended to be either unfavourable or neutral, while none of them contained articles favourable toward the Palestinians (Abduljawad, 1994, p. 110). The *Times*, for example portrayed the Israelis as the “old Testament warriors,” who returned to their “promised land”, while the Palestinians were described as “pro-Hitler,” “terrorists,” and “troublemakers” (p. 111). Although *The Economist* focused on finding a peaceful solution for the Palestinian refugees and ending the conflict, it mostly depicted the Palestinians as “rigid/inflexible” and “radicals” who strove to destroy Israel (p. 112).

Christison asserted that the process of legitimizing Israel at the expense of the Palestinians continued after the war, when the press nurtured the picture of the “new

Palestine minus its Arabs” (2000, p. 82). As such, leading papers featured long articles on Israel’s accomplishments in state-building portraying the settlers as “bold, self-conscious,” “high spirited,” a “new and intense” kind of nationalism, “inspired by a lack of nationhood” (p. 82). In addition, the press reinforced the similarities between the Israelis and the Americans, emphasizing that Israel was a nation much like the U.S. in terms of its pioneering history and its Western democratic spirit.

While defining Israel as a courageous young state under constant siege from violent neighbours the media almost completely ignored the Palestinians (Christison, 2000, p. 82). Much of the small amount of press coverage that they did receive was unsympathetic to the Palestinians. This was documented by the State Department in March 1949. According to the State Department’s report the public in the U.S.:

Generally is unaware of the Palestine refugee problem, since it has not been hammered away by the press or radio. Aside from *The New York Times* and *The Herald Tribune*, which have done more faithful reporting than other papers, there has been very little coverage of the problem (as cited in Neff, 1995, p. 73)

This report also pointed out that *The New York Post*, strongly opposed to helping the refugees (p. 73), and the liberal opinion weeklies the *Nation* and the *New Republic* portrayed the problem as the sole responsibility of the Arabs states (Abduljawad, 1994; Christison, 2000)

The Portrayal of Arabs and Israelis from the 1950s to the 1960s.

The trend of dichotomous media portrayal of the Arabs and Israelis that began in the late 1940s continued throughout the next two decades. A study of seven American newsmagazines covering the 1956 Suez crisis indicated that Arabs were often portrayed as desert-living nomads, while the Israelis were presented as Western-like and democratic. In addition, these newsmagazines portrayed Arabs as the “bad guys,” aggressors who stood against the “peace loving” Israelis (Suleiman, 1988, p. 33). Although some of the

magazines in this study displayed balanced or neutral coverage of the Middle East, Suleiman concluded that the negative portrayal of Arabs was prominent and significant (p. 34).

The negative portrayal of Arabs during that period seems unrelated to the actual American policy in the Middle East. As U.S.'s efforts were focused on containing Communism and preventing its influence in the Middle East, the administration was relatively pragmatic towards Israel. For instance, the American opposition to Israel and its French and British allies in the Suez Crisis was not reflected in the media positive portrayal of Israelis as compared to Arabs.

A slight change in American policy occurred during the 1960s as a result of the rise of nationalism in several Arab countries. This development led to the U.S. policy of strengthening Israel, making initial steps toward the so-called "special relationship" between Israel and the U.S. It seems as if only then the coverage of Israelis as compared to Arabs reflected the political unrest in the Middle East and the American concerns with the Arabs' acceptance of Soviet influence. However, the agreement between U.S. media portrayal of Arabs and Israelis and the American policy towards the conflict reached its peak during and after the 1967 war.

Scholars asserted that the 1967 war brought another flood of attention from the American media. Melman & Raviv asserted that "the pro-Israeli media attitude was so strong that even Israel itself could not have written a better scenario" (1994, p. 365). A content analysis of eight U.S. magazines reporting on the 1967 conflict showed a significant increase in press bias both in favour of Israelis and against the Arabs (Suleiman, 1988, p. 37). Furthermore, in contrast to the Israeli leadership, the Arab leadership was portrayed as extremely nationalist and was held responsible for the conflict (Melman & Raviv, 1994; Sulieman, 1988). The press portrayed Israelis in a heroic light as young, energetic, and brave, whereas Arabs were pictured as dishonest, unreliable, and inefficient

(Suleiman, 1988, p. 41, Ghareeb, 1983, p. 7). For example, Melman and Raviv found that *Life* magazine was especially powerful in creating positive images of Israelis, with embedded photographs that constantly contained smiling, handsome, young Israeli soldiers liberating Jerusalem's Wailing Wall or wading in the Suez Canal (1994, p. 365).

A content analysis of 644 unsigned editorials of elite newspapers addressing the Middle East between January 1, 1967, and December 31, 1967, showed an overwhelming support for Israel as compared to the Arab states. Except for a handful articles conveying neutral coverage, the newspapers mostly condemned the Arabs' behaviour. Only 15 editorials showed direct support for the Arab cause, while 24 were critical of Israel (Daugherty & Warden, 1979).

A study investigating images of Arabs and Israelis in five prestigious newspapers and magazines showed that in 1967 attributional verbs associated with the Israelis were largely neutral. In both newsmagazines and newspapers Israeli speakers were more likely to tell, say, or announce, while Arab speakers tended to deliver messages in an aggressive, angry, or threatening style (Belkaoui, 1978, p. 736). This study concluded that the media's selection of verbs was more colourful for Arabs and more neutral for Israelis (p. 736). Nevertheless, the press identified some Arab heroes during 1967. These were primarily leaders who were moderate and "friends of the U.S." For example, the images of King Hussein of Jordan, Hassan of Morocco, and Faisal of Saudi Arabia were favourably described in the American press (p. 737).

A content analysis of three prestigious newspapers from May 1967 through December 1969 concluded that although news articles presented a pro Israeli tone, editorials were preoccupied with the achievement of a negotiated settlement of the conflict (Wagner, 1973, p. 317). The study also showed that significant differences were manifested in each newspaper's orientation toward the Middle East. For example, *The*

New York Times was extremely supportive toward Israel, while the *Los Angeles Times* was at the other extreme of the continuum, advocating support for the Arabs (1973, p. 315).

Media coverage of Israel and the Arabs after the 1967 war seemed to reflect the American policy of relying on Israel in preventing Communist influence in the Middle East. The war proved to the Americans that Israel was a major regional power that could contain both radical Arab nationalism and Soviet expansionism. Although during the war American and Soviet policy was to end the hostilities, the Americans welcomed Israel's victory especially because Egypt, a Soviet client, had been defeated, following increasing efforts to strengthen Israel militarily and economically during that time.

It is important to clarify that until the 1970s, the Palestinians were considered part of the larger "Arab" contingent, and though perceived as a threat, the media did not treat them separately (Zaharna, 1995, p. 41). The 1967 war marked a turning point not only to the history of the conflict, but also to the coverage of Palestinians and their leadership. The Palestinian image in the media coverage was split—they were portrayed as either terrorists or refugees (1980, p.48). According to Zaharna, the image of the Palestinian victim became more pronounced after the 1967 war because it produced a new flood of refugees (p. 41).

The Portrayal of Arabs and Israelis during the 1970s—the emergence of the Palestinian issue.

The 1973 war and the consequent Arab oil embargo generated a reassessment of the American policy in the Middle East. As a result, the Americans became more sensitive to the Arab position in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Ending the oil embargo and resolving the conflict became the highest U.S. priority. During the 1970s, American policy focused on initiating a peace process in the Middle East. This political trend was reflected in the U.S. media coverage, which gradually changed its slant toward the adversaries in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The shift in American policy in the Middle East during the 1970s made the region the most frequently covered foreign area in the U.S. media (Adams & Heyl, 1981, p. 4). According to Adams and Heyl, two key events contributed to the proliferation of media coverage during those years: The 1973 war and the Egyptian President's visit to Israel in 1977 (p. 17). Morad identified these two episodes as turning points in U.S. media coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict, becoming less pro-Israeli (1981, p. 68). In an analysis of the prestigious U.S. press, Belkaoui found that the aggressive and angry Arab image changed to one that incorporated more moderate elements (1978, p. 736). Moreover the image of the Israeli political leadership also changed from "strong, decisive, and confident" in 1967 to "angry, worried, and gloomy" in 1973 (p. 737).

According to Suleiman, the 1973 war shattered America's negative myths about the Middle East and moved it towards a better understanding of the Arab view (1988, p. 55). Studies of American newspapers and newsmagazines indicated that the year of 1973 marked the beginning of a move toward a "balanced coverage" of Arab as compared to Israelis (Ghareeb, 1983; Suleiman, 1988). To some extent, newsmagazines started showing more concern and sensitivity for the Arab point of view and Arab actions and views were adequately justified, placed in context, or explained (1988, p. 61). Similarly, a small number of pro-Arab and pro-Palestinian articles were published—such articles were absent before 1973 (Ghareeb, 1983, p. 12). Although it marked a significant change, the 1973 media coverage perpetuated some prevailing concepts in the Arab-Israeli conflict. These included the perception that Arab refugees deliberately left their homeland, and that the Arabs are out to destroy Israel (p. 67).

Although consistent with generally positive coverage of Israel, there were few mentions of negative attributes with respect to the Israelis. These included a lack of preparation, overconfidence, and underestimation of the enemy. While it continued to be

taboo to criticize Israel, the study indicated that a definite and significant drop in the pro-Israeli attitude of 1967 took place in 1973 (Suleiman, 1988, p. 66).

A study of four elite American newspapers over a period of 11 years (1967–1977) indicated that while there was some evidence of pro-Israeli tone in the press, it was more evident in the overall picture than in any partisan prejudice, such as editorials (Daugherty & Warden, 1979, p. 782). In addition, the perception of competing demands and rhetoric in Arab-Israeli relations appeared sensitized because the prestige press consistently depicted Israel as a besieged state, “three million Jews surrounded by 100 million Arabs” (p. 782). As such, during the 11 years under study, the press accepted the role of the Israelis as largely defensive (besieged) and the Arabs as largely offensive (aggressor). However, Sadat’s peace initiative altered this portrayal, when support gravitated towards the “peacemaker” versus the “sabre-rattler,” regardless of nationality (p. 782).

Sadat’s peace initiative dramatically altered the U.S. media perception of the Egyptians in particular and of the Arabs in general. Moreover, the Carter administration’s policy also prepared the ground for accepting the Arabs’ and the Palestinians’ cause, supporting a comprehensive peace settlement that encompassed all the major players in the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestinians. Carter was also the first president to acknowledge the Palestinians’ political aspirations and to support a homeland as a solution to their problem. Carter’s position and role in the Egyptian-Israeli peace process not only contributed to the positive press coverage of Egypt but also to a more positive treatment of the Palestinians. The change in U.S. policy towards the Arabs and the Palestinians, as well as the active U.S. role in bringing about peace in the Middle East, seemed to reinforce the shift in media coverage of the players in the region. Based on studies of TV newscasts, scholars found that 1977 marked an important transition in U.S. media attitudes toward Israel (Adams & Heyl, 1981; Morad, 1981). In turn, Egypt and especially the Egyptian president, enjoyed favourable media coverage (Morad, 1981, p. 71). The U.S. media

portrayed Sadat in a one-dimensional image as “a leader who did what no other Arab dared, a brave, courageous, charismatic, charming and handsome hero” (Kays, 1984, p. 12). These favourable images spilled over to the state of Egypt whose coverage was more negative prior to Sadat’s peace initiative (Adams & Heyl, 1981, p. 17).

The Egyptian President’s peace initiative raised the profile of the Palestinian issue, which until that time was not treated favourably by the U.S. media (Adams & Heyl, 1981, p. 19). Marilyn Robinson, an NBC correspondent, asserted that between 1975 and 1977, “the way they [media] present the Palestinians is not to present the Palestinians. Anyone who tells the story of these millions of refugees stashed away in some desert or something is going to have to cause some kind of feeling about these people. You’ll hear a lot about Arafat and Palestinian raids, but what Palestinians are feeling, what they’re thinking about...no chance” (as cited in Ghareeb, 1983, pp. 47–48). Moreover, Jim McCartney, a military and national security affairs correspondent suggested that in the early 1970s there was no in-depth reporting of the Palestinian problem in the Washington newspapers. In addition, the only coverage the Palestinians received in the American media was related to their terrorist raids (Ghareeb, 1983, p. 54).

Conversely, *The Christian Science Monitor*’s special correspondent, Trudy Rubin, asserted that from 1974, the Palestinians received extensive press coverage. “Everyone who says that people have been ignoring the PLO, the Palestinians, has not been observant. Ever since the cover stories when Arafat came to the U.N. in 1974, there has been a great deal of coverage of...the Palestinians in camps, the Palestinians in Jordan...there were reams of coverage...very sympathetic” (as cited in Ghareeb, 1983, p. 276). In addition, an attitude analysis of *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Detroit Free Press*, showed that the Palestinians were treated as a separate entity from the rest of the Arab world. Despite condemning Palestinian commando activity, the newspapers showed sympathy for their plight (Terry & Mendenhall, 1974).

In a time-series content analysis of TV news coverage of the Middle East, Morad found that after 1978 the U.S. media became less hostile toward the Palestinians and the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization). This was a result of both Sadat's diplomatic appeals on behalf of the Palestinians and the Palestinians becoming more skilled in communicating with the media (1981, p. 71).

Scholars have noted that Sadat's discussions of the Palestinian issue contributed to the legitimization of the topic as reasonable and important (Adams & Heyl, 1981; Morad, 1981; Roeh, 1981). Based on a study analyzing ABC, CBS and NBC early evening news stories, Roeh concluded that in 1979 Palestinians were frequently portrayed in the U.S. media as helpless and passive victims (1981, p. 87). Sadat's efforts to raise the profile of the Palestinian issue not only increased the amount of coverage given to the PLO, but at the same time decreased the amount of negative coverage (Morad, 1981, p. 70).

In addition to the Palestinians' victim image, Zaharna argued that the 1970s marked the rise of an opposite image, the Palestinian "terrorist" (1995, p. 42). In contrast to the victim image, the Palestinian terrorist was "equipped with...guns, dynamite, and airline schedules" (p. 42). According to Zaharna, during the 1970s Palestinians became synonymous with terrorists, skyjackers, commandos, and guerrillas. A content analysis of *Time* newsmagazine from that period showed that Palestinians were portrayed negatively as "dedicated, vicious political fanatics" and as "unpredictable terrorists" (Zaharna, 1995, p. 43).

The Portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians during the 1980s—the Lebanon War and the first Intifada.

President Carter's policy towards the Palestinians and the Egypt-Israel peace settlement was only part of the process of change in the portrayal of the Palestinians—a change that was later reinforced by the Lebanon War and the first *Intifada*. According to Christison, while Israel continued to dominate the news and the media largely maintained their stereotypical coverage of the Palestinians, Israel's image started to deteriorate. For

example, in the early 1980s, *The Washington Post* ran a hard-hitting series of articles on Israel's occupation practices, while other papers, such as the *Christian Science Monitor* were often critical of Israel and careful to report the Palestinian perspective (Christison, 2000, p. 227).

In 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon for the purpose of destroying the PLO and to achieve security on its northern border. The Israeli seizure of Beirut followed by massive evacuation of the PLO from Lebanon opened an opportunity for an American peace initiative in the area including solving the Palestinian problem. President Reagan's plan to solve the Palestinian problem was unveiled at the same time that pictures from the battlefield were being beamed into Americans' living rooms.

Scholars' attitudes regarding media coverage of the war varied. There were scholars who accused the Western press, especially the TV networks, of presenting an anti-Israeli bias, inaccurate and distorted pictures of the war (Chafets, 1985; Gervasi, 1984; Gilboa, 1993b; Karentzky & Frankel, 1989; Landau, 1984). Others asserted that it was the first time that the U.S. media had reported the Arab-Israeli conflict objectively and accurately (McDavid, 1983, p. 299). Ghareeb supported this view stating that the extensive coverage of Israel's invasion of Lebanon provided substantial evidence of a trend toward greater balance in the media's handling of Middle East issues (1983, p. 169).

During the first stage of the war, Israel's embassy in Washington rated newspapers and television on their coverage. The *Washington Post* reported on November 10, 1982, that Israel had rated it the most negative U.S. newspaper because of its opinions and editorials on the Lebanon invasion and other recent issues in the Middle East. Similarly, *The New York Times* was also among the newspapers Israel rated negatively, and viewed as a perpetrator of television imbalance (Paraschos & Rutherford, 1985, p. 458). During the invasion of Lebanon, the weekly periodical the *Nation* piercingly criticized Israel and

recognized the PLO as the voice of the Palestinians, advocating the organization's inclusion in the peace process (Christison, 2000, p. 227).

The war in Lebanon highlighted some of the problems and consequences of network war reporting, especially due to the fact that this was the first war in which television cameras had access to both sides of the hostilities (ADL, 1984, p. 117). While Israeli officials thought that foreign reporters would view the war from the same perspective they did, the prevailing negative Israeli image resulted from the vacuum of information from the Israeli side in the early days of the fighting as security considerations of protecting military personnel and operations predominated considerations of public relations. This information vacuum led media practitioners to lean on PLO, Red Crescent and Syrian sources for coverage concerning civilian casualties and destruction—a vacuum in which exaggerated and distorted reporting flourished (ADL, 1984, p. 169).

Regardless of these arguments, the fact was that the Lebanon War had greatly damaged the positive image that Israel had enjoyed for a long time. Conversely, it helped to raise attention about the Palestinian issue and enhanced their positive image. Television, radio, and newspaper ads emphasizing Israel's aggressiveness and the loss of life and destruction inflicted on Lebanese and Palestinians began to appear (Ghareeb, 1983, 180). Some claimed that during this war the PLO and Palestinians won the "public relations" battle (Lewin, 1984, p. 24). Similarly, Chafets suggested that "it was the first Arab-Israeli war whose coverage by the foreign press became, in itself, a kind of battlefield" (1985, p. 296).

A content analysis of evening newscasts from ABC, NBC and CBS—from June 7, 1982, the beginning of the war, to August 20, 1982, the day the first PLO fighters departed by sea—confirmed that the PLO enjoyed more favourable coverage than the Israelis (Paraschos & Rutherford, 1985, p. 463). Furthermore, the nature of the assertions utilized to describe Israeli actions often seemed to deteriorate into more colourful and caustic

reviews, being translated into fewer neutral assertions and more unfavourable ones.

Consistent with this trend, the reporters relied on their own observations more frequently when describing Israeli activities. In contrast, in describing PLO activities, reporters tended to rely on information given by other sources (p. 464).

During the Lebanon War, the media often portrayed Israelis as brutal invaders who killed innocent civilians, while the Palestinians and the PLO were depicted as “freedom fighters” or “guerrillas,” terms that were far removed from the previous terminology of “terrorists” (Gervasi, 1984, p. 42). Furthermore, the media described the PLO as a “resistance movement” seeking the fulfilment of “legitimate rights” (p. 43). In contrast, the Israeli military action was portrayed as a “gratuitous onslaught on a small, defenceless Lebanon” (p. 43).

Another contributing factor in the “public relations war” was the increased sensitivity of Palestinians, Arab governments and the Arab lobby to the need to provide substantive and accurate information to journalists as well as easy access to sources of information. Thus, the PLO information offices and leaders appeared to have learned the benefits of cultivating the media. Ghareeb pointed to the example of PLO leader Yasir Arafat’s changing image that during this period, began to be viewed in positive terms as a wise, dedicated leader (1983, p. 181).

It is interesting, however, to see that the Palestinians’ positive media image, as compared to that of the Israelis, did not have substantial affect on U.S. policy. The pictures from the battlefield did mobilize some change in the administration’s policy, compelling it to react; however, this reaction was rather mild and *ad-hoc*. As such, while acknowledging that Israel’s occupation was not acceptable, President Reagan held that a Palestinian state was also an unacceptable notion. Rather, Reagan saw the solution for the Palestinians as an autonomy federated with Jordan, while still considering the PLO an illegitimate organization.

The Lebanon War marked the beginning of a new era in the history of U.S. media coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israelis received more neutral and negative coverage, which enhanced their negative image. In contrast, the Palestinians' dual image as terrorists and refugees was transformed to more neutral and even positive images. This trend was strengthened by media coverage of the first *Intifada* along with the American change in policy towards the Palestinians and the PLO.

The outbreak of the first *Intifada* in the late 1980s received intense media coverage in the U.S. News stories began to appear sympathetic to the Palestinians presenting them as a distinct people with national aspirations, who seek freedom from an occupying power (Christison, 2000, p. 236). The *Intifada* dramatically changed the Palestinians' image in the U.S. and Western media, stirring the world's sympathy and placing the conflict at the top of the world's agenda. In an article published in *Newsweek*, J. Shaheen pointed out that before the nightly news exposed the American public to "Palestinian boys being punched and beaten [by Israeli soldiers], almost all portraits of Arabs seen in America were dangerously threatening" (1988, p. 10). Prior to the *Intifada*, Arabs had never been seen practicing any profession ordinary people do. They were portrayed only as "bombers or billionaires" (p. 10).

The Palestinian riots received considerable attention in the American media, especially on television. For weeks, stories about events in the West Bank and Gaza appeared on the front pages of major U.S. daily newspapers and led American network evening news programmes. Studies confirmed that "the coverage of the *Intifada* was intensive and its tone was very negative toward Israel" (Gilboa, 1989; Gilboa, 1993a; Karentzky & Frankel, 1989; Zaharna, 1995). Indeed, the Palestinian uprising in Gaza and the West Bank was a landmark in terms of media coverage of Israel in all respects. These included media usage of frames, narratives and images in the coverage of this conflict.

According to Gadi Wolfsfeld, though the news media usually give preference to the more powerful actors in a given political conflict, they also have an important space reserved for victims (1999, p. 9). Thus, becoming a victim is one of the only ways in which the weaker side in a conflict can be considered both newsworthy and legitimate. Studies supported Wolfsfeld argument, showing that during the *Intifada*, the media were very critical to Israel's policies and responses, due to the Palestinians' position as victims in the conflict.

Wolfsfeld distinguished between three sets of media frames. The first are those adopted by the antagonists, the second are those adopted by the news media, and the third are those adopted by the outside audiences (1993, 1997). The Palestinian frame for the *Intifada* centred on the concept of "injustice," and their demand for self-determination. The Israeli government tended to frame the *Intifada* as a "law and order" issue. However, the Media's frames of the conflict tended to change overtime because the media's attempts to find new angles on the same story. Wolfsfeld argued that variation in the media's attention toward the *Intifada* was in itself a change in frame. The nature of the frame among the various audiences was dependent on the relative salience and relevancy of the conflict to them (1993, p. xxv).

In addition, Daniel identified several other frames that the media used to present the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (1995). Thus, the media "fitted" the conflict into old familiar story lines including the "Cold War" frame, the "terrorist" frame, the "blood feud" frame, and the "David and Goliath" frame. (p. 65). During the *Intifada*, the media transformed these frames from the traditional pro-Israeli portrayal into a more pro-Palestinian one. This dichotomous good/evil framework naturally encouraged the audience to identify with the good—the Palestinians—during the *Intifada*.

The *Intifada* also altered the narrative language of the conflict, allowing new positive terms to enter the game. As such, concepts such as the “end to occupation,” “homeland,” and “self determination” for the Palestinians became dominant in the new public discourse (Daniel, 1995, p. 69). This process has contributed to the legitimization of the Palestinian struggle. The acceptance of the Palestinians was achieved by the *Intifada*’s challenge to the Israeli hero/Palestinian villain frame, and by the decreased concerns over the threat that a Palestinian entity would pose to Israel’s security (p.70).

In terms of media images, there was no doubt that the *Intifada* completely transformed the image of the Palestinians. Zaharna described media images of the *Intifada* as vivid and the language as graphic (1995, p. 44). The images of Palestinian stone-throwers contrasted dramatically with their previous image as helpless refugees (p. 44). Not only the Palestinian people, but also their leadership were portrayed with positive values such as courage, self-reliance, and desire for independence (p. 45). For example, the Palestinians appeared on the evening news as an unarmed, almost haphazard civilian conglomeration whose only weapons were pitifully inadequate in the face of the superior military strength of the Israeli Army (Daniel, 1995, p. 68).

Consistent with the anti-Israel media coverage during the *Intifada*, Eytan Gilboa found that during the first phase of the conflict, political cartoons criticized Israel’s reactions against rock-throwing Palestinians (Gilboa, 1993a, p. 96). Some newspapers even referred to the events using the term “holocaust” in their descriptions. Others compared Israel’s alleged treatment of Palestinians to the South African apartheid policy and its treatment of blacks (Gilboa, 1993b; Zuckerman, 1989). A survey of TV newscasts and reports from the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* during the first six months of the *Intifada* showed that nine out of ten attributions to the IDF's treatment of the Palestinian rioters were critical toward Israel. An analysis of editorials from five U.S. elite

newspapers showed that 95% (83 out of 86 pieces) were critical and judgmental toward Israel (Gilboa, 1989; 1993).

The American media became an important factor in the *Intifada* and in the Palestinian strategy as one of its goals was to alter U.S. policy through a political communication process based on violence. The Palestinians hoped that anti-Israeli riots would produce supportive media coverage and consequently sympathetic public opinion, which in turn, would pressure American policy makers to accept Palestinian demands (Gilboa, 1993a, p. 93). Undoubtedly, the media coverage along with other events, did led to action, as Secretary Shultz proposed a plan for a peace settlement to be achieved through direct bilateral negotiations between Israeli and joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegations. However, the proposed American plan fell far short of fulfilling the Palestinian and PLO political demands.

A comprehensive study of public opinion and policy during the *Intifada* showed that the Palestinians failed to achieve their goals in terms of changes in public opinion and official U.S. foreign policy (Gilboa, 1993b, p. 230). While media coverage of the *Intifada* did brought the Palestinian problem into focus, somewhat changing some opinions about the Palestinians, it did not fundamentally change U.S. foreign policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The violence did not significantly change the long-term trends in U.S. public opinion regarding Israel and the Israeli-Arab conflict. While the administration showed concern and sympathy to the fate of the Palestinian people, this was not translated into supporting their major political demands. Although the *Intifada* mobilized the Reagan administration to move from its passive position to more active involvement, it did not bring about a genuine change in U.S. foreign policy (p. 231). This trend continued in President Bush's administration, which took an active role only 18 months after assuming office, and only when international and domestic circumstances allowed.

The Portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians 1990-2000—from Oslo to the al-Aqsa Intifada.

Media coverage of the first *Intifada* brought the Palestinian problem to the attention of the world. Being portrayed as the weaker party in the conflict, the Palestinians gained worldwide public sympathy for their cause. However, the PLO alignment and support for Iraq's Saddam Hussein during the Persian Gulf crisis of 1991 severely damaged the Palestinians' image in the eyes of the world (Christison, 2000, p. 286).

The 1993 signing of the Oslo Agreement was not only a diplomatic breakthrough, but also marked a change in the images of the Israelis and the Palestinians. As such, the Palestinians and their leadership became more acceptable in both official Washington and in the U.S. media. The Palestinian voice predominated the various media from news programmes and talk shows to other presentations on the Middle East (Christison, 2000, p. 275). The portrayal of the conflict focused on the end of the enmity, being depicted mainly through the frame of the "peace process."

While the election of the right-wing Likud government in 1996 led to a more critical coverage of Israel, some scholars asserted that the media were still adhering to the traditional conventions for portraying the Israelis and the Palestinians. Christison argued that some media vehicles such as the *Wall Street Journal's* editorial page consistently aligned themselves with the perspective of Israel's right-wing. In addition, radio talk shows hosts frequently gave vent to anti-Palestinian, pro-Israeli diatribes (2000, p. 283). For example, during 1990–92, when the *Intifada* was still going on, the media frequently used the term "occupied territories" when referring to the areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. As a result of the Oslo Agreement, this term was transformed into "disputed territories," making it more legitimate (Ackerman, 2001; Fisk, 2002; Melhem, 2001). Similarly, the U.S. media often adopted the Israeli names/terms for elements related to the conflict such as "Jewish neighbourhoods" or "communities" instead of "illegal settlements"

(Ackerman 2001, Christison, 2000). In addition, the media's reference to the 1997 Israeli building project in East Jerusalem as the "Israeli neighbourhood of Har Homa," using the Israeli rather than the Arab name for the place, "Jabal Abu Ghneim" created a sense of "irrational Palestinian demands" among the average American audience (Melhem, 2001, p. 23).

The first year of the 21st Century witnessed a total collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process with the eruption of the *al-Aqsa Intifada*. Engaged in an extremely violent confrontation, the Israelis and Palestinians portrayed this crisis differently. More than ever before, the media played a crucial role in this confrontation, serving as an additional weapon in each side's arsenal. Although very little research has been done to date to systematically analyze media coverage of this *Intifada*, each side in the conflict claimed that the media were biased in favour of the other side. Thus, while the Palestinians and the Arab world perceive the U.S. media as being unambiguously sympathetic to Israel, the Israelis and some Jewish groups around the world saw the media as constantly propagandizing the Palestinian cause.

A comparative study of the first and second *Intifadas* revealed that as opposed to the early stage of the conflict in which the Palestinian image resulted in wide scale sympathy for the Palestinians, the flow of reports and photos during the subsequent stages conveyed a more negative view of them. As such, media coverage that started with images of oppressed Palestinians resisting occupation, developed into images of either meaningless violence or of parties being equally responsible (Andony, 2001, p. 215).

Those who asserted media bias against the Palestinians primarily blamed the commentaries and editorials of the U.S. media rather than the news articles. A review of editorials and opinion articles published by *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* during the first six months of the *Intifada* revealed a strong pro-Israel bias. As such, 81% of the items were pro-Israeli, 7% were neutral, showing sensitivity to both the Israelis and

the Palestinians, and 12% were pro-Palestinian (Abunimah & Ibish, 2001, p. 234). In addition, both newspapers frequently printed pieces written by Israeli officials, while printing only two pieces written by Palestinian authors (p. 234).

It has been often argued that the media blamed the Palestinians for the violence, being encouraged by their leadership to die as "martyrs" (Abunimah & Ibish, 2001, p. 236). The media seemed to feature unprovoked Palestinian violence and aggression from one side, with mere retaliation from the Israeli side (Ackerman, 2001, p. 64). It has been also argued that the U.S. media often dehumanized Palestinian parents and leadership by reporting that they deliberately promote the killing of children in order to gain favourable coverage and the world's sympathy (Abunimah & Ibish, 2001; Andoni, 2001).

Further allegations of biased coverage were levelled at reports about the Palestinian casualties that were typically vague, impersonal or sometimes nonexistent, while Israeli casualties were often prominent detailed and humanized (Abunimah & Ibish, 2001, p.238). Similarly, Palestinian casualties were depicted as an inevitable, though unfortunate, by-product of the violence in the West Bank and Gaza (Ackerman, 2001, p. 66). As for the circumstances of death, the media often used the term "caught in crossfire" to describe the way in which Palestinian civilians died (Abunimah & Ibish, 2001; Ackerman, 2001; Melhem, 2001).

From the early days of the *Intifada*, U.S. editorial writers were almost unanimous in claiming that the violence was planned, orchestrated, and sustained by the Palestinian Authority (PA) and particularly Yasir Arafat. The media depicted Arafat as exhibiting "ingratitude," as being a "peace breaker" who encouraged irrational violence, in contrast to Prime Minister Ehud Barak who was routinely described as "brave," "generous" and "committed to peace." (Abunimah & Ibish, 2001; Ackerman, 2001 p. 243).

On the other hand, Israeli officials and media specialists have often argued that while media editorials might have lined up behind Israel, the bulk of media coverage,

especially in the electronic media, was more sympathetic to the Palestinians. As such, the Israelis were consistently condemned for their “excessive use of force” against Palestinian civilians and children, portraying them as un-proportionally aggressive, while conveying sympathy for the Palestinians facing a harsh reality (Abunimah & Ibish, 2001, p. 252).

Israeli journalists often accused the foreign media of providing partial pictures of the violence and killing of civilians, especially children. For example, when reporters covered the killing of a baby by Israeli forces, they tended not to provide additional information, such as the fact that terrorists opened fire on Israeli soldiers from the house where the baby lived. This was not reflected in the pictures and descriptions presented by the media. As a result, the public did not get the full picture, but distorted and misleading information (Golan, 2002, p. 2).

The Palestinian violence was often portrayed from the frame of a struggle for statehood and resistance to the occupation and that Israel's reaction to the uprising was brutal and unjustifiable (Abunimah & Ibish, 2001, p.253). This portrayal created a sense that the violence was directed not against Israel but merely against Israel's occupation while ignoring Arafat's call for Jihad (Holy War) and the Palestinians hidden intentions to destroy Israel (Helmreich, 2001; Margolis, 2001). The popular frame of the struggle for statehood was partly explained by the fact that Western journalists imposed a convenient and familiar Western motif—the struggle for independence from colonial occupation—on the unfamiliar realm of the Israeli Palestinian conflict (Helmreich, 2001).

At the beginning of the confrontation, the media tended to blame the visit to the Temple Mount by Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon for inciting the violence, referring to this visit as deliberately provocative (Helmreich, 2001; Margolis, 2001). Even though in later stages the U.S. media acknowledged that Sharon's visit was not the real cause of the *Intifada*—a conclusion that has been reinforced by the Mitchell Report—at the beginning,

journalists tended to describe the results of Sharon's visit as objective fact rather than speculation.

Although the literature regarding media coverage of the recent conflict seemed to be less systematic and to some extent subjective, it has clearly shown the importance that the adversaries attributed to their media portrayal and images. As the violence escalated, both sides became engaged in efforts to gain public sympathy that in turn would change U.S. policy. In a conflict where both words and pictures mattered, each side attempted to impose its own terminologies and phraseologies on the media coverage. As such, one side's "terrorist," who has been killed as an act of "self-defence" was the other side's "freedom fighter," who was "assassinated." (Haberman, 2001, ¶ 4). Nevertheless additional research is required in order to explore aspects related to media coverage of the *al-Aqsa Intifada*.

Conclusions

Since the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Arabs and Israelis have tried to rationalize their points of view and to justify their actions and reactions using the mass media to transmit their messages. Understanding the powerful role of the mass media in perpetuating or creating images, which may affect U.S. foreign policy, Arab and Israelis strove to reinforce a more favourable coverage.

The Middle East has attracted the attention of the U.S. media more than any other region in the world because of its strategic, geopolitical and economic importance to the U.S. Research has shown that over the years, media coverage of the conflict has developed and changed, shifting its focus from the Arab-Israeli to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Over time, the portrayal of Arabs and then Palestinians has also gradually shifted from negative to neutral and even positive, while the portrayal of Israelis has been transformed from positive, fluctuating between neutral and negative depictions.

The significance of images of nations stems from the belief that images have a major and direct impact on policy-making by shaping the thinking of policy-makers. Especially in the U.S., where the mass audience is less interested in foreign policy, the media provide decision-makers with the boundaries within which foreign policy can be made (Gerges, 1997, p. 74). As a result, the press becomes an indirect participant in the process, as it contributes to the climate in which foreign policy is made. Understanding that images have become so important in the in the media age, antagonists often enlist professional public relations agencies to convey a desirable image to the international audience and especially to international governments.

In contrast, U.S. officials have tended to deny any connection between media portrayal and foreign policy decision-making, asserting that foreign policy decision-making is based on their perception of the national interest. A review of U.S. foreign policy towards the Arab-Palestinian-Israeli conflict and this conflict's portrayal in the media seems to support these claims. As this review has shown, throughout the history of the conflict, media images did not necessarily affect official U.S. policy. While images did created urgency for U.S. presidents to react and to address given events, the commitment to a strong Israel and U.S.-Israeli alliance predominated any American policy.

At the same time, it is clear that perceptions of the national interest are not established in a vacuum, but as a result of an interplay between cultural, environmental and political factors including the mass media. So, even if a policy change does not occur overnight with the occurrence of a certain event, it is certainly a long-term process in which media images do play a role. Based on this notion, much of this research will be devoted to exploring aspects related to the portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the development of the antagonists' images. In addition, attempts will be made to inquire into the interplay between those images and the extant U.S. foreign policy.

CHAPTER III

Mass Media and U.S. Foreign Policy

The emergence of advanced communication technology after WWII changed the way in which politics are made. The mass media's role as a dominant institution in American society has long been recognized in terms of their relationship with the foreign policy-making process. Thus, foreign policy, which was previously conducted behind the scenes, became a relatively transparent activity that is open to public scrutiny. The influence of the media on the perceptions of U.S. politicians, the public and foreign governments compelled foreign policy-makers to become skilled communicators.

During the last four decades, scholars, politicians, and journalists have been debating the relationship between two powerful institutions in the U.S., the government and the media. Nevertheless, the question of the direction of effect, media-government or government-media, has remained an enigma. At the heart of the debate is the question of the media's role in the policy-making process—whether or not the media affect the foreign policy process, foreign policy substance, or both. Scholars are divided between two major schools of thought. At one end of the continuum, there are those who hold that the media are active players in foreign policy decision-making both through the process of news-gathering and the construction of news. Therefore, they may act as either partisan supporters of government policy or its bitter opponents (Cohen, 1994; Larson, 1988; O'Heffernan, 1991). At the other end of the continuum, there are those who assert that the media are passive players merely reflecting government's policy (Bennett, 1990; Chang, 1993, Dorman & Farhang, 1987; Hallin, 1986; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Zaller & Chiu, 1996). In recent years, a middle approach has been developed to reconcile the two dichotomous approaches and contradicting realities. According to the third school of thought, the media are neither effective nor reflective because they do not have the complete data or the tools to analyze and assess foreign policy decisions (Berry, 1990;

Serfaty, 1990). In addition, the extent of the media's activity or passivity is a result of a combination of variables that should be present in each given case (Robinson 2001, 2002; Wolfsfeld 1993, 1997).

This debate and the absence of convincing evidence with respect to media effects on foreign policy require further comprehensive research. It is imperative to explore these relationships, especially because foreign policy extended beyond national boundaries and actually affects other nations. Moreover, it is essential to monitor developments in this relationship especially because of the rapid changes in media technology, and in world politics. This work attempts to assess the nature of the relationship between the U.S. government and the media, analyzing case studies related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In order to present a complete picture and identify the type of relationship, this chapter reviews the central concepts related to media and foreign policy. First, it presents the principles of the pluralist paradigm to provide a departure point for the evaluation of the media-government relationship in a democratic, liberal society. Second, it reviews the central roles media play in foreign policy coverage. Lastly, the chapter presents the different approaches to the media-government relationship held by the three schools of thought, utilizing relevant examples from the history of foreign news coverage.

Paradigms of Media Influence

In general, the literature on media and foreign policy tends to be diverse (Mowlana, 1998, p. 29). A review of theoretical, empirical and normative work reveals three major standpoints from which scholars draw conclusions on the connections between news media and political elites. At one end of the spectrum, news and foreign policy analyses were primarily based on the democratic-pluralistic model, while at the other end the bureaucratic/Marxist model was emphasized. Both the pluralist and Marxist positions with respect to the media are built from the analysis and understanding of the nature of power,

and its distribution in society. Between these two extremes fell scholars who adhered to the Rational Actor Model (Allison, 1971, p. 9).

The major differences between these approaches evolve around three pivots. First, the extent to which the mass media are autonomous in determining the content and form of their messages. Second, the nature of the relationship between political institutions or the state and the mass media. Finally, the nature of the media's audience (Negrine, 1989, pp. 18–19). This work, however, relies on the approach of the pluralistic paradigm because it focuses on the relationship between media and government in a liberal, democratic society such as the U.S., in which the media have long enjoyed the position of an independent voice. Guaranteed by the Constitution and identified in the popular mind with the liberty of all citizens, the experience of media freedom in the U.S. is perhaps unique in the history of nations.

Generally speaking, the pluralist approach views the media's degree of autonomy in terms of their relations with other institutions, and with respect to their work in the production of content and meaning (Negrine, 1989, p. 19). Under this perspective, the media play a highly active role in influencing foreign policy decision-making. As an independent actor, the media play a mediating role, collecting, monitoring and distributing information between the government and the public. Thus, the media function as an independent observer, an active participant, or a catalyst (Cohen, 1965) and therefore strive to meet their individual self-interest. However, when both institutions face conflicting purposes, roles and definitions, they are occasionally hit by upsets and pressures (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1981, p. 489).

Under the notion of the pluralistic approach, society consists of many power centres in the form of institutions and interest groups that compete for power. Through this competition, political power can shift from one group to another and a change in the political/social order can occur. In this dynamic, the media is one of the forces competing

for dominance and power among other forces, including political elites. Therefore, the media and the political elite can sometime be bitter adversaries (Rivers, 1970).

According to this approach the media are perceived as a watchdog and as the fourth estate, and as such are expected to oversee the activities of the government in the interest of the public. Moreover, in the struggle for power, the media can either be a competing force, acting independently, or a force deployed by powerful groups. Ralph Negrine argued that the change resulting from this competition is likely to be a gradual rather than radical rearrangement of the political and social order (1989, p. 19). Thus, fluidity, continuous change, and an evolving social order are the characteristics of this conception of the political and social world, while the image of a powerful, active, authoritative, independent media is attractive to journalists and supporters of the news media (Chang, 1993; Nimmo & Combs, 1980).

The ongoing debate surrounding the relationship between the media and the establishment of foreign policy has become more complex as technology has developed. Policy-makers have recognized the presence of television cameras during a wide spectrum of foreign relation activities, from trade negotiations, to peace agreements and wars. As such, elites, interest groups and foreign governments alike have come to view the task of news management as an important element of the policy process.

Media researchers have frequently looked at the role the media play in setting the public affairs agenda with respect to their audiences. This research attempts to offer an opportunity to isolate the two components, media and government, and study their mutual effects. Thus, it generally revolves around the reflective hypothesis framework, mainly represented by the work of Hallin (1986), Bennet's *Indexing Hypothesis* (1990), and Herman and Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent* (1988). This chapter reviews the structural and functional approaches to the media-government relationship in order to

construct a comprehensive conceptual basis. Similarly, it integrates studies from various disciplines, including political science, international relations and mass communication.

Mass Media Roles in Foreign Policy

“It has become obvious, in conducting foreign policy, that the press plays a critically important role. The press can either make or break a foreign policy initiative”

(as cited in O’Heffernan, 1991, p. 37).

The power possessed by the media in shaping Americans’ perceptions of the world has long been debated, evaluated, criticized and questioned. While much attention has been paid to domestic coverage, technological developments and the globalization of the media industry have raised the importance of international reporting. As such, foreign news stories came to be at the centre of many media controversies, political debates, and election campaigns. At the same time, audience dependence on the various media in this area increased.

According to Cohen, the press is closely involved in foreign policy-making despite the reluctance of media practitioners to admit this fact (1965, p. 198). Researchers have attributed several roles to the media in the foreign policy arena. These include transmission of information, interpretation, persuading public opinion, setting the agenda, advocating and supporting foreign policies, as well as initiating policies (media diplomacy). Although media roles in the political context vary, this section focuses on four major areas relevant to the study. These include the media as a source of information about international affairs, media’s effect on public opinion, media’s agenda-setting role, and media’s actual involvement in foreign policy processes (media diplomacy).

The Media as a Source of Information

Foreign news stories today take Americans to distant battlefields, political and social revolutions, disasters and international elections simultaneously, as events occur. In general, mass public knowledge and familiarity with foreign affairs issues are derived from

the mass media (Dorman & Farhang, 1987; Rubin, 1977; Zaller, 1994). Despite the fact that the mass media are universally criticized for being biased and inaccurate, newspapers, wire services, magazines, and broadcast organizations continue to provide most of the information received by individuals in modern society. In their most basic form, print and broadcast media allow citizens to function as observers of international events (Woodward, 1997, p. 156). As such, the media's periodic world news and commentaries are the most common source of information underlying audiences' comprehension of international developments.

As communicators, the media transmit information both of a policy and of an opinion nature (Cohen, 1963, p. 208). Thus, government officials and scholars make extensive use of daily foreign news reporting even more than ordinary media consumers do (Cohen, 1963; Mowlana, 1998). Policy officials use the media for immediate, useful information when making decisions, especially in the early stages of an issue. Moreover, the media are often the only source of policy information in crisis situations; this information is often seen as critical for policy-making, even more so than official data (O'Heffernan, 1991, p. 38). Policy makers turn to the media not only for information, but also for analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of developments and proposals, and sometimes even for new ideas on how to deal with the various problems that confront them (Cohen, 1963; Lang & Lang, 1983).

Interpretation of the news is an additional function that the media perform along with the presentation of information (Batscha, 1975; Cohen, 1965; Graber, 1984). This function, however, is generally performed explicitly by special columnists or analysts rather than by news-gathering reporters. By suggesting the causes of and relationships between various events, the media may shape opinions even without telling their audiences what to think or think about (Graber, 1984, p. 10). However, at the same time, media practitioners acknowledge that foreign affairs are so complex that the audience does not

command the background information necessary to comprehend all the received information (Batscha, 1975, p. 32). Therefore, to effectively function as a source of information, the media can and should provide its audience with relevant background information.

Based on comprehensive research of the media-foreign policy relationship, Patrick O’Heffernan argued that a second aspect of media’s role as an information source is the degree to which it is used at the earliest stage of the policy cycle (1991, p. 40). Thus, foreign policy officials made use of the media to a great extent for information gathering in the first stages of a given case, in other words, in the problem identification stage (p.40). Moreover, according to this study, foreign policy officials tend to rely on mass media-delivered information during fast-breaking crisis or emergency situations (pp. 40–41).

Media’s Agenda-Setting Role

Besides providing essential information for policymakers and the public regarding matters of potential concern, the media provide cues to the public about the degree of importance of a given issue. The notion of the agenda-setting process of the news media in general, and in foreign policy in particular, stems directly from Cohen’s statement that the mass media “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (1963, p. 13). The notion of the media agenda-setting function, which led to a series of empirical studies, implied a strong, positive relationship between the emphases of mass media coverage and the salience or priority of these topics in the minds of the audience (McCombs, Einsiedel & Weaver, 1991; McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Rogers & Dearing, 1988).

McCombs and Mauro argued that issues covered prominently by the media—on the front page with large headlines and pictures or as a major television or radio feature—are likely to be considered most important by media audiences. In contrast, stories that appeared in the back pages are generally perceived as less important (1977, p. 4).

However, Graber concluded that once an issue is covered, even if briefly and comparatively inconspicuously, it immediately is lent an aura of significance (1984, p. 7). Both, experimental and survey-based studies have supported Graber's argument, indicating that even relatively short exposures to news coverage of particular issues were sufficient to induce significant shifts in viewers' beliefs about the relative importance of those issues (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). Similarly, policy-making officials have generally acknowledged that important events or issues not covered by the mass media can suffer in their ranking of importance in the policy agenda (O'Heffernan, 1994, p. 330).

In the context of mass media and policy, agenda-setting refers to the salience of an issue, rather than its policy position. According to O'Heffernan, agenda-setting in policy involves two elements—the *placement* of an issue, region or country on the U.S. foreign policy agenda that was not already there, and the *transition* to a higher level of policy consideration of an issue, region or country already on the agenda (1991, p. 45).

The results of a series of in-depth interviews of high-level federal officials indicated that mass media attention to a regional event can put the region or the event on the nation's foreign policy agenda (O'Heffernan, 1994, p. 330). Additionally, this survey indicated that although the media were perceived as capable of establishing the importance of issues and often of bringing them to the attention of a more senior policy maker, this would rarely lead to a reassessment of a policy position on an issue already on the agenda (p. 330).

The Media and Public Opinion

The relationship between the media and the government is largely seen as mediated by a third group—the public at large. This relationship is illustrated by cases where media coverage has had some effect on public's attitudes. These attitudes were translated into public pressure for governmental action. This process comes into full action during international crises and conflicts that receive extensive media coverage. Examples include

the 1984 famine in Ethiopia, South African apartheid, and the 1992 intervention in Somalia. The question is whether public opinion constitutes an important factor in shaping American foreign policy, or whether public opinion enters into politicians' discussions only after policy has already been determined. In the latter case, public opinion is given only a peripheral role in the foreign policy making process.

In the media-public-policy model, the intensity of coverage sets the agenda of issues that the public perceives as most salient. Then, the public evaluates politicians who are involved in the news based on how they handle these important issues. In performing their functions, the media play a significant role with respect to foreign policy and the audience, helping to create or shape the outlines of foreign policy issues in the minds of the general public, organized groups and government officials. In turn, the public may generate either direct or invisible pressure on the government to 'do something.' At the same time, the media provide policy-makers with some image of public opinion regarding the issues on the agenda.

Brenda Seaver identified four ways in which the media influence the foreign policy process via public opinion. First, the media establish the foreign policy agenda for decision-makers by bringing international conflicts to the public's attention (agenda-setting). Second, the media influence the foreign policy process by providing the criteria by which the public evaluates its leadership (priming). Third, the media influence the foreign policy process by framing foreign affairs issues in a certain way and thus presenting them to the public. Fourth, leaders of foreign countries and terrorist groups use the media as a tool to influence U.S. foreign policy makers by manipulating American public opinion (1998, p. 80–81).

There is an on-going debate among scholars, media professionals and politicians about the significance of public opinion in foreign policy making. Media professionals tend to believe that the majority of their audiences are not particularly interested in foreign

events (Graber, 1984; Taylor, 1997). Researchers have viewed the public as impotent in the foreign policy-making process, arguing that public opinion is only an entity to be educated rather than an important source of input for foreign policy (Cohen, 1973; Powlick, 1991). This view may explain why evening newscast and morning newspapers tend to cover domestic news, while foreign affairs are usually covered only briefly. Because of their lack of interest in and knowledge about the subject, the audience is easily influenced by what they hear and see (Graber, 1984, p. 331).

While public opinion can sometimes limit or broaden policy makers' options, or serve as a resource for them, the public's predominant attitude on issues of foreign policy can be characterized as "government knows best" (Paletz, 1994, p. 286). Thus, public perceptions about American relations with other states are almost totally in the control of the foreign policy establishment, and the journalists who cover them. Policy makers have wide latitude to act in foreign relations, but are then judged by the perceived results of their actions. And if events are mismanaged, presidents and legislative leaders can pay a high domestic price in the relatively short term—for a president, the price could be losing the next elections (Miller, 1967; Paletz, 1994; Woodward, 1997).

Other studies have suggested a slightly different approach, crediting public opinion with some sort of influence, although indirect. Thus, the public provides a set of broad constraints for policy that are based on values and expectations, while policy-makers form policies that fall roughly within these wide parameters (as cited in Cohen, 1973; Larson, 1988; Margolis & Mauser, 1989). However, recently, scholars have begun to think that public opinion might be more influential in the foreign policy process. Dorman and Farhang suggested that "the importance of public opinion...can be measured in direct proportions to the degree of effort taken to manipulate it, which, as recent history has demonstrated, has been considerable" (1987, p. 20). Nevertheless, today, the volume of

exposure to foreign news information through various media, namely television, assures a more involved public (Schneider, 1982, pp. 13–14).

A reality of a more “independent-thinking” public has been illustrated by studies of the first *Intifada*. Although the U.S. media tended to portray Israel negatively during this *Intifada*, studies based on opinion polls showed no change in basic American public opinion toward Israel and especially towards economic and military aid to Israel (Gilboa, 1989; 1993a; 1993b). In addition, no changes were found in the rating of Israel as the “strongest” and most “reliable” U.S. ally in the Middle East, as well as the perception that Israel is a “strategic asset to the U.S.” and that American-Israeli ties should be strengthened or kept at the same level (1989, p. 35).

The domestic political implications that result from the public acceptance of specific policies compel politicians to be attentive to the public voice. The most common and important method of monitoring public opinion is to read the press. Therefore, policy officials spend a considerable amount of time every morning reading the nation’s leading newspapers. Moreover, policy-makers not only use news stories, editorials, and analyses to monitor public opinion, but to compare the press interest with the public interest (Rosenau, Thompson, & Boyd, 1976, p. 396). Since the days of Rosenau et al.’s work on world’s politics, we have witnessed the expansion of real-time television with more than a few 24-hour news channels coming into existence, yet it is unclear how this has changed the way policy-makers use T.V. to monitor public opinion.

Despite the large amount of literature exploring the relationship between the mass media, public opinion and U.S. foreign policy, researchers are far from reaching a consensus regarding the public’s role in affecting foreign policy. A comprehensive review of the literature revealed little in the way toward a consistent pattern in the media-public-policy relationship (Seaver, 1998, p. 84). The literature has suggested that the extent to which the public influences foreign policy depends on a variety of conditions. These

include the type of foreign policy decision, the stage in the policy process, the presence of an external threat, the media's position (compliant or adversarial), the decision context, and politicians' beliefs about public opinion (p. 85). Because of the problems and contradictions that emerged from the various studies, scholars have neglected to examine the entire relationship between the three groups, examining only part of the equation.

Media Diplomacy

The growing need to keep the public informed and to avoid speculation about secret agreements and commitments after WW II, along with the revolution in media technology, have further strengthened the link between diplomacy and the media. At the same time, it has made traditional secret diplomacy among international governments more difficult. Scholars and politicians noted that the information age created a "new diplomacy" that is played out in public, with the active involvement of the media (Cohen B., 1963; Cohen Y., 1986; Gilboa, 1998; O'Heffernan, 1991; Rosenau et al., 1976; Serfaty 1990).

Media diplomacy generally refers to the use of the media to articulate and promote foreign policy. This term is also defined as "the role the press plays in diplomatic practice between nations" (Ramaprasad, 1983, p. 70). Governments around the world constantly communicate with each other, either directly or indirectly. Each party attempts to learn as much as possible about the characteristics, intentions, strengths and weaknesses of its counterpart. This information comes from various sources, including direct intelligence channels and reports from diplomats stationed abroad. However, some of this information is derived directly from media reports.

In the making and execution of foreign policy, governments mutually communicate with other governments, with the public in their own nations, and with public in other countries. In this communication process, the media constitute a predominant factor,

performing various functions, including communication between governments, diplomatic signalling, as well as initiation and acceleration of policies.

Scholars and diplomats have long acknowledged that communication is a key element in international negotiation. In the context of foreign relations, one government communicates messages to another in attempts to persuade it to behave in a desired way (Cohen Y., 1986, p.68). Governments communicate through formal and informal channels. Personal conversations and diplomatic notes between foreign policy personnel constitute most official communications. The informal communication methods include statements and speeches of officials in their Parliaments and at political rallies, as well as the mass media (Cohen Y., 1986; Rosenau et al., 1976). Communication between governments through the mass media include letters to the editor, articles written by officials, press, radio and television interviews, and off-the-record leaks to journalists.

Similarly, news media play a significant role in negotiations between foreign governments. By publicly revealing information that was previously known only to the parties involved in this process, one party tries to force the other towards or away from a particular action. Thus, the presence of the media creates additional pressure on the parties to yield (Cohen Y., 1986; Gilboa, 1998; Rosenau et al., 1976)

In some cases, mass media channels play an important role prior to the start of formal negotiations, actually initiating foreign policy actions and changes. One of the most prominent examples is related to the history of the Middle East in the late 1970s. CBS anchorman Walter Cronkite became a peacemaker when, during a television satellite interview, he drew a public promise from the Egyptian President, Sadat, to go to Jerusalem if this would further peace between Israel and Egypt. In a separate interview, Cronkite secured a promise from Israeli Prime Minister Begin, that he would personally welcome Sadat at the airport, should he come. Through these interviews, the media actually set the scene for the historic meeting and the subsequent peace negotiations.

Based on such cases of journalists as mediators in international conflicts, Eytan Gilboa drew a distinction between *media diplomacy* and what he termed *media-broker diplomacy* (1998). The latter referred to international mediation conducted and sometimes initiated by media professionals (p. 67). According to Gilboa, whereas in media diplomacy reporters pursue professional journalism work and follow moves initiated by policymakers, in media-broker diplomacy, they act as diplomats and not as reporters. However, Gilboa asserted that media-broker diplomacy is rare (p. 67–68).

Once the adversaries reached a breakthrough, the involved parties sealed it with a well-orchestrated media event. The media event is the glamorous side of media diplomacy. Media events, which are broadcast live, usually attract national and international audiences (Gilboa, 1998; Negrine, 1996). Media events could be used at the beginning of negotiations to build confidence and facilitate negotiations or at the end of the negotiations to mobilize public support for an agreement achieved through other types of diplomacy (Gilboa, 1998, p. 65). A recent example was the signing of the Declaration of Principles of Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank between Israel and the Palestinians in Washington in September 1993.

Although media events are set apart from ‘ordinary’ coverage, being filled with important symbolic, political, and social properties, this phenomenon is not beyond criticism. First, international media events offer a particular perspective on issues and problems. They reinforce ‘hegemonic internationalism,’ where not everyone takes part on equal terms. Second, they usually take place on the soil of the world’s leading nations. Third, international political media events often work as symbolic events, being isolated from the real problems they are meant to resolve. Finally, the high expectations created by media events can often lead to grievous disappointment as the real, “hidden” problems emerge (Negrine, 1996, pp. 172–173).

Scholars have asserted that one of the most utilized and most effective techniques in the use of the media by foreign policy officials is for signalling American preferences to other nations (Cohen Y., 1986; O’Heffernan, 1991). Diplomatic applications of this role range from the use of the media as a communication device to negotiate with governments who cannot be contacted in other ways, to sending influential signals to the people and the agencies of other governments and receiving signals back from them (O’Heffernan, 1991, p. 53). Moreover, involving the public in the process can lead to public impact/pressure on policymakers and governments (Cohen Y., 1986, p. 82).

Until the last three decades, the role of television in international affairs appeared to be limited to providing a ‘window on the world’ for national and local audiences. Today, however, there is a growing debate about the role and impact of television on the foreign policy making process, especially in the light of real-time television coverage of international conflicts. President Bush’s press secretary noted that “CNN has opened up a whole new communications system between governments in terms of immediacy and directness. In many cases, it is the first communication we have (as cited in Woodward, 1997, p. 157).

Nevertheless, the mass media have been often criticized for interfering with foreign policy. Critics have asserted that media diplomacy can sometimes be disadvantageous or even dangerous (Graber, 1984; O’Heffernan, 1991). Graber explained that government officials, who have far more foreign policy expertise than journalists might be manoeuvred into untenable positions. Foreign policy may then become incoherent and unskilful, with serious consequences for the nation (1984, pp. 316–317).

News Media and Foreign Policy: Between Opinion-Makers to Government’s Helpers

As the study of media and politics emerged, scholars acknowledged the importance of investigating whether or not the media play an influential role in the political environment. A significant part of their work has been devoted to the relationship between

media and foreign policy. Questions that shaped these studies and their resulting controversies include: Who sets the agenda, the media or the government? To what extent do the media affect the substance of national policy? Is the media coverage of foreign policy issues distorted or biased? Are the relationship between media and government adversarial or cooperative? (Serfaty, 1990, p. xix).

The field of media and foreign policy is dominated by two major schools of thought. The first school of thought portrays the media as an active and influential player in the realm of foreign policy (Cohen, 1994; Larson, 1988; O’Heffernan, 1991; Taylor, 1997). In this relationship, the media play an active role in derailing a certain policy through continuous criticism or denouncements. The second school of thought portrays the media as being controlled and influenced by the government, maintaining support for its prevailing actions and policies. (Bennett, 1990; Chang, 1993; Dorman & Farhang, 1987; Hallin, 1986; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Zaller & Chiu, 1996).

A middle approach on this continuum emerged when scholars identified the limitations of the dichotomous active/passive distinction. They provided an integrated approach, determining the provisions under which the media are likely to behave more actively or more passively. Scholars who advocated the middle approach argue that neither the media nor the government is as manipulative as the extreme positions suggest. Furthermore, the degree of influence of each institution changes according to a combination of variables and the circumstances at hand (Berry, 1990; Robinson, 2000, 2001, 2002; Serfaty, 1990; Wolfsfeld, 1993, 1999).

A review of the literature reveals four main models for a media-government relationship:

1. Media Coverage → Public Opinion → Government Policy (U.S. withdrawal from Somalia in 1993).
2. Outside Source (foreign media or government) → Media Coverage → Public Opinion → Government Policy (1987–88 Iran Contra Affair).
3. Media Coverage → Government policy (the 1991 Persian Gulf War)-the media are the first ones to gain access to breaking developments and coverage generates U.S. reaction/policy.
4. Government Policy → Media Coverage (Nixon's 1972 visit to China; the 2003 Operation Iraqi Liberation).

In the first two models, media affect government policy through intermediaries such as the public, other governments, or outside sources. In the last two models, media-policy relationships are direct, excluding the public from the process. While the first three models acknowledge some sort of media influence on government foreign policy, the last model assigns no media influence on foreign policy.

Acknowledging the various models, this study, however, attempts to investigate the direction of influence that stems from direct contacts between the media and the government, excluding intermediary factors. Thus, the central question of this study is what was the nature of relationship between the government and the media in determining U.S. policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, before exploring this question, it is important to understand the ideas behind the three approaches to media-government relationship: The active/influential media approach, the passive/reflective media approach and the circumstantial approach.

School I: The Media are Active Players in Foreign Policy

Roger Hilsman (1992) proposed a model for the structure of foreign policy decision-making. This model suggests a hierarchical structure of foreign policy decision-making that is built on a set of three concentric circles (see Figure 3.1). The inner, smallest ring of “power centres” includes those who are most directly involved in making defence and foreign policy decisions. This circle includes the President and the White House staff, political appointees, and the secretaries and assistant secretaries of the major departments. The inner circle also includes bureaucrats, especially those involved in national security, the foreign service of the Department of State, the CIA, and the military. The second ring of policy-makers includes those individuals and organizations that are not an official part of government but whose central purpose is to influence foreign and defence policy. These include interest groups and the mass media. In the outer circle of power the public opinion and the electorate are concentrated.

While public opinion is assigned a peripheral role in foreign policy decision-making, in Hilsman’s model, the news media play a major role in influencing foreign policy formation. Scholars have long expressed the notion of the media’s extensive power, referring to them as the “opinion makers” (Rivers, 1970), the “king makers” (Dye & Zeigler, 1989, p. 122), the “fourth branch of government” (Cater, 1959), or the “other government” (Rivers, 1982). These terms indicate that both scholars and politicians perceive the media as a powerful force in American political and social systems.

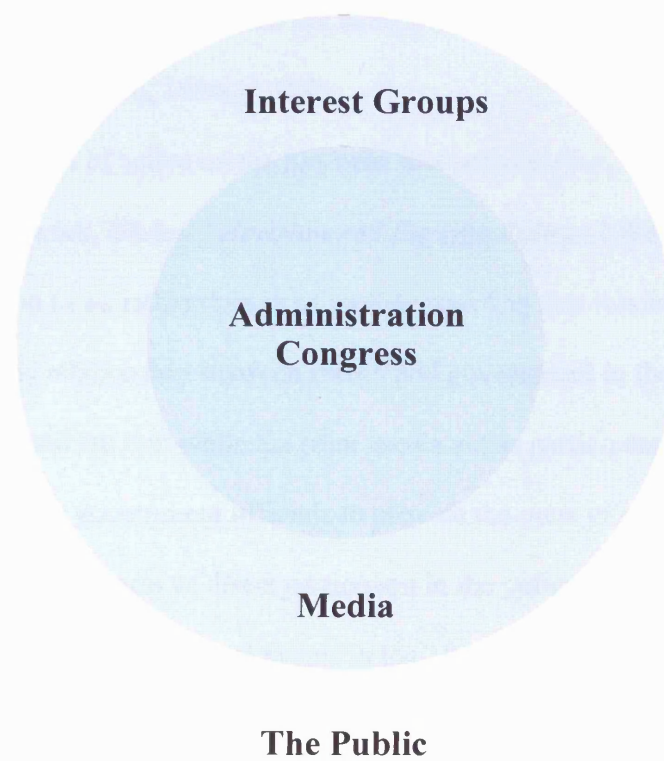


Figure 3.1. Hilsman's Model for Foreign Policy Decision-Making

Scholars who represent the “active/influential media” school of thought tend to view the mass media as an external, separate force that acts as an intermediary between policy makers and a highly involved public (Cohen, 1994; Larson, 1988; O’Heffernan, 1991; Taylor, 1997). Advocates of this school of thought have often pointed at the advances in communication technology as the main reason for the media’s increased influence on international affairs. This phenomenon is often referred to as the *CNN Effect*, suggesting that when CNN floods the airwaves with news and powerful images of a foreign crisis, it induces public demands for action from policy decision-makers. Under the effect of the CNN, policy-makers have no choice but to redirect their attention to the given crisis or risk their popularity (Neuman, 1996, p. 109).

The concept of active media has been discussed earlier, in James Larson’s comprehensive work, *Global Television and Foreign Policy* (1988). Larson focused on the role of television news rather than print media, asserting that this medium created a revolution in the relationship between media and government in the realm of foreign policy. He pointed out that while the print media act as participants in the foreign policy process, relying on government officials to provide the view of reality and policy discussions, television acts as direct participant in the policy process. (p. 43). Based on U.S. encounters with international events in the 1970s and 1980s, such as the Iran hostage crisis, the Iran-Contra affair, the hijacking of TWA Flight 847 and others, Larson demonstrated how television news became participants in shaping world events rather than mere observers.

Larson argued that the roles Bernard Cohen assigned to the media in the early 1960s, observer, participant and catalyst, are comprehensive rather than exclusive of one another (1988, p. 12). According to Larson, the media’s role as participants in the foreign policy process is mainly performed by providing an interactive channel for diplomacy that is instantaneous or timely (p. 43). In addition, he viewed television’s role as a catalyst for

change in foreign policy through the dimension of public opinion. While acknowledging that the American public as a whole does not influence foreign policy in a direct sense, Larson argued that public opinion operates in an indirect manner, setting the limits within which the administration can plan and implement foreign policy (p. 59). Larson concluded that television and other media contribute to changes in American foreign policy mainly through the elite and the attentive public.

Similar to Larson, Patrick O’Heffernan employed Cohen’s pioneering study, *The Press and Foreign Policy* (1963), as a departure point for a comprehensive, more updated exploration of the relationship between media and government (1991). Based on three case studies, O’Heffernan attempted to find evidence for active media roles and for specific media influences in the foreign policy process. Thus, he confirmed that the mass media played active roles in both the development and the execution of U.S. foreign policy (1991, p. 6). He argued that “they are active players because they shape the tone and the style in various degrees” (1991, p. 61). Furthermore, O’Heffernan implied that the media affect foreign policy both directly and indirectly. Thus, the media’s ability to set agendas, generate domestic lobbying pressure, influence policy actions, and shift policy initiatives all influence foreign policy through an intermediate third party (p. 34). In addition, the media’s direct influence stems from the policy makers’ perception of the media’s importance and utility, especially the importance of the electronic media’s injection of certain biases into the policy-making process.

In his studies, O’Heffernan has demonstrated the interplay between the media and the foreign policy apparatus, revealing a deeper dynamic within this relationship. Thus, this relationship “cannot be satisfied by a simple bi-polar competition theory based on a contest between reporters’ desire for truth and government’s desire for support” (1994, p. 232). Based on interviews with American foreign policy officials, as well as security-policy officials and military leaders from foreign countries (Europeans and Soviets),

O’Heffernan concluded that the relationships between government and media are characterized as interdependent mutual exploitation rather than a simple symbiosis (1991; 1994).

O’Heffernan’s interviews with policy makers revealed a very strong perception of the power of the media to stimulate domestic support for policies (1991, p. 63).

Furthermore, he found that interviewees assigned the media dual, somehow contradicting role. On the one the hand, the media introduce new actors into the policy process, add new information, and broaden the range of goals and criteria used by policy makers. However, at the same time they limit policy makers’ ability to control this information and to gain power and advantage (1991, p. 91).

Both sets of interviewees acknowledged using or attempting to use the other. The policy makers interviewed perceived that policy-making cannot be done without news organizations and that news organizations cannot cover international affairs without government conformity. As such, in their relationships, each side tried to control the other and extract what it wanted for its own benefit. The policy-makers interviewed perceived the media as part of the policy process, arguing that the government has become and must remain part of the media process (1991, p. 82). These studies did not suggest that government and media counterbalance each other, but constantly evolve with the balance of influence changing continually, depending upon the issue examined and the point in time of the examination (O’Heffernan, 1994, p. 233).

Scholars who advocated the active/influential media’s role often viewed the electronic media as a revolutionary factor that dramatically changed the media-government relationship (Cohen B., 1994; Taylor, 1997). As such, the ability of the electronic media to cover the entire world in “real-time” in vivid pictures and colours, and the liberation of this medium from the norms of traditional journalism contributed to the power of the media to “move and shake” governments (Cohen, 1994, p. 9).

According to Bernard Cohen, television today is so powerful that this medium alone can influence government policy, while in the past a policy change required a convergence of all different types of media. Thus, by focusing daily on the starving children in Somalia or the humanitarian aspects of the fighting in Bosnia, television successfully mobilized the conscience of the public institutions, compelling the government into policy intervention or at least the consideration of intervention policies (1994, p. 10).

The extent to which communication technology and real-time television have contributed to the media's influence on government emerged in Philip Taylor's in-depth qualitative analysis of international history since 1945. In his study, Taylor traced a development in media-government relationship from cooperative to influential, along with the advances in communication technology. Thus, in the early days, the media were highly cooperative with the government, selling the governmental actions and sustaining public support for them (1997, pp. 59–60). However, the last couple of decades witnessed a shift in this relationship toward antagonism because of two key elements—trust and technology (p. 62). First, the combination of the Vietnam War and the subsequent Watergate scandal in the mid 1970s changed the old level of mutual cooperation and trust between the government and the media. Since then, government officials and policies have become the object of media scrutiny and attack (pp.63–64). Second, the introduction of new communication technologies and the accelerated pace at which things are changing in the news compels decision-makers to constantly adjust in order to make complex decisions. With today's real-time TV, policy makers have to react to breaking news immediately, having a far shorter time for situation analysis and decision-making. Moreover, technology advances influence both the way foreign policy decisions are made and the way they are perceived through the media (Taylor, 1997, p. 13).

News procedures and substance affect foreign policy.

Scholars who advocate the active/influential media role in the context of foreign policy distinguish between two aspects of effect—the effect of the news process and the effect of news content on foreign policy. Scholars who argue that the news process directly shapes policy outcomes have often explained that officials are driven by the need to tailor policy to its public relations value. Henry Kissinger, for instance, remarked that in the past diplomats seeking his advice used to ask him what they should do. “Now, they ask me what they should say” (as cited in Neuman, 1996, p. 115). Moreover, Leon Sigal noted the pledge to withdraw of all U.S. forces from Vietnam “within six months” of an agreement became part of the American negotiating position as a result of President Johnson’s desire for something “short and snappy” that would “get the headlines” (Sigal, 1973, p. 183).

Scholars have further elaborated on this view, stating that the speed and portability of communication equipment, combined with a public interest in live events coverage, has forced officials to make calculations based on the daily publicity surrounding their actions. Thus, “the aggressiveness of moment-by-moment commentary gets policy makers in the frame of mind to answer an ambushing reporter, more than figuring out what to do” (as cited in Neuman, 1996, p. 115). Such calculations might result in policies that are hasty, ill-conceived, damaging to future options, or tempered by domestic, immediate opinion rather than long-term state interests (Bennett, 1994; Dorman and Farhang, 1987; Taylor, 1997).

This phenomenon is especially enhanced in political conflicts in which only the presence of the media affects the behaviour of the antagonists, whether they are governments or government vs. non-government antagonists (Wolfsfeld, 1993; 1999). For example, in the case of the first *Intifada*, while political violence existed without the presence of the news media, it took a different shape and direction when the cameras were

on (Wolfsfeld, 1993, p. 9). Moreover, the presence of the media had an inhibitory influence on the use of force by the Israeli soldiers (a proxy of the Israeli government) who were aware of the international implications of broadcast pictures from the “battlefield” (p. 9).

Nevertheless, tailoring policy to meet public relations purposes seems less significant than the structuring of the policy process to cope with the nature of the news media. Sigal asserted that by creating crises and by imposing deadlines, the news media set agendas for officials (1973, p. 185). Thus, the news process also affects the timing of the policy process. By anticipating or covering crises, the media force officials to react in attempts to divert public attention elsewhere (Sigal, 1973, p. 185). Moreover, in order to get publicity for their policies and actions, politicians are forced to operate under the media’s procedures and deadlines. As such, government officials disclose policy information to meet pre-established action channels and media schedules.

Leaks are another factor affecting the process of foreign policy decision making. Dissemination of premature foreign policy and defence information has the potential to negatively affect and even jeopardize U.S. interests. At the same time, the media are reluctant to withhold such delicate information, driven by the principle of the people’s right to know, or by considerations of newsworthiness. The threat of leaks results in government’s constriction of the circle of advisors and decision-makers who have access to secret information. This process reduces information flow between government officials, and from government officials to the public. Sigal argued that the compartmentalization that results from the attempts to seal leaks can interfere with policy implementation, coordination, and conduct of foreign relations (1973, p. 184).

Apart from the procedure and policy of making news, the content of news itself affects foreign policy-making. First, news content affects the creation of a general mood in the larger public about what a foreign policy consists of and how effectively politicians are

handling it. Second, the effect of news content on foreign policy derives from its capacity to provide an alternative source of information, and the reality check on, those elites that become directly or indirectly involved in the policy process. Thus, the news network transmits information not only from the public to the government, but also throughout the government, and often with greater speed than internal channels of communication (Cooper, 1970; Dorman & Farhang, 1987). The news media, especially the elite media, are known for their considerable influence on the opinions and political behaviour of policy makers. The news media select the sights and sounds that government officials will see and hear the next day and thereby shape their perceptions of the environment.

The main reason that the press is so influential is the publicity factor. Publicity enhances the salience of information and provides the bulk of information that is required for making decisions. According to Sigal, the existence of rival government bureaus with alternative information and independent access to the news can reduce the likelihood of unlimited, absolute control in the hands of a few people (1973, p. 186). Reedy emphasized that, “the significant impact of the press upon the President, lies not in its critical reflections but in its capacity to tell him what he is doing as seen through other eyes...Virtually all other communications that reach him will be shaped either directly or indirectly by people who wish either to conciliate or [to] antagonize the Chief Executive” (1971, pp. 99–100).

Livingston has further expanded the concept of the power of media publicity in times of crisis, arguing that the effect of news content on foreign policy stems from its ability to accelerate or inhibit policy and set the foreign policy agenda (1997, p. 293). As accelerants, the news media shorten decision-making response time, especially in cases of television diplomacy (p. 293). As impediments, the news media can utilize emotional coverage, operating through the agency of public opinion, both explicitly and covertly. As a result, compelling, emotional coverage reorders foreign policy priorities. Neuman agreed

with this view asserting that “Television’s ability to bring graphic images of pain and outrage into our living rooms has heightened the pressure both for immediate engagement in areas of international crisis and immediate disengagement when events do not go according to plan” (1996, p. 109).

Scholars have acknowledged that news media have major effects on foreign policy decision-making in times of war and conflict. As such, the growing belief among politicians and other political observers is that fighting lengthy wars becomes nearly impossible for democratic societies. Public support for wars and for the political leadership is quickly lost in when “colourful” battle scenes are broadcast right into people’s living rooms (Graber, 1984, p. 325). As such, news content may limit the ability of democratic societies to enforce their international goals, especially compared with countries that are not subject to similar restraints. Thus, government control and efforts to delay pictorial coverage of wars to reduce adverse public opinion at home can be found throughout history: In the U.S. invasion of Grenada, the Russians in Afghanistan, the Syrians in Lebanon, and the British in the Falkland Island War with Argentina.

School II: The Media are Passive Players in Foreign Policy

While some scholars and politicians argue that both news media content and news-gathering process affect foreign policy formation and officials’ political behaviour, others support the opposite view. As such, the second school of thought presents the media as passive mediators, manipulated by the government (Bennett, 1990; Chang, 1993; Dorman & Farhang, 1987; Hallin, 1986; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Zaller & Chiu, 1996). This school of thought emphasizes that media practitioners often face a wall of secrecy and their coverage is overwhelmed with briefs from government media staff. The media’s dependence on the government leads to a reflective coverage of the dominant elite through the selection of topics, distribution of concerns, framing of issues, filtering information, emphasis and tone (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p. 298). By these practices, the media

“manufacture consent” to the government positions (Herman & Chomsky, 1988), going along with “even the most bizarre policies, adhering to the view of the president and his legion of media managers” (Berry, 1990, p. xviii).

The concept of the media’s passive role in foreign policy was represented early on by Bernard Cohen’s pioneering work (1963). In his comprehensive study, Cohen pointed out one of the most established findings in media research. Thus, reporters often turned to officials as sources for political stories and for framing the policy content of a story, regarding as newsworthy what their “legitimate” or “official” sources said was newsworthy. As such, the press is usually a cooperative partner in the policy process, advising policy-makers through quiet conversations and reasoned editorials in elite newspapers. In Cohen’s study, the press emerged as a helpful, cooperative partner in the policy process, especially considering the lack of public interest in foreign policy (1963, p. 259). This study depicted a symbiotic relationship between the media and the government in which journalists and political officials were mutually dependent, using each other to promote their particular organizational goals. As Cohen explained,

Both the reporter and the official are constantly concerned to find ways to improve relations between the foreign policy agencies and the press, but this usually means that each side wants the kind of understanding and acceptance from the other that would permit it to achieve its own preferences in the way of coverage (Cohen, 1963, p. 266).

Studies of different historical periods and different policy issues have further confirmed the cooperative approach initially raised by Cohen’s study. Daniel Hallin’s work, *The Uncensored War*, offered a case study of how media coverage is affected by the degree of consensus among the political elite. He examined the claim that during the Vietnam War the news media played an oppositional role to official U.S. policy. However, Hallin found that critical news media coverage occurred only after parts of the Washington

political elite turned against the war. Hallin developed the concept of three spheres with respect to any given political issue, including consensus, legitimate controversy, and deviance. He argued that news media coverage, taking its guidelines from political elites, rarely produced coverage within the deviant sphere, but either reflected elite consensus or elite-legitimated controversy over an issue (Hallin, 1986). As such, the debate during the Vietnam War was attributed to the emergence of sustained opposition to the administration's policies from both Congress and the executive branch itself (Bennett, 1994, p. 25).

Hallin's work received further clarification through the work of Lance Bennett (1990). Bennett argued that mass media news tends to "index" its coverage according to the range of views expressed by the government (Bennett, 1990; p. 106). When media coverage highlights policy problems or failures, it simply reflects a "professional responsibility on the part of the journalist to highlight important conflicts and struggles within the centres of power" (Bennett, 1990; p. 110). Because the media indexed the slant of their coverage to the range of opinions that existed within the political elite, periods of elite consensus were more likely to be periods in which the media covered only one side of the story. The index theory has been further supported by Zaller and Chiu's (1996) analysis of news media coverage of foreign policy crises between 1945 and 1991. According to Zaller and Chiu, news media reporting rarely moved beyond the agenda of official Washington represented by the President and members of Congress (1996, p. 399).

A pattern of press reflection of the government's policy line was also evident in two different longitudinal analyses of the press coverage of U.S. policy toward foreign countries. These included Dorman and Farhang (1987) study of the press coverage of Iran and Tsan-Kou Chang (1988, 1993) study of the press and U.S.-China policy. Based on a study of twenty-five years of press coverage of Iran by the prestige mainstream print media, Dorman and Farhang concluded that the press was far from fulfilling the watchdog

role suggested by the democratic theory. In this research, the press was deferential rather than adversarial towards political elites in the foreign policy arena (Dorman & Farhang, 1987, p. 2). They explained that journalists' limited access to information from the government and the complexity of foreign policy issues interfered with the media's capacity to report adequately. Moreover, journalists were unable to understand the political culture in Iran, and thus, had no choice but to reflect the position of the American government. (Dorman & Farhang, 1987, p. 204).

A similar picture emerged from Chang's comprehensive research (1993) on the press coverage of U.S. policy toward China between 1950 and 1984. As Chang concluded, the press appeared more as a "surrogate for foreign policy makers, than an independent voice for alternative views in the making of China policy" (p. 247). Thus, the press allowed foreign policy makers to set the rules of the political game, to predominate policy information, to construct the scope and range of the public debate, as well as the symbolic representation of China (pp. 240–243). Consistent with the picture emerged from Cohen's pioneering study, this research indicated that "only a few top policy makers from the executive branch...the President and his closest advisers, predominate in the press coverage," inevitably limiting the range of policy alternatives (pp. 244–245).

The degree to which the media are considered troublesome in international politics emerged in British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd's lecture on diplomacy and media. Hurd drew a distinction between 'the reporter and the commentator' versus 'the minister and the serving officer.' He argued that "the reporter and commentator have a different angle of vision and different preconception from the decision-makers." As such, one cannot expect that reporters will see the issues that politicians are confronted with the same way. Hurd stressed that "the relationship between the media and government will be fruitful provided each side recognizes the difference between the professions" (as cited in Negrine, 1996, p. 174). Hurd concluded that the commentator and the politician should act

according to the roles that their duties assigned for them, rather than trying to play the other's role.

According to Negrine, Hurd's speech referred to the reporting from Bosnia where reporters were all "founder members of the 'something must be done' school." Nevertheless, during this international conflict, political actors were able to resist these demands (1996, p. 174). As such, the Bosnia example illustrated that while the media were able to force items onto the agenda, their power was limited in terms of changing policy directions. Negrine further concluded that the media's involvement in the diplomatic process is complex—"it can include bringing information to light, contributing new information and persuading 'public opinion,' rather than simply bringing about a dramatic change in policy" (1996, p. 175).

Johanna Neuman, foreign editor of *USA Today*, emphasized quality of leadership as the critical factor in directing policies. As such, Neuman disregarded the ability of journalism or communication technologies to influence policy direction, suggesting that "television only provides a lens; leadership provides the focus" (1996, p. 109). Neuman explained that throughout history, each innovation in media technology posed the same challenge to the power elite. However, this challenge has provoked a test of leadership rather than a policy change. Thus, creative leadership could harness communications technology to their will in times of crisis (1996, p. 109–110).

Scholars who advocate the view that leadership, not the media, makes the difference in foreign policy usually argue that the news media fail a constitutional obligation to challenge aggressively political leaders and thus fail to function as a watchdog. The reason why American journalists fail to fulfil an active, adversarial role stems from the direct and indirect government control of information and media people. Among the direct control factors are laws and practices of censorship and government's exclusivity over information. Indirect control includes media practitioners' self-imposed

need to be part of the political elite, maintaining close, friendly relationship with those in power.

Government control.

Since WW II, the power of the Presidency has been increasing steadily, while the power of the press and even the Congress to restrict the Chief Executive has decreased proportionally (Dye & Zeigler, 1989; Hilsman, 1993; Reston, 1967; Sigal, 1973). The media spend more time covering the President than they devote to Congress and although the legislature is obviously a power centre, in foreign policy its power is elusive. Moreover, television coverage of Congress is likely to be more negative than coverage of the Presidency (Dye & Zeigler, 1989; Hilsman, 1992). Congress usually surfaces in the news as an element in someone else's story, most often reacting to executive initiatives. Given the President's constitutional and traditional power over the foreign policy apparatus, reporting of a range of opinions, albeit at odds with the administration, is vital to a genuine political deliberation.

Governmental attempts to control and manipulate the media are universal, and stem from the perception that media effects are important political forces. This belief is based on the assumption that the media can shape public knowledge and behaviour and thereby affect citizens' and officials' support for or opposition to the government and its politics. By controlling mass information flow, governments seek to preserve the political system and their own power. Although control occurs in all societies, its extent, nature, and purposes vary (Graber, 1984, p. 19).

Researchers have pointed out that the media's link to the existing power structures are strong because they depend heavily on the government as a source of information and as news originators (Cohen, 1963; Gans, 1979; Paletz & Entman, 1981; Sigal 1973; Tuchman, 1978). In fact, most of what people learn about foreign countries does not originate from a correspondent on the scene. Rather, the events of other nations are

frequently reported through the filtering perspective of national self-interest, as defined by key figures in the executive branch (Woodward, 1997, p. 163). Because foreign policy is the domain of the government, it constitutes the ultimate source that generates foreign policy-related news. Moreover, important events in other nations are framed in terms of news of government-to-government contacts. Thus, the government outlines for journalists the nature and the quality of official relations between the U.S. and foreign countries (p. 163).

Government's most common means to deliver policy messages include press conferences, interviews, background information, press releases, speeches, handouts, leaks and briefings (Cohen, 1963; O'Heffernan, 1991). Thus, communication staff, polling operations, and public relations consultants are standard fixtures in the White House and other government agencies (O'Heffernan, 1991, p. 94). This technique for controlling news flow and content, sometimes referred to as news management, is used by the government for various reasons. The government utilizes news management to advance an alternative policy, to promote personal position within the decision-making circle, to enlist public support for a certain policy, or to kill an unwanted policy. By applying techniques of news management, the government exercises control of the content, timing, methods and circumstances of what is published (Paletz & Entman, 1981; Parenti, 1993; Serfaty, 1990). For example, the President can demand prime-time media exposure with only a telephone call, a practice that can postpone other issues from entering the newscast.

The third aspect of government control of information is related to issues of secrecy and foreign policy. At times, reporters in a democratic society withhold important information at the request of the government to save it or particular officials from embarrassment or interference (Graber, 1984; Reston, 1967). Throughout history, policymakers have successfully persuaded reporters from disclosing secret information. The Bay of Pigs conflict illustrated this type of government-media cooperation well. *The*

New York Times' editor decided to withhold information after President Kennedy had discussed the need for secrecy with him, and had suggested it would serve the national interest to keep the forthcoming invasion of Cuba a secret (Reston, 1967, p. 21).

Scholars have attempted to explain the phenomenon of government-media cooperation, suggesting that news people are generally attracted to power, finding it more gratifying and rewarding to stand with it than against it (Cohen, 1986; Paletz & Entman, 1981; Pollock, 1981). Parenti added that gala events in the White House not only feature the usual array of business people, diplomats, Congressional leaders, and entertainment celebrities, but also an impressive selection of journalists, editors, and publishers. As such, journalists often socialize with people they are supposed to scrutinize (1993, p. 62).

Furthermore, the executive branch has enormous access to the media, thus exerting its influence over news content and presentation (Serfaty, 1990, p. 24). Therefore, it is not unusual for top administrators, including the President, to call news executives to convey "suggestions" and to complain about particular stories and reporters (Parenti, 1993, p. 64). Government leaders have ways of retaliating against unfavourable treatment. Officials can deny interviews, withhold access to information, give scoops to favoured reporters, and give misleading information to others.

Gans identified five ways that government officials can communicate their displeasure. First, they can simply complain to news or corporate executives. Second, the organization can be threatened economically if its journalists do not report the news according to the official preference. Third, government can pressure the news media by launching investigations. Fourth, lawsuits can be brought against journalists. Fifth, government officials can publicly criticize the media. Because government sources are generally perceived as credible, officials' criticism may generate a negative response from audience members such as complaints and boycotts against specific media outlets (1979, pp. 260–263).

Epstein suggested that regulation is the sixth method by which government can pressure the media. Congress empowered the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to license and regulate broadcast media. "The dangling swords, under which the networks metaphorically live, are tied not only to the policies and the values of the FCC, but also to those of political persons and groups who exert influence on the regulating agency" (1973, p.73). Epstein articulated his view regarding the relationship between government and media by concluding that "since these and other political pressures can be brought, it [the media] necessarily adapts itself to the political tone in Washington" (p. 73).

School III: Neither Heroes nor Villains

The third school of thought emerged out of the limitations and shortcomings of the totalizing theories of media-government relationship, which assume that the media is either an active/influential or passive/compliant player in policy-making (Berry, 1990; Robinson, 2000, 2001; 2002; Serfaty, 1991; Wolfsfeld, 1993, 1999). This third approach integrates the first two, providing a less dichotomous way of looking at these relationships. By virtue of reconciliation between the two approaches, the third school of thought argues that the media are neither active nor passive players in foreign policy, or in Simon Serfaty's words "neither heroes nor villains" (1990). In addition, this school sets out the provisions and circumstances in which the media are more likely to behave actively or passively.

Based on in-depth analyses of the *Time's* coverage of the Lebanon War, the Vietnam War, and the Iranian hostage crisis, Berry concluded that neither the media nor the government are as manipulative as some scholars have suggested, nor do they work together to manipulate public opinion (1990, p. x). He explained that the media are now completely aware of the government's attempts to manipulate them, and are therefore able to successfully defy such manipulation. He asserted that media are "reporting events the way they see them," indicating that the media are neither powerful in influencing foreign policy, nor managed by the government in a manipulative sense (Berry, 1990, P. x). As

such, the media's role in foreign policy is minimal and the government's control of the media is also minimal (1990, p. xii).

Berry distinguished between three stages of foreign policy: Formation, implementation, and outcome. At each stage, the tone of the press is expected to be different as a natural result of the development of a political event. Thus, in the early stages when the policy is being formulated and implemented, the media are unable to interpret or evaluate the foreign policy. During the initial stages of a foreign policy, the media focus on getting the story, so what U.S. officials say and do constitutes most of the news (Berry, 1990, p. XII).

Berry further indicated that the media tend to report about issues uncritically in the early stages of the policy process. However, when U.S. policy has failed, criticism occurred not just because of the presence of internal debate, but because American journalists do not want to see their country fail. Berry concluded that policy failure is the only condition in which the media play an active role:

A journalist's cultural bias is not 'my country is right or wrong.' It is, instead, a natural bias to have the United States succeed...Reporters, like everyone else, rally around the President...when confronting hostile forces...However, at the outcome stage, when policy appears to be failing, reporters' cultural bias drives them to critical analyses. They do not want their country to continue down a dead end path. Flagging ineffective or costly foreign policy is patriotic (1990, pp.141–142).

Based on comprehensive analyses of the role of the media in political conflicts, and peace processes Gadi Wolfsfeld attempted to explore the extent to which the press becomes an active agent or a passive conveyer of political information (1993, 1999). By examining three case studies related to the first *Intifada* and the Gulf War, Wolfsfeld drew the provisions under which the media are expected to be influential (1993). He concluded that the role of the media in unequal political conflicts is determined by the ability of the

more powerful antagonist to control the political environment. This control is demonstrated by three variables: The powerful antagonist's ability to maintain consensus among elites, to initiate and control conflict events, and to regulate the flow of information (1993, p.19). Wolfsfeld argued that the authorities' ability to take control over the political environment is a key factor in creating media consent and cooperation with the government. Thus, when there is a high level of consensus among the political elite, the news media not only reflect that climate of opinion, but also reinforce it (1999, p. 12).

However, the media are more likely to play an independent role with the presence of controversial political issues. Based on case studies related to international conflicts and peace processes, Wolfsfeld, concluded that in democratic countries, the media often serve as agents for intensifying internal disputes, thus making it more difficult for the government to implement its policies (Wolfsfeld, 1999, p. 12). For example, the lack of consensus among the Israeli polity with respect to the occupied territories during the first *Intifada*, allowed news sources of various political views to be heard (1993, p. 10). In addition, while the media celebrated the widely accepted peace between Israel and Jordan and between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland, they played a more independent role in the Oslo peace process with the Palestinians. With a lack of political consensus on a political issue, the media do not only reflect the range of moods in the political elite, but also amplify and accelerate it (1999, p. 13).

The other criteria for media's degree of cooperation are related to government's control over both, the events and the flow of information. Though controlling the flow of information is somewhat difficult in democratic societies, the media are more likely to become influential in international political conflicts when the powerful antagonist loses control over both the events and the information environment because it enables the weaker side to better promote its frame of the conflict (Wolfsfeld, 1993, p.9).

Wolfsfeld found that during the first *Intifada*, the Palestinians initiated the events on the ground—such as protests and riots—while the Israeli army was unable to control both the occurrence and the intensity of events. Similarly, journalists could easily obtain information from various sources, including from the Palestinians, so instead of providing the government's frame of the story, Israeli spokespersons found themselves “running after the story and thus unable to have almost any effect on media frames and coverage of the conflict” (Wolfsfeld, 1993, p.7). This lack of control, Wolfsfeld concluded, led to a more active and independent news media.

While the media showed a high degree of independence and influence in the case of the *Intifada*, their role in the two Gulf War cases was much more marginal. For example, in the Gulf War, the allies were the initiators of events, being able to control and regulate the flow of information about the conflict (Wolfsfeld, 1993, pp. 10–11). The U.S. political elite also showed a high level of consensus, and even though there were voices in U.S. Congress that opposed the war with Iraq, Congress was mostly silent after the outbreak of the war (p. 13). As each case assigned the media a contradictory role, Wolfsfeld concluded that the degree of media independence is a variable that changes over time with circumstances (1993, p.18).

Another attempt to reconcile contradicting cases was made by Piers Robinson (2000; 2001; 2002), who criticized both the *Manufacturing Consent* school that viewed the media as a totally passive actor in foreign policy-making, and the *CNN Effect* concept that exaggerated media power vis-à-vis foreign policy. Based on a comprehensive research, encompassing cases of U.S. policy toward various international crises, Robinson suggested a model that can explain and predict instances in which media coverage is more likely to influence policy toward specific world events (2000; 2002). In a similar way to Berry and Wolfsfeld, Robinson set out the conditions under which media coverage influences the policy process. Robinson identified four variables: Elite consensus, elite dissensus, policy

certainty, and policy uncertainty. As such, when consensus exists among the political elite over an issue, the media are unlikely to produce coverage that challenges this consensus. However, when elite dissensus exists with respect to an issue, there is a possibility that media coverage might actually take sides in that elite debate, adopting the frames of one side of the debate (2001, p. 531). The negative coverage could generate several reactions such as influenced public opinion, damage to the government's credibility, or policy-makers' questioning of the government's policy (p. 535).

In addition, Robinson argued that the greater the level of uncertainty over policy within the executive, the more vulnerable the policy process is to the influence of media coverage (2000; 2001). Policy uncertainty also means that the government is inadequately equipped to respond to journalists' criticism (Robinson, 2001, p. 535). Alternatively, if government policy is firm and cohesive, policy-makers are likely to resist the pressures of negative media coverage. Robinson concluded that with the existence of both elite dissensus and policy uncertainty, followed by critically framed media coverage, the media function to influence the direction of government policy (p. 536). As Robinson concluded:

For those interested in the scope of media power in the post-Cold War, real-time environment, the findings offer support to the claim of a more powerful media, and at the same time, caution against the over-estimation of media power...In particular finding that the news media functioned to mobilize support for U.S. foreign policy in the Somalia, Rwanda...cases is a salient reminder of the continued tendency of news media coverage to follow...U.S. foreign policy...helping to manufacture consent for that policy. At the same time, providing evidence of a pattern of media-driven air power intervention in Bosnia provides...some support to the claim that news media coverage, under specific circumstances, has the power to influence policy outcomes (2002, pp. 128-129).

Based on the case of the Vietnam War, Serfaty concluded that the press “is neither a hero or better, nor a villain or worse” (1991, p. 230). As such, the press seldom deserved either the credit or the blame it widely received for bringing the war to an end. The notion of an adversarial relationship between media and government does not entail confrontation and does not prevent cooperation (p. 237). Serfaty asserted that the media’s role as an opposition party whose invisible hand helped shape policy is usually exaggerated.

Although the media may exert pressure on policy makers in terms of time constraints, this is a far cry from setting the substance and shape of foreign policy. Thus, journalists do not make American policies in the world, but merely bring these policies and their impact to the attention of the American people. The public’s reactions, in turn, determine the measure of support or opposition the administration receives (1991, p. 232).

Limitations of the Studies

A remarkable amount of research exploring the media-government relationship has emerged in recent years. However, a great deal of research is still needed to gain a clearer understanding of the effect the media has had and continues to have on international systems as a result of their effects on U.S. foreign policy. Furthermore, the field is still troubled by the lack of systematic, empirical studies synthesizing the various elements and dimensions that make up in this complex issue.

Previous studies tended to suffer from inherent limitations that this study intends to overcome. Most studies used content analysis of either the news media or interviews with media practitioners and officials about their perceptions and attitudes in order to draw conclusions. Interviews found to be problematic as a research method because these research are susceptible to the selective memory of the interviewees and their willingness to be well-perceived by the interviewer. In addition, foreign policy makers tend to distort the impact of the news media when discussing decisions they have been involved with by either over-estimating or under-estimating the media impact (Robinsin, 2002, p. 18).

Lastly, interview-based studies lacked the empirical dimension that emerged from cross analyzing officials' actual pronouncements with actual media coverage.

Other studies, though empirical, used different case studies to draw conclusions about the relationship between media and policy-makers. Such studies, however, were unable to investigate other factors that might either disrupt press coverage or affect its slant independently, such as the nature of a crisis, the type of foreign adversary, or the time period. These studies ignored the fact that every foreign policy case has a unique political-international context, different historical background, and a specific relationship with the U.S. that are exclusive to the particular regions and regimes. Thus, it was difficult to draw conclusions or to find a pattern from such unrelated cases.

The literature reveals that discovering the kind of relationship between the government and the media has long been and remained a challenging task. Studies on media and foreign policy are generally diverse, covering narrow aspects of this complex picture and dealing with distinct media, policy issues, regions and historical contexts. Very often these studies focused on media coverage of international relations in extraordinary periods or crisis-oriented contexts such as terrorism, wars and invasions. The unique nature of these contexts inevitably produced a distinct media-government relationship that might not exist if studied under more neutral or non-crisis periods.

This study intends to synthesize various aspects in an attempt to add to the complex mosaic of media-foreign policy relationship. Thus, it will be based on three case studies related to the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and will examine the direct relationship between government and media, while disregarding intermediary factors such as public opinion or outside sources. In this research, the concept of *manufacturing consent* or passive/reflective media constituted the departure point from which the research hypotheses were formulated to discover the nature of relationship between the government and the media in a specific international context.

CHAPTER IV

Methodology

Chapter I reviewed the U.S.-Middle East policy over more than 50 years, focusing on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Chapter II showed how this conflict has been depicted in the U.S. media over the years, addressing various aspects related to the relationship between the media and U.S.-Middle East foreign policy as they rose from the historical context. Chapter III presented various aspects regarding the relationship between the U.S. mass media and the foreign policy apparatus. Based on the results from previous studies of media-foreign policy relationship, the previous chapter provided the theoretical background for further research, revealing three approaches for viewing the relationship between foreign policy making and media coverage of foreign news.

This chapter will review the procedures taken in order to test the theoretical assertions against the case of U.S. policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the press coverage of this issue. This is achieved through the analysis of three case studies that are linked over time and quantitative content analysis of these cases. Although it might be difficult to conclude about the general field of foreign policy-press relations from a distinct foreign-related case, this research will contribute to the field of study in three major ways. First, it will add insights to the pool of existing studies to create a better understanding of the complex relationship between the media and foreign policy. Second, it will enable comparisons to be made between different cases. Third, it will add new aspects related to foreign policy formulation and the media portrayal of international conflicts.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical context related to the media-foreign policy relationship and media handling of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict over the years, the researcher formulated various research hypotheses. These are intended to address three questions: The interaction between the news and government's foreign policy, the development in

portrayal of both the conflict and the involved parties, and the role of the U.S. press in the foreign policy making process. The first aspect refers to whether or not the press lines up with the government in their coverage of foreign policy as appeared in both newspapers and Presidential papers. The second aspect is an extension of the first as it is widely believed that media portrayal can lead to a policy change. The third aspect deals with the more general question of whether the press plays a central or marginal role in the foreign policy process.

In order to carry out this research and address its central questions, the researcher developed six hypotheses. As previous research provides more evidence that supports the passive/reflective media approach for media-government relationship, these hypotheses were designed and formulated according to this model.

- H1: The more favourable the President's attitude toward the Palestinian cause the more favourable the press' attitude toward the Palestinians and their cause.
- H2: The more favourable the President's attitude toward the Israeli cause the more favourable the press' attitude toward Israel's Interests.
- H3: In the coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the press follows the line of the President with respect to the portrayal of the Israelis and Palestinians.
- H4: In editorial coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the image of the Palestinians is more negative than the image of the Israelis.
- H5: The direction of the press' portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians has no effect on U.S. policy toward either group.
- H6: In the U.S. foreign policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the tone of the President affects the coverage of the press more than vice versa.

Research Framework: Content Analysis

This study was designed as a quantitative content analysis based on case studies that are linked to each other and developed over time. Thus, it looked at three case studies related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and U.S. policy in three distinct time periods:

1. November 1977–March 1979 The Egyptian-Israeli peace talks
2. August 1993–July 1994: The Oslo Agreement
3. September 2000–August 2001: The *al-Aqsa Intifada*

Based on a case-study analysis, the researcher was able to find out whether or not the images of Israelis and Palestinians have changed over time in both newspapers and Presidential documents. It also provided a basis for tracking the direction of U.S. policy flow towards the Israelis and the Palestinians within the historical context.

This study used a content analysis to explore the relationship between selected U.S. press and foreign policy with respect to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As George V. Zito defined:

Content analysis may be defined as a methodology by which the researcher seeks to determine the manifest content of written, spoken, or published communications by systematic, objective, and quantitative analysis... Since any communication... is produced by a communicator, the intention of the communicator may be the object of our research. Or we may be interested in the audience, or receiver of the communication, and may attempt to determine something about it (1975, p. 27).

Similarly, Berelson has defined content analysis as “a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (1952, p. 18). As both definitions show, in a content analysis the emphasis is on a stated message rather than the motives driven the message or the receivers’ responses to this message. As such, one reason for employing content analysis technique in this research was to analyze the published messages generated by both the foreign policy apparatus and the press as

they appear in newspapers and Presidential documents.

The second reason is related to the fact that in foreign policy studies, researchers are unable to use observational methods to assess the perceptions and attitudes of foreign policy makers at the actual time when decisions are made. Therefore, the best is to analyze a document from the historical perspective (Holsti, 1969, p. 77).

Content analysis definitions often mention three characteristics essential for this research technique: Objectivity, systematic and quantitative (Hsia, 1988, p. 319). An objective content analysis requires that each research process will be carried out according to clear-cut, pre-defined procedures. A systematic content analysis requires a consistent selection of content or categories for analysis. A quantitative content analysis suggests that the frequency or any numerical presentation of the units that appear in each category is an important element in the communication process. The following sections will provide a comprehensive description of the procedures taken to analyze the content of the U.S. press and Presidential documents, while meeting the above mentioned requirements.

Time Frame

The roots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are set way back in the years preceding the establishment of the State of Israel and the following 1948 Arab-Israeli War. However, the conflict has been reinforced with the Israeli occupation of territories referred to as the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem during the 1967 war. The researcher chose to explore the press-foreign policy relationship towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through three case studies that are considered as turning points in the history of the conflict.

The first period includes the years between November 1977 to March 1979. It encompasses the Egyptian President's historical visit to Jerusalem, the beginning of the peace talks between Egypt and Israel and the signing of a peace agreement between both countries. This period was a turning point in terms of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

because President Sadat was the first to raise the Palestinian problem, demanding a meaningful solution to it as part of the Egyptian-Israeli peace agreements. It was also the first time that the American administration had to define an actual policy towards this issue and to take the necessary diplomatic steps to implement it. Thus, by early 1978, the administration's concept was to work toward a comprehensive peace settlement that included solution for the Palestinian problem. In terms of the media, the Egyptian-Israeli talks received enormous media coverage that leveraged the Palestinian problem from its marginal position to a more central one in the American agenda.

The second period includes the year between August 1993 to July 1994. With the Oslo Declaration of Principles, signed by Israel and the PLO on September 1993, the Palestinians became more acceptable and legitimate in the U.S. The PLO leader, Yasir Arafat, gained legitimacy by being invited to Washington and in some extent was treated by Washington's officials as a leader of a sovereign nation. As a result, the Palestinians received prominence in the U.S. media that covered the issue from different angles in news programmes, talk shows and other presentations. The change in U.S. policy towards the Palestinians paved the way for a more critical approach towards the Israeli policies from both U.S. media and Washington's officials. Thus, it will be important to explore the developments in both media portrayal of the Israelis and Palestinians and U.S. foreign policy during that time.

The third period includes the year between September 2000 to August 2001. This year marked a nearly total collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. In July 2000, President Clinton had tried to bring this process to a conclusion by conferring the Camp David Summit that ended up with no results due to the unbridgeable gaps between the sides. Frustrated by a deadlock in the peace process, encouraged by radical Palestinian groups (such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad), and triggered by an Israeli politician visit to the holy site of Temple Mount, the Palestinians launched a violent uprising referred to as The

al-Aqsa Intifada. By the end of Clinton's term on January 2001, the U.S. has been deeply involved in the Israeli-Palestinian crisis; however, President George W. Bush, who replaced him, preferred the alternative policy, by choosing not to intervene during the first year. The new *Intifada* characterized by Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israelis and Israeli aggressive retaliation assaults against Palestinians has been covered extensively in the world's media. The Israeli and Palestinian image that has gradually improved as a result of the peace process was changed again.

The timeframes selected reflect turning points in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, representing both crisis and non-crisis (relatively peaceful) periods in the history of this conflict. In addition, because these cases represent important periods, the researcher expected that they would generate both extensive media coverage, and U.S. policy to address the changing political reality. By looking into these three time periods, the researcher attempted to uncover the essence of triangular relationship between the media, U.S. policy and the conflict.

Source of Data and Sampling

The study covered three different periods related to the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and included four U.S. administrations: 1977-1979 (the Carter administration); 1993-1994 (the Clinton administration); 2000-2001 (the end of Clinton's term and the beginning of George W. Bush administration). Two sets of data sources have been analyzed in this study: Newspapers as a source of news and Presidential documents as a source of government's policy.

The researcher used *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* to analyze media content as the first step to determine the messages and images presented to the audience (in this case the U.S. administration) and therefore, what messages, if any, have had an effect on its policy. In order to analyze the government's messages (foreign policy positions), the researcher looked into the Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States.

The newspapers

The elite newspapers are often chosen for studies of media-government relationship because of their status and effect on national and international politics. Because government and public officials, journalists, scholars and business leaders are among the readers of the prestige press, the opinions presented in these papers have an enormous influence on decision makers (De-Sola Pool, 1970, p. 62). It has been widely known that the American foreign policy elites including government officials and members of Congress read the editorial pages of the prestigious papers first in the morning to learn about the issues on the agenda and to be able to address them effectively in their policy-making endeavours (Graber, 1997, p. 341). Furthermore, researchers argued that *The New York Times* is so influential that it managed to influence the content of other media such as TV, radio news and newsmagazines, setting the norms for presentation and interpretation that editors and reporters adapt for their media (Gitlin, 1980; Graber, 1984).

In addition, both *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* devote considerable space to international-related news coverage, rather than focusing mainly on domestic affairs. Therefore, these papers can not only influence the U.S. decision makers, but also have some effect on the diplomatic community and decision-makers abroad in practices referred to as media diplomacy (Graber, 1997, p. 349).

News articles and editorials from *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* were selected for analysis in this study. Articles for case studies I and II were obtained from the microfilm copies at the Fort Lauderdale Public Library, Florida. Articles for the third case study were obtained from *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*'s on-line archives.

U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian foreign news.

The sample included news articles that appeared on section A in both newspapers, as well as editorials focused on Israeli-Palestinian foreign policy coverage. Other feature stories, columns or letters to the editor were excluded from this study. It is important first to clearly define foreign-policy news items and to distinguish them from foreign or international news coverage. Foreign news coverage is therefore related to what government has done, is doing or will do regarding its foreign relations. In comparison, study of foreign policy news examines how a government's reaction to and interaction with other countries are reported in the news media, while that of foreign news looked at how foreign countries are portrayed in the news media (Chang, 1993, p. 88). For example, media coverage of natural disasters abroad is not considered foreign policy news, but foreign or international news. Therefore, this study included news articles and editorials focused on the U.S. government activities, stated intentions opinions and strategies regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It is also widely acceptable to distinguish foreign policy coverage from foreign news coverage by looking at the origin of the news. While foreign news generally has a foreign dateline, foreign policy news is usually originated domestically. Thus, in the United States, a majority of foreign policy news clearly comes from the White House, State Department, Department of Defence or Congress, rather than from outside the country (Chittick, 1970; Cohen, 1967; Graber, 1984). Nevertheless, this study included news articles with foreign dateline as long as they referred to U.S. policy vis-à-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within their content. The reason was that much U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian foreign news were generated and originated in the Middle East during the administration's diplomatic journeys.

The units of analysis in this study included news articles and editorials that dealt with U.S. foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As such, the researcher

sampled only articles that referred to the Israelis, Palestinians and U.S. policy in their coverage. As such, news stories or editorial pages had to discuss U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian relations, or to include comments or assertions from U.S. government on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Articles that did not include these three prerequisites were excluded from the sample.

For case studies I and II, the researcher used the hard copy indexes of the two newspapers to search for relevant news stories and editorials, conducting a primary selection according to the following major key words: *Middle East Conflict, PLO, Palestinians, Israel, Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza Strip, Arafat (Yasir Arafat)*. To ensure that relevant items were included for analysis, a secondary selection was performed after locating the articles by going through the microfilm pages. The researcher scanned each item to include only the ones that met the standards set. As for case study III, the researcher used an internal advanced search engine within the Web Sites of both newspapers to conduct a primary key-word selection. After identifying the relevant news items, the researcher reviewed each article to ensure a selection according to the standards set.

A total of 122 articles out of 108 issues of *The New York Times*, and a total of 127 articles out of 92 issues of *The Washington Post* constituted the sample of case study I (1977–1979). A total of 45 articles out of 39 issues of *The New York Times*, and a total of 49 articles out of 47 issues of *The Washington Post* constituted the sample of case study II (1993–1994). A total of 115 articles out of 109 issues of *The New York Times*, and a total of 105 articles out of 89 issues of *The Washington Post* constituted the sample of case study III (2000–2001). These samples were subjected to content analysis.

Government Policy

The previous chapter discussed the prominent role of the President and its administration in foreign policy formulation. The President actually sets the guidelines according to which his apparatus works in the foreign policy formation. A recent example refers to the substantial differences between President Bush and his predecessor, President Clinton in their treatment of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. President Clinton's policy throughout most of its years in office was to put a heavy emphasis on solving the Arab-Israeli conflict in general and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. In contrast, President George W. Bush led a hands-off strategy, intervening each time a crisis threatened to explode the whole region. This example shows the central role of the President in determining the framework in which its foreign policy officials' work.

As a primary player in the foreign policy decision-making process, the President's comments, thoughts and ideas with respect to U.S. relations with other countries set up the American foreign policy. In political communication, public speeches, announcements and exchange with reporters are important means frequently used by policy officials to send messages or signals to both domestic and international audiences. Moreover, policy officials often use speeches and public statements to attract or influence the attention of the news media to prepare the stage for upcoming governmental activities. As De Sola Pool noted, the communication process is an aspect of the historical process. "What is said in the communication channels of any country at any time, is therefore, part of what is done in that country" (1970, p. 26). Based on the importance of Presidential communications, this study focused on Presidential documents as a source of foreign policy content. A comparison between Presidential communication on U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian relations and their coverage in the news media might provide substantial understanding of the relationship between the press and government in policymaking process regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Government policy in this study was defined as official announcements, public speeches, comments and other materials generated by the U.S. President and dealing with U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian relations. The units of analysis in this study included documents originated by the White House and listed in the Public Papers of the President of the United States, or in the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, obtained from Florida International University's library. As official records of presidential activities, these two sources could be expected to cover all presidential public communications on U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian relations during the study period. Indexes of the two sources were used to locate all relevant items for the sample.

For case studies I and II, the researcher used the hard copy indexes, conducting a primary selection according to the following major key words: *Middle East Conflict, PLO, Palestinians, Israel, Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza Strip, Arafat (Yasir Arafat)*. To ensure that the relevant items were included for analysis, a secondary selection was performed after locating the documents. Thus, the researcher scanned each document to include only the ones that met the standards set. As for case study III, the researcher used an advanced internal search engine within the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents to conduct a primary key-word search. After identifying the relevant items, the researcher reviewed each document to ensure a selection according to the standards set.

A total of 47 items from the Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States from November 1977 to March 1979 constituted the sample for government policy for the first case study. A total of 28 items from the Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States from July 1993 to August 1994 constituted the sample for government policy for the second case study. The third case study included a total of 31 items from the on-line version of the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents from September 2000 to August 2001.

Variables and Categories: Definitions and Coding

In order to measure the results for each unit of analysis, the researcher coded each communication piece. The process of coding observations is considered a central part of the research design. Coding is defined as the process whereby raw data are systematically transformed and aggregated into units that provide accurate description of relevant content characteristics (Holsti, 1969, p. 94). The researchers' theory, hypotheses and prior understanding of what is observed direct the rules by which this transformation is accomplished (Anderson, 1987; Holsti, 1969). In this study, a single news article, editorial or presidential document was considered the coding unit (Holsti, 1969, p. 117). By analyzing the content of each item, the researcher expected to conclude about the sources' attitude regarding various issues through the messages they conveyed. In this study, the whole article has been selected for coding because performing coding procedures to small units such as paragraphs or sentences appeared to be more cumbersome and complex. Thus, each item was subjected to content analysis according to a predefined set of standards specified in the codebooks provided in Appendix A.

Each item in the study was analyzed by classifying the direction of attitudes regarding a specific foreign policy category, judging whether an attitude is favourable, unfavourable or neutral. As for the study of images, each category included specific nominal attributes, rather than directions.

In addition, because each case study referred to a different time period, the codebook has been slightly adjusted to reflect the changes in foreign policy issues and in the range of images that described the involved parties. For example, while during 1977-1979 the issue of a confederation with Jordan was considered an alternative solution for the Palestinians, in cases II and III this solution was irrelevant. Similarly, in case I, the PLO was considered an illegitimate organization with whom the U.S. should not establish any diplomatic relations. Following the Oslo Agreement both Yasir Arafat and the PLO

became legitimate in the eyes of Washington's officials and formal diplomatic relationship has been established between both entities. As for the change in images, while in the first case study the image of Anti-Western/Communist was relevant for analysis, it became inapplicable for the other case studies because of the collapse of the former Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. Thus, this image was adjusted to include only the term Anti-Western.

The following section includes the types of variables, descriptions, definitions and examples reflected by all three case studies. As previously mentioned, Appendix A provides a detailed codebook of each case study for both government documents and newspapers. The variables in the each codebook were divided into three sections. The first section included variables providing general information related to the item under analysis, the second section included variables related to the Israelis and Palestinians portrayal, and the third section included specific reference to foreign policy issues and finally press' attitude toward the government's position. The following summary will encompass all variables that were included in all three case studies, even though variables were adjusted in each particular case study to meet relevancy requirements. This is true especially in variables related to foreign policy issues where old principles have been modified or eliminated over time, while new standards have emerged.

Newspapers

General:

1. Date: day, Month, and Year.

2. Newspaper: This variable referred to the name of the newspaper under analysis.

Categories under this variable included *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*.

3. Type of Coverage: This variable referred to whether the item under analysis was a news article from section A of the newspaper or an editorial piece.

4. Source of Israeli Palestinian Policy: This variable referred to the origin of Israeli-Palestinian related U.S. policy, thoughts, comments or ideas that were conveyed in news articles editorial pages. This variable included 10 categories (see Figure 4.1): White House/Administration, State Department, Defence Department/Military, Congress/Congressmen, Palestinian Officials, Israeli Officials, U.S. Press, Former Presidents/Officials, Unnamed/Unattributed, Other.

Israelis and Palestinians Portrayal

5. General Frame: Neuman et al. found five frames that have been widely used by the media. These included economic, conflict, powerlessness, human impact, and morality (1992, pp. 64–74). The researcher used these frames, though slightly adapting some of them to fit the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The variable General Frame referred to the dominant frame or the social, political or economic larger context in which a particular U.S. Israeli-Palestinian policy took place. This variable included six categories (see Figure 4.2): Conflict, Conflict Resolution/Reconciliation, Economic, Human Impact, Morality, Other.

6. Images of Israelis/Israeli Groups: This variable referred to the dominant images or attributions that were used to portray, describe, depict and characterize the Israeli people, Israeli political/social/business groups or individuals. The type of dominant image was determined by looking at both **attributional images** and **descriptive images**.

Attributional image refers to the method used to attribute a style or image to a speaker's manner of address, while descriptive image includes judgmental adjectives or descriptive phrases to portray a certain group (Belkaoui, 1978).

Source of Policy	Description	Example
White House/Administration	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is the President, his advisors, spokespersons and/or staff members	"Carter Administration has suggested some subtle but potentially significant modifications in its...formula...for Middle East peace conference."
State Department	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is the Secretary of State, his/her advisors, spokespersons and staff members	"A U.S. official travelling with Albright (Secretary of State)...cautioned...we are not laying claim to any agreement."
Defence Department/Military	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is the Secretary of Defence, its spokespersons, or advisors.	No military sources have been recorded
Congress/Congressmen	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is the Congress or a specific Congressman	"The House yesterday passed a resolution expressing support for Israel and condemning Palestinian leaders..."
Civilians/Interest Groups	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is an organization such as political/social/human right lobbies.	No civilians/interest groups sources have been recorded
Palestinian Officials	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is the Palestinian leadership, PLO members, Palestinian authority officials, spokespersons, and advisors.	"President Carter's condemnation of the PLO has strengthened its feeling of being 'locked out' of Middle East peace negotiations by the U.S. and Egypt, PLO officials said today."
Israeli Officials	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is an Israeli government official, member of the Knesset, Minister, Military official, spokespersons, or advisors.	"The only specific disagreement...she (Golda Meir, Israel's former Prime Minister) mentioned was over Mr. Carter's declaration...that there has to be homeland...for the Palestinian refugees..."
U.S. Press	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is a journalist, columnist, or media practitioner/analyst.	Articles appear in the editorial pages, except of letters to the editor. Related columns, commentaries and News Analysis.
Former Presidents/Officials	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is former U.S. President, Congressmen, staff members, Administration's officials, or advisors.	"Former Senator George J. Mitchell (D-Maine) remains philosophical about the prospect..."
Unnamed/Unattributed	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is not mentioned.	"...Senior officials say they remain intent on continuing their current approach...persuading the two sides to accept a U.S.-brokered cease fire..."
Other	Items in which the dominant source of Israeli-Palestinian U.S. policy is none-of the above.	"Texas Gov. George W. Bush declared today that the Middle East Crisis has bolstered his fear..."

Figure 4.1. Content analysis scheme for the source of Israeli-Palestinian policy in newspapers and Presidential documents.

This variable included 19 categories (see Figure 4.3): Heroes, Villains, Victims, Flexible/Conciliatory, Inflexible Decision Makers, Determined Decision Makers, Western-Like, Anti-Western/Communist, Democratic/Liberal, Antidemocratic/Fundamentalist, American Allies, Obstacle to American Interests, Moral, Immoral, Peace Lovers, Warriors/Militants/Aggressor, Irrational, Two Conflicting Images, None-Applicable (N/A).

7. Images of Palestinians/Palestinian Groups: This variable referred to the dominant images or attributions that were used to portray, describe, depict and characterize the Palestinian people, Palestinian political/social/business groups or individuals. The type of dominant image was determined by looking at both **attributional images** and **descriptive images**. This variable included 19 categories (see Figure 4.4): Heroes, Villains, Victims, Flexible/Conciliatory, Inflexible Decision Makers, Determined Decision Makers, Western-Like, Anti-Western/Communist, Democratic/Liberal, Antidemocratic/Fundamentalist, American Allies, Obstacle to American Interests, Moral, Immoral, Peace Lovers, Warriors/Militants/Aggressor, Irrational, Two Conflicting Images, None-Applicable (N/A).

Israeli-Palestinian Policy related Issues

This section included referrals to specific Israeli-Palestinian related policies as appeared in both newspapers and Presidential documents (see Figure 4.5).

8. Palestinian Self-Rule: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards the fulfilment of Palestinian's right for self-rule, autonomy or homeland where they organize by themselves their civil life socially, culturally, economically and educationally. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this policy issue were

considered favourable. Items that did not present this issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

9. Palestinian Independent State: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards the establishment of a Palestinian independent state or the fulfilment of Palestinian's right for self-determination within the occupied territories. This means, determined and definite borders, the establishment of political apparatus, an army and security forces as well as diplomatic relations with other nations. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

10. An Alternative Solution for the Palestinians: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards providing the Palestinians with alternative solutions other than the self-rule or an independent state, for example, the creation of a confederation with Jordan or with other Arab country. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

Frame	Description	Example
Conflict	Items in which the dominant frame presents a discord, war, violence, hostility or controversy	"Secretary of State...huddled in marathon talks with the Palestinian and Israeli leaders...to calm six days of bloodletting in Gaza and West Bank...and transformed faltering peace negotiations into mutual recrimination."
Conflict resolution/ Reconciliation	Items in which the dominant frame presents attempts to reach agreements, common ground, peace settlements or when ideas are debated rather than forced.	"President Carter...told...that the United States regarded his (Prime Minister Begin) latest peace proposals as 'a constructive approach' toward an overall Middle East settlement."
Powerlessness	Items in which the dominant frame presents weakness of groups or individuals and inability to change a given reality or a situation	The letter [from Arafat] called...to stop the killing, the assassinations of community leaders...demolition of houses and the economic state of siege..."
Economic	Items in which the dominant frame is commercial, financial, business-development or industrial-related.	"The success of any peace plan could depend in large measures on whether the Palestinians get billion of dollars of aid from the United States, Europe, Japan and wealthy Arab nations."
Human Impact	Items in which the dominant frame is of the ordinary people's perspective including human interests, human suffering, prosperity and success as well as descriptions of people's everyday's life.	"Israel had agreed to improve political conditions for the Palestinians...Mr. Begin told the Senate that no one should doubt his country's desire to find a humane solution to the Palestinian problem."
Morality	Items in which the dominant frame is of benevolent, compassionate, moral conduct of groups or individuals. Or Items in which the dominant frame is of cruel, immoral, brutal conduct of groups or individuals.	"U.S. finds [human] rights abuses in China, Columbia and Israel..."
Other	Items in which the dominant frame is other than the above mentioned.	"A debate over the legality of Israel's civilian settlements in occupied Arab territories revolves around complex issues of international law."

Figure 4.2. Content analysis scheme for the general frame in newspapers and Presidential documents.

Image	Description	Example
Heroes	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of young, powerful, energetic, enthusiastic, brave/courageous and liberators.	"In a triumph of hope over history, Yitzhak Rabin. The Prime Minister of Israel and Yasir Arafat, the Chairman of the PLO shook hands..."
Villains	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of suppressors, occupiers, brutal, victimizers engaging with Palestinians' humiliation, property damage, injury and/or death.	"...(Sec. of State) Powell repeated his call for Israel to ease economic pressure on the Palestinian territories. In particular...to 'lift the siege' on the West Bank and Gaza Strip..."
Victims	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of civilians suffering from Palestinian violence, terrorist assaults and/or who died as a result of Palestinian violent activities.	"As if to underline, the stakes involved 13 Israelis were injured...when two bombs exploded on a bus in Tel-Aviv..."
Flexible / Conciliatory	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of adaptable, yielding, agreeable, responsive and cooperative negotiators who strive to reach a common ground.	"...Barak has sweetened the offer he made at Camp David, staking close to suggesting that he would yield Israeli sovereignty over the disputed Temple Mount in exchange for Palestinian renunciation of the 'right of return' for refugees..."
Inflexible Decision Makers	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of resistant, unyielding, obstinate and rigid negotiators, reluctant to yield in order to reach a common ground.	"Israeli officials...were dead set against the idea, insisting that only the U.S. could conduct an impartial inquiry..."
Determined Decision Makers	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of definite, firm and rigorous negotiators whose opinion and behaviour is reasonable and justified.	"Some of the changes...are great of significance to the Israelis who see them as affecting their nation's security and perhaps even its survival..."
Western-Like	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of people who share "Western", liberal social and economic values.	"We should realize that the peace process will not change the anti-Western fundamentals...both, Washington and Jerusalem will have to live in an imperfect...violent world..."
Anti-Western/ Communist	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of a threat to liberal, European/American culture and values and/or of a society that is engaged with the Soviet Union.	
Democratic	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of people who share liberal political values and principles with a stable democratic regime.	"Israel is a democracy, and historically democracies have honoured the commitments their governments have made..."

Figure 4.3. Content analysis scheme for images of Israelis/Israeli groups in newspapers and Presidential documents.

Figure 4.3 Cont.: Content analysis scheme for images of Israelis/Israeli groups in newspapers and Presidential documents.

Image	Description	Example
American Allies	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of close friends of the U.S., supported by the U.S. financially and/or militarily or related to the U.S. with special ties.	..."The House approved a nonbinding resolution...taking the side of Israel in its latest round of clashes...expresses U.S. solidarity with Israel and urges a U.S. veto of any more 'unbalanced' U.N. ...Resolutions on the conflict..."
Obstacle to American Interests	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of an impediment, or a barrier imposing difficulties on the U.S. government to achieve its economic, political and/or cultural objectives in the Middle East.	"The U.S. has been opposed to Israeli settlements...in the American interpretation such settlements violate international law barring an occupation power for establishing colonies...make it harder to obtain Israel's agreement to withdrawal from occupied land..."
Moral	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of compassionate, humane and benevolent.	
Immoral	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of inhumane, brutal, unethical and/or ungracious.	"U.S. finds [human] rights abuses in China, Columbia and Israel..."
Peace Lovers	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of people who strive to reach peace agreement with its foes and to end the state of war and conflict.	"Israel...will come to the White House to sign a courageous and historic peace accord, the first step in replacing war with peace and giving the children of the Middle East a chance to grow up to a normal life."
Warriors/Militants / Aggressor	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of settlers or soldiers engaging with aggressive activity that may/does result in property damage, injury and/or death of Palestinians.	"But governments...matter little to the Palestinian youth throwing stones at well-armed Israeli troops ready to shoot them down for that act."
Irrational	Items in which the dominant image of Israelis is of illogical, senseless decision makers, or whose behaviour is considered unreasonable.	"But the Israeli strategy is also wacky...Israel continues to hold on to far-flung settlements...plunked in the middle of Gaza..."
Two Conflicting Images	Items in which there are two contradictory, dominant images of Israeli groups or individuals.	"...After an Israeli helicopter rocketed a pick up truck near Bethlehem..." (Warriors/militant) "(Prime Minister) Barak has signalled that he is interested in resuming the peace process in spite of the violence..." (Peace lovers)
None-Applicable (N/A).	Items that neither present a clear image for Israelis nor refer to Israeli images at all.	

Image	Description	Example
Heroes	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of freedom fighters, brave/courageous and liberators.	"In a triumph of hope over history, Yitzhak Rabin. The Prime Minister of Israel and Yasir Arafat, the Chairman of the PLO shook hands..."
Villains	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of terrorists, guerrillas, hijackers, brutal, victimizers engaging with Israelis' property damage, injury and/or death.	"...Two of its (Israel's) soldiers were murdered by a Palestinian mob in the West Bank..."
Victims	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of refugees, and/or civilians suffering from Israeli occupation, violence, retaliation assaults and/or who died as a result of Israeli violent activities.	"A Palestinian farmer...was killed...by a burst of gunfire...and three other Palestinians were wounded. Palestinians said Jewish settlers...were responsible..."
Flexible / Conciliatory	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of adaptable, yielding, agreeable, responsive and cooperative negotiators who strive to reach a common ground.	
Inflexible Decision-Makers	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of resistant, unyielding, obstinate and rigid negotiators, reluctant to yield in order to reach a common ground.	"Emerging from his talks with Clinton, Arafat sounded anything but conciliatory..."
Determined Decision Makers	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of definite, firm and rigorous negotiators whose opinion and behaviour is reasonable and justified.	"The Israeli-Palestinian negotiating track has been hamstrung over Palestinian insistence that talks about limited self-government...be broadened..."
Western-Like	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of people who share "Western", liberal social and economic values.	"There are two professors now living in the U.S. who are members of the Palestine National Council...dominated by the PLO..."
Anti-Western / Communist	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of a threat to liberal, European/American culture and values and/or of a society that is engaged with the Soviet Union.	"He (Sadat) is there...against the wishes of the bloc of Syrian-PLO Soviet radicals..."
Democratic / Moderate	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of people who share liberal political values and principles striving to achieve a democratic political order.	"...The administration of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel, Jordan and moderate Palestinians...and the U.N..."

Figure 4.4. Content analysis scheme for images of Palestinians/Palestinian groups in newspapers and Presidential documents.

Figure 4.4 Cont.: Content analysis scheme for images of Palestinians/Palestinian groups in newspapers and Presidential documents

Image	Description	Example
American Allies	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of close friends of the U.S., supported by the U.S. financially and/or militarily or related to the U.S. with unique bounds.	"Christopher drove down from Jerusalem to this...oasis (Jericho) to salute the people he called 'our Palestinian friends...'"
Obstacle to American Interests	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of an impediment, or a barrier imposing difficulties on the U.S. government to achieve its economic, political and/or cultural objectives in the Middle East.	"Clinton has signalled that he is loosing patience with Arafat...blamed the Palestinian leader for the failure of the negotiations...threatened to revisit the entire U.S.-Palestinian relationship if Arafat...declare a Palestinian state in the absence of a peace deal..."
Moral	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of compassionate, humane and benevolent.	
Immoral	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of inhumane, unethical and/or ungracious or of a corrupted society.	
Peace Lovers	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of people who strive to reach peace agreement with its foes and to end the state of war and conflict.	"Israel and the PLO will come to the White House to sign a courageous and historic peace accord, the first step in replacing war with peace and giving the children of the Middle East a chance to grow up to a normal life."
Warriors / Militants / Aggressors	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of organized groups and/or street gangs engaging with aggressive activity that may/does result in property damage, injury and/or death.	"In another West Bank incident, an Israeli was reported hurt in a drive-by shooting near the city of Jenin..."
Irrational	Items in which the dominant image of Palestinians is of illogical, senseless decision makers, or whose behaviour is considered unreasonable.	"The Palestinian strategy is frankly, insane..." "Mr. Arafat...has always promised his people, unrealistically, that they would be able to return..."
Two Conflicting Images	Items in which there are two contradictory, dominant images of Palestinian groups or individuals.	"Israel launched the attack after at least two of its soldiers were murdered by a Palestinian mob in the West Bank" (villains) "...After 14 days of violence that has claimed nearly 100 lives, most of them Palestinians..." (Victims)
None-Applicable (N/A).	Items that neither present a clear image for Palestinians nor refer to Palestinian images at all.	

11. U.N. Resolution 242: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards the fulfilment and implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242. This resolution called upon Israel's withdrawal from the territories occupied in the 1967 war and the acknowledgment of the right of all states to live in peace within secured and recognized borders. With respect to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, items coded for this category included those that specifically dealt with the Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip or those that generally referred to U.N. Resolution 242. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

12. Refugees Right of Return to Israel: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards the right of the Palestinians who have been exiled as a result of the Israeli Arab wars since 1948 to return to the areas they have originally come from, including areas within the State of Israel. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

13. Refugees Right of Return to Palestine: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards the right of the Palestinians who have been exiled as a result of the Israeli Arab wars since 1948 to return to the areas that would be considered as the

Palestinian State. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

14. Palestinian Sovereignty over East Jerusalem: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards Israel's ceding sovereignty to the Palestinians over parts of East Jerusalem as a part of an Israeli-Palestinian final peace agreement. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

15. Unilateral Separation: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards Israel's executing unilateral separation from Palestinian areas not as part of a mutual agreement with the Palestinians. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

16. International Forces: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards the deployment of international military forces and/or observers that would separate between Palestinian and Israeli populated areas in the West bank and Gaza Strip. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

17. Legitimization of the PLO: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards recognizing the PLO as the Palestinians' sole legitimate representative empowered to negotiate political issues and to make decisions on their behalf. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

18. Dialog with the PLO: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards U.S. conducting direct contacts/dialog or establishing diplomatic relations with the PLO. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered

favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

19. Greater Israel: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards Israel's right over the historical, biblical land of Israel including the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as the Jordan Valley. The operational definition of this variable was through the attitudes presented towards the Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and settlements building and expansion. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

20. Maintaining Settlement Blocs: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards Israel's right to retain blocs of populated Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as part of a final peace agreement with the Palestinian. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

21. U.S. Military and Economic Aid to Israel: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards U.S. assisting Israel financially and militarily. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered

unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

22. U.S. Economic Aid to the Palestinians: This variable referred to the position presented in an item towards U.S. assisting the Palestinians and/or the Palestinian authorities financially. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented a U.S. government's opposition to this idea were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions regarding this issue were considered neutral. Items in which the U.S. government position was supportive toward this issue were considered favourable. Items that did not present this policy issue were considered as none-applicable (N/A).

23. The Position of the Press toward U.S. Stand on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: This variable referred to the opinion of the press as was conveyed by journalists, reporters, columnists in an item regarding the government's position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (see Figure 7). The researcher looked at both explicit and/or implicit references indicating the press' reaction to the American official stand on various policy issues. This variable included four categories: Unfavourable, Neutral, Favourable, and None-Applicable (N/A). Thus, items that presented an opposition to the government's policy and/or actions, criticizing it as undesirable, illogical and contradicting American interests were considered unfavourable. Items that presented no clear opinion/position or presented two contradicting opinions with respect to the U.S. government Israeli-Palestinian stand were considered neutral. Items that presented a supportive position, praising the government's stand and/or actions as logical, reasonable and desirable were considered favourable. Items that did not include any evaluation or assessment of the U.S. government's policy were considered as None-Applicable (N/A).

Policy Issue	Direction	Example
Palestinian Self-Rule	Favourable	"Mr. Clinton suggested...to see the Palestinian-Israeli self-rule agreement carried out smoothly..."
	Unfavourable	
Palestinian Independent State	Favourable	"Under the proposal...outlined by Clinton, the Palestinians would gain sovereignty over 95 percent of Gaza and West Bank..."
	Unfavourable	"The Administration still opposes the creation of an independent Palestinian state...but Israelis and Palestinians should decide such issues..."
An Alternative solution for the Palestinians	Favourable	"We can go...with an international conference with a prior understanding of a Palestinian settlement with Jordan..."
	Unfavourable	
U.N. Resolution 242	Favourable	"...The two other principles were Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories occupied in 1967 and an agreement for peace between the Arabs and Israel..."
	Unfavourable	"Israel is the only nation in the world called upon by the U.N. to return captured territories...why?"
Refugees Right of Return to Israel	Favourable	
	Unfavourable	"The Israeli side could not accept...a right of return that would imply a right to immigrate to Israel..."
Refugees Right of Return to Palestine	Favourable	"Palestinians would...have a right of return...is the sense that they could move to the new Palestinian homeland..."
	Unfavourable	
Palestinian Sovereignty over East Jerusalem	Favourable	"...The Palestinians would gain sovereignty over...most of Arab East Jerusalem with its all-important holy sites..."
	Unfavourable	
Unilateral Separation	Favourable	
	Unfavourable	
International forces	Favourable	"...Christopher...said that Washington largely agreed with the PLO demand for an 'international presence' to guarantee the safety of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza..."
	Unfavourable	"The Bush Administration cast its first veto in the Security Council...for a U.N. observer force in Israeli-occupied territories..."
Legitimization of the PLO	Favourable	"...The team is trying to resolve differences over a draft drawn by Washington...the draft has been...rejected by the Palestinian Liberation Organization which guides the Palestinian negotiators..."
	Unfavourable	
Dialog with the PLO	Favourable	"Warren Christopher strongly hinted...that the U.S. might soon end its ban on a dialogue with the PLO which Washington established after a PLO raid..."
	Unfavourable	"...The U.S. government...suspended its own low-level dialogue with the PLO following an abortive attempt by Palestinian commandos..."
Greater Israel	Favourable	"The settlements are either in empty places, old Jordanian government facilities, or on land purchased legitimately and without pressure from the former Arab occupants"
	Unfavourable	"The Clinton Administration has slashed the loan guarantees that it will give Israel because of Israel's continued settlement in the occupied territories and its disputed constructions in East Jerusalem..."
Maintaining Settlement Blocs	Favourable	"On settlements...agreed to cluster them around Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv, and to incorporate 80 percent of the settlers into Israel..."
	Unfavourable	
U.S. Military and Economic Aid to Israel	Favourable	"Protecting the welfare of Israel has been a central American commitment since the Jewish state was founded..."
	Unfavourable	"Carter added that he preferred that U.S. involvement in post settlement security will be minimal..."
U.S. Economic Aid to the Palestinians	Favourable	"The U.S. has been investing more than \$100 million yearly in development projects in Palestinian areas..."
	Unfavourable	"Congress called...to consider closing the Washington office of the PLO...and cutting economic assistance to Palestinian institutions..."

Figure 4.5. Content analysis scheme for Israeli-Palestinian policy issues in newspapers and Presidential documents.

Direction	Example
Favourable	“For this summit...Mr. Clinton set limited though realistic goals...and on paper, he appeared to have achieved them...”
Neutral	“Two high-level attempts at truces, including one involving Mr. Clinton’s visit to Egypt...have failed to calm the violence on the ground...”
Unfavourable	<p>“...But no doubt, also that Bush has gone too far the other way...”</p> <p>“Why didn’t the U.S. link its half billion dollar pledge to an end to the boycott?...America helping make the PLO financially strong enough to encourage Arab dictators to wage economic war on Israel?”</p>

Figure 4.6. Content analysis scheme for the position of the press toward U.S. stand on Israeli-Palestinian policy issues in newspapers and Presidential documents.

Government Documents.

Similar to the newspapers' codebooks, government documents' codebooks contained three sections (see Appendix A). The first section included general information related to the item under analysis, the second section included variables related to the portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians, and the third section included specific reference to foreign policy issues and finally the attitude of the press toward the U.S. government's position.

The variables and categories included in the second and third sections were identical in both the government documents and the newspapers. However, the first section that contained general information about the item under analysis was different from the newspapers codebook by one category. This category included the type of document under analysis:

Government Communication Types: This variable referred to the type of channels through which the President conveyed his messages or communiqués. Categories included Press Release/Statement, News Conference, Speech/Address/ Remark, Message to Congress, an Interview or Other (other material made public by the President other than the above listed types).

Statistical Procedures

The data gathered for this analysis have been processed through the statistics software SPSS 7.5 for Windows to obtain variable frequencies and cross-tabulations. In order to address research questions related to press coverage of foreign policy issues, the researcher examined, compared and contrasted variable distributions, frequencies and percentages in both newspapers and government documents.

In order to address issues related to the role of the press in the foreign policy formation process, the relevant variables were cross-tabulated. Finally, in order to find out whether or not the press portrayal of each group affects government policy, foreign policy issues were examined against the preceding newspapers' coverage of the conflict. Thus,

the researcher tracked the dominant images of the Israelis and the Palestinians as appeared in news coverage during the three months period prior to the President's communication of a specific policy statement.

Intercoder Reliability

In content analysis, various measures of intercoder reliability are used to assure that everyone involved in the research understands the categories in the same way. Intercoder reliability is measured by having different researchers code the same body of data to achieve agreement on the appropriate classification or classifications to be used.

As Holsti emphasized, "if research is to satisfy the requirement of objectivity, measures and procedures must be reliable; i.e., repeated measures with the same instrument on a given sample of data should yield similar results" (1969, p. 135). For quantitative research to be meaningful, the requirement for reliability does not apply only to researchers involved in the study, but also to independent researchers who wish to reproduce the study. As such, independent researchers at different locations, and at different times, using the same instructions for coding the same set of data, should reach the same results (Krippendorff, 1980, p. 132). In order to achieve an intercoder agreement, a 10% sub-sample was randomly selected from each larger sample in all three case studies. The selected items were coded by an independent coder (Dr. Ralph Negrine) according to the parameters set in the codebooks.

CHAPTER V

Results

The previous chapter provided a detailed description of the procedures taken to explore U.S. foreign policy issues vis-à-vis media-government relationship and the portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the U.S. media. This chapter presents the research findings as they stem from processing the data and performing statistical procedures. Data have been analyzed against the historical, political context of each case study in attempts to complete the puzzle and create a more comprehensive picture of the media-government relationship.

This chapter presents the results gathered from three case studies related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It explores aspects related to press coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and press coverage of the U.S. foreign policy. Complete articles from section A of *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* constituted the coding units for the press, while complete items from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States* constituted the coding units for government foreign policy. Both items were subjected to content analysis and statistical procedures in attempts to address the research questions and hypotheses that this study has previously set.

Case Study I (1977-1979): The Egypt-Israel Peace Process

Historical-Political Background

The year of 1977 marked a turning point in both the Israeli politics and the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In this year, the right-wing Likud party won the elections in Israel and the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat visited Jerusalem. The visit opened a dialog that led to the peace process between Egypt and Israel followed by extensive involvement of the U.S. In his 1977 address to the Israeli Knesset, Sadat presented his formula for a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East that will include a “just solution for the Palestinian Problem.” (Laqueur & Rubin, 2001, p. 209). Furthermore,

Sadat specified the terms for achieving peace in the Middle East, demanding Israel's withdrawal from all the territories occupied in the 1967 War, including the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem that were populated by Palestinian inhabitants. As Sadat stated, "There are Arab territories which Israel occupied and still occupy by force. We insist on complete withdrawal from these territories, including Arab Jerusalem." (p. 213).

Sadat's visit marked a breakthrough in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by presenting it as the core of the entire Arab-Israeli conflict (p. 212). Furthermore, this was the first time in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict that the Palestinian problem was brought into focus. It was also the first time that an Arab leader created a linkage between a solution to the Palestinian problem and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

A month later, the Israeli Prime Minister, Menachem Begin made his first visit to Egypt, however with no concrete counter plan to the Egyptian peace initiative. The first round of meetings between Sadat, Begin and U.S. President Jimmy Carter ended with no substantial agreement, especially due to the Israeli insistence on retaining complete control of the west Bank and Gaza even at the expense of giving up the chance for peace in the region. The Israeli proposal regarding the West Bank and Gaza Strip suggested an end to the military rule and the establishment of administrative autonomy for the Palestinian inhabitants, however insisted on Israel's sovereignty and security control over these areas (Laqueur & Rubin, 2001, p. 219–220).

The following few months of intense trilateral diplomatic efforts among Egypt, Israel and the U.S. ended up with an almost unbridgeable impasse. This led President Carter to convene the Camp David Summit early on September 1978. During the intense 12-day negotiations, the parties reached an agreement on only minor points, while Israel's refusal to complete withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza as well as the Sinai Peninsula remained the reason for the deadlock ("Camp David Day by Day," 2002).

A breakthrough in the talks has been achieved in the last two days of the summit with an Israeli agreement to relinquish their military bases and settlements from the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula supported by vast American financial guaranties (“Camp David day by Day,” 2002). This agreement paved the way for the establishment of peace between Israel and Egypt and the beginning of normalization between both countries. The Palestinian dimension of the conflict has been addressed in a document formulated during the talks referred to as “Camp David Summit Meeting: Framework for Peace” (“The Camp David Accords,” 2002). It was agreed that a comprehensive and durable settlements in the Middle East will be based on U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 that generally called for withdrawal from occupied territories in return for peace. Under this framework agreement, the future of the Palestinians was to be determined in negotiations among Egypt, Jordan, Israel as well as representatives of the Palestinian people.

The framework agreement suggested three stages for the negotiations on the future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. First, it envisioned a transitional period, not exceeding five years, during which the final status of the west Bank and Gaza would be determined. The inhabitants of these territories were to have full autonomy during this period, with an Israeli military government and its civilian administration withdrawal as soon as the self-governing authority would be freely elected by the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. Second, Egypt, Israel and Jordan would participate in negotiating the modalities for establishing elected self-governing authority that would be followed by a withdrawal of the Israeli military that hereafter would be redeployed into specified security locations. Third, the transitional period would begin as soon as the self-governing authority was established and inaugurated. As soon as possible thereafter, but no later than three years, negotiations would be held among Egypt, Israel and Jordan and the elected representatives of the Palestinian inhabitants in order to determine their own future.

For the Israeli-Palestinian issue, this framework agreement was no more than a general proposal characterized by broad guidelines and a vague language that was opened to different interpretations (Tessler, 1994, p. 514). Although the agreement recognized the legitimate rights and requirements of the Palestinian people, the agreement actually left the future of the territories undecided. There was no mention of East Jerusalem at all and there was no definite Israeli commitment to withdraw from the territories. In addition, the future of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was not mentioned in this document. The peace accord signed by Egypt and Israel on March 1979 was based on the Camp David Framework agreement, dismissing the linkage between the comprehensive peace in the Middle East and a resolution for the Palestinian problem.

U.S. Foreign Policy Orientation

Soon after taking office, the Carter administration became deeply involved in Middle East diplomacy. It began by promoting the notion of a comprehensive settlement and brought to focus the Palestinian problem. On March 15, 1977, President Carter stated that the first prerequisite of a lasting peace was Arab recognition of Israel, the second was the establishment of permanent borders for Israel and the third was to deal with the Palestinian problem. Carter specifically argued “there has to be a homeland for the Palestinian refugees who have suffered for many, many years.” (Marder, 1977a, p. A4).

Until that time, the concept of a Palestinian homeland had never been part of the official American policy. Carter recognized the importance of solving the Palestinian problem and realized that the American peace efforts should also accommodate the Palestinian people. Carter’s administration’s policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict changed the U.S. perception in three ways. First it raised the Palestinian issue for the first time. Second, it initially supported Palestinian self-determination, or a homeland preferably in association with Jordan (“Public Papers,” 1977, p. 2173), third, he accepted Palestinian participation in peace negotiations in order “for the Palestinian question to be

resolved (Marder, 1977b, p. A20). As such, a joint U.S.-Soviet statement issued on October 1st, 1977 called for convening the Geneva Peace Conference in which all parties involved in the conflict will attend, including representatives of the Palestinian people. This joint statement indicated that various Palestinian-Israeli related key issues should be resolved within a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace process. Issues included the withdrawal of Israeli forces from areas occupied in the 1967 War, the resolution of the Palestinian question including ensuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, termination of the state of war and the establishment of normal, peaceful relations between the conflicted parties (Marder, 1977c, p. A1).

However, the Carter administration's plan to reconvene the Geneva peace conference before the end of 1977 was disrupted by Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November. While Sadat insisted on a solution for the Palestinians including an Israeli withdrawal from the areas occupied in 1967, Begin offered a vague self-rule plan for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, perpetuating Israeli control over these areas. Being deeply involved with the peace talks and motivated to conclude them, President Carter gradually abandoned some of the principles he previously held with respect to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (Shadid, 1981, pp. 138-139).

Although President Carter advocated an agreement based on U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, his policy towards the Palestinians gradually changed during the Egyptian-Israeli peace talks. Thus, the definite language supporting a Palestinian self-determination or a homeland became more vague and ambiguous as it showed in Carter's statement on January 4, 1978 that "there must be a resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects. The problem must recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and enable the Palestinians to participate in the determination of their own future" (Laqueur & Rubin, 2001, p. 221). As the Egyptian-Israeli negotiations advanced, Carter became more

supportive of Begin's self-rule proposals, while firmly objecting an independent Palestinian State ("Public Papers," 1978, p. 494).

Similarly, the U.S. administration's position towards the PLO has fluctuated throughout Carter's term. Initially the Carter administration viewed the PLO as a terrorist organization posing a political threat to the United States (Shadid, 1981, p. 141). Although adhering with Kissinger's 1975 commitment not to deal with the PLO, the joint Soviet-U.S. statement calling for the Geneva Peace Conference implied the participation of the PLO. This was because the Arab States and the United Nations had already recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people (Christison, 2000; Shadid, 1981). In general, Carter's administration softened its position towards the PLO requiring the PLO to recognize Israel's right to exist and accept Resolution 242 before it would deal with it ("Public Papers," 1978, p. 1612). Furthermore, Carter was more willing to accept the PLO, making several indirect contacts with the organization through various channels (Christison, 2000; Shadid, 1981). Nevertheless, the Egypt-Israel talks have somewhat affected Carter's position toward the PLO, with Carter's denouncing the PLO for its opposition to Sadat's peace initiative (Randal, 1977, p. A1). As a result, Carter preferred to deal with the local Palestinian leadership in the West Bank and Gaza rather than the PLO.

Whereas U.S. policy towards the Palestinians and the PLO has slightly changed, as a result of the dynamics of the peace talks, the U.S. stand on the Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza remained firm throughout Carter's term. Thus, the Israeli policy of expanding the Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip became a particular point of confrontation between the Carter administration and Israel. The U.S. has consistently objected to settlements building in the West Bank and Gaza throughout Carter's term, referring to them as illegal under international law ("Public Papers," 1978, p. 292). Carter and his foreign policy team regarded the construction of settlements as a

kind of gradual annexation of territories and Carter made clear that the settlements has long been violating international law. In the American view, continued settlement activity signalled that Israel intended a permanent military occupation, foreclosing the possibility for convening a peace conference.

In the first case study (1977-1979), a total of 122 articles from *The New York Times*, 125 articles from *The Washington Post* and 44 items from *The Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States* were subject to content analysis. The following section discusses the results obtained from data processing through statistical procedures, while taking into account the political situation characterized this period.

Foreign Policy Issues in Newspapers and Presidential Documents

H1: The more favourable the President's attitude toward the Palestinian cause, the more favourable the press' attitude toward the Palestinian cause.

H2: The more favourable the President's attitude toward the Israeli cause, the more favourable the press' attitude toward the Israeli cause.

In order to address the first and second research hypotheses, the attitudes towards different foreign policy issues in both Presidential documents and newspapers, were compared. Although the researcher did run statistical tests for significance, the results were found to be irrelevant to the relationship between the press coverage of policy issues and the Presidential attitudes toward these same policies. The reason rests on the fact that there could be other factors that might have entered the equation and affected the attitudes of the press.

A comparison between the newspapers and Presidential documents supported these hypotheses, showing a general agreement in the attitudes towards various foreign policy issues in both sources. For example, as Table 5.1 shows, both Presidential papers and the newspapers highly supported autonomy for the Palestinians (34.1%, and 36% respectively). Equally, both sources showed low rates for the unfavourable and unclear

categories (0.8%; 2.3% and 8.5%; 9.1% respectively). The unclear category was rated second in the attitudes continuum with nearly similar values in both newspapers and government documents (8.5% vs. 9.1% respectively).

Table 5.1

Position toward the Palestinians Right for Self-Rule/Autonomy in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	2 (0.8%)	1 (2.3%)
Favourable	89 (36%)	15 (34.1%)
Unclear	21 (8.5%)	4 (9.1%)
N/A	135 (54.7%)	24 (54.6%)
Total	247 (100%)	44 (100%)

Similarly, Table 5.2 shows that both the newspapers and the Presidential documents tended to accept the PLO as the Palestinians legitimate representative with nearly similar scores of 8.1% and 9.1% respectively. Equally, both sources showed extremely low rates for the unfavourable category (0.8%; 2.3%).

Table 5.2

Position toward the PLO as the Palestinians Legitimate Representative in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	2 (0.8)	1 (2.3%)
Favourable	20 (8.1%)	4 (9.1%)
N/A	225 (91.1%)	39 (88.6%)
Total	247 (100%)	44 (100%)

The results imply that the press did not reflect an independent line, inevitably reporting based on the government's agenda, attitudes and preferences (see additional results in Tables 1 through 6 of Appendix B).

The Portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians

H3: In the coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the press follows the line of the President with respect to the portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians.

The results from both parameters of portrayal, i.e., frames and images, tended to support the third hypothesis, providing that the President generally dictated the press' portrayal of both groups.

Frame of reference.

The concept of framing refers to the “specific properties of ...[a] narrative that encourage those perceiving and thinking about events to develop particular understanding of them (Entman, 1991, p.7). However, media stories never take place in a vacuum but within a larger social and political context that varies over time and place (Wolfsfeld, 1997, p. 32). The press coverage of U.S. foreign policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict between 1977 to 1979 tended to reflect the larger political context created by the Egypt-Israel peace negotiations. As Figure 8 shows, the dominant frame presented in both the press and the Presidential documents was of conflict resolution/reconciliation (70.9%; 77.3% respectively) that was generated by the intensive American-Egyptian-Israeli talks to achieve peace. Conflict was the second dominant frame in both press coverage and Presidential documents (24.3%; 13.6%) that mostly represented the difficulties and crises on the way to reach an agreement during the negotiations (see also Table 7 of Appendix B).

In general, the results show that the press conformed to the President's dominant frame through which the story was conveyed. Nevertheless, a comparison between the newspapers and the Presidential documents (see Figure 5.1) reveals that even in cells that showed differences in the frame scores, there was only a subtle deviation from the President's line. Thus, in the Presidential documents the frame referred to as conflict resolution/reconciliation, scored higher than in the newspapers (77.3% vs. 70.9% respectively). Similarly, the frame referred to as conflict, scored lower in the Presidential

documents than in the newspapers (13.6% vs. 24.3% respectively). This could be explained by the fact that for political reasons, the President tended to stress a more optimistic approach represented by the conflict resolution frame rather than the pessimistic frame of the conflict.

Dominant images in newspapers and Presidential documents.

Images are not a mere collection of words and phrases used to portray an object, a person, or a group but are powerful in constructing an overall perception towards them in the eyes of the beholder. It is important to understand the political context in which the American diplomatic efforts took place when looking at the data gathered from Presidential documents. Initially, the American interest was to reach a comprehensive peace that involved all parties in the Middle Eastern conflict. However, when President Sadat came with his peace initiative, the U.S. government became fully involved in the negotiations and committed itself to a successful conclusion of the process at any expense. Figures 5.2 and 5.3 show that in Presidential public communications, the dominant image of Israelis was of heroes with 13.6% of the applicable cases, whereas the dominant Palestinian image was of villains with 11.4%. As Figures 5.2 and 5.3 reveal, in the newspapers, the dominant image of Israelis was of inflexible decision makers with 27.9% of the applicable cases, while the dominant image of the Palestinians was of villains scored 10.9% (See also Table 5.3 for complete data on frequencies and percentages).

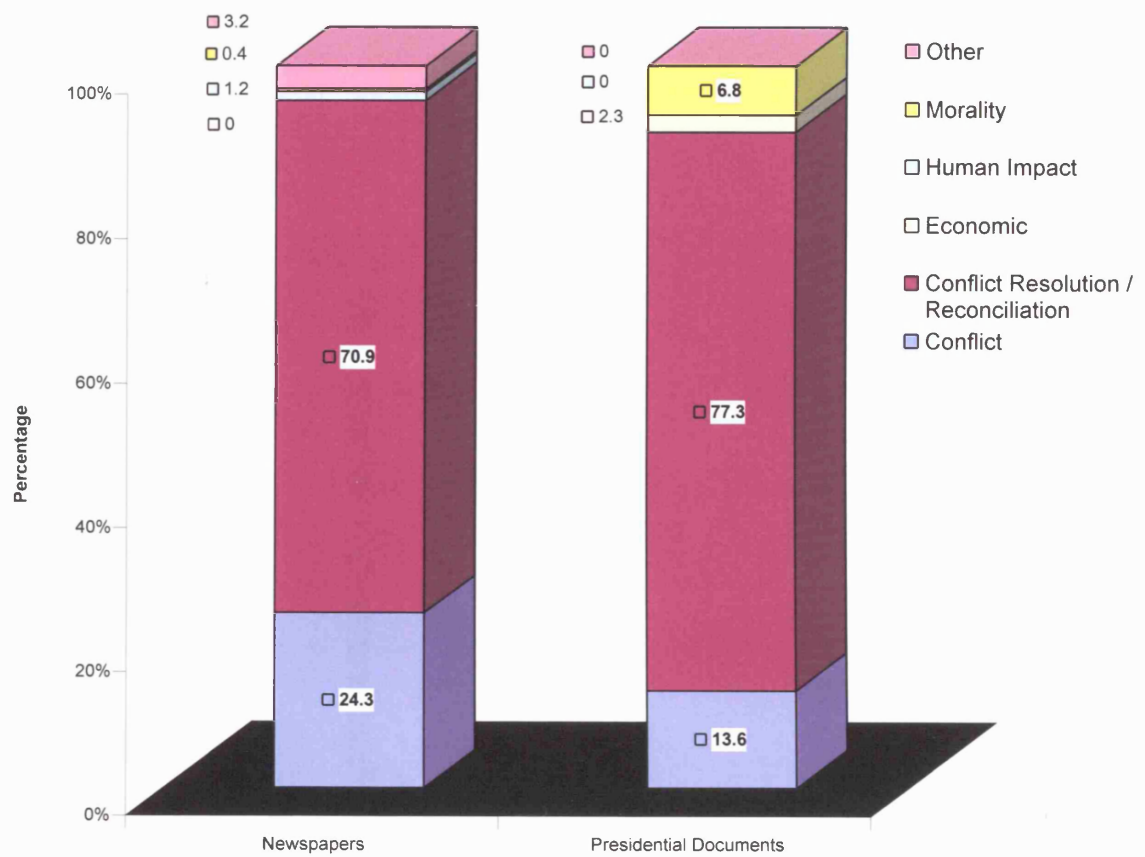


Figure 5.1. Newspapers and Presidential documents 1977-79: Dominant frame by percentage.

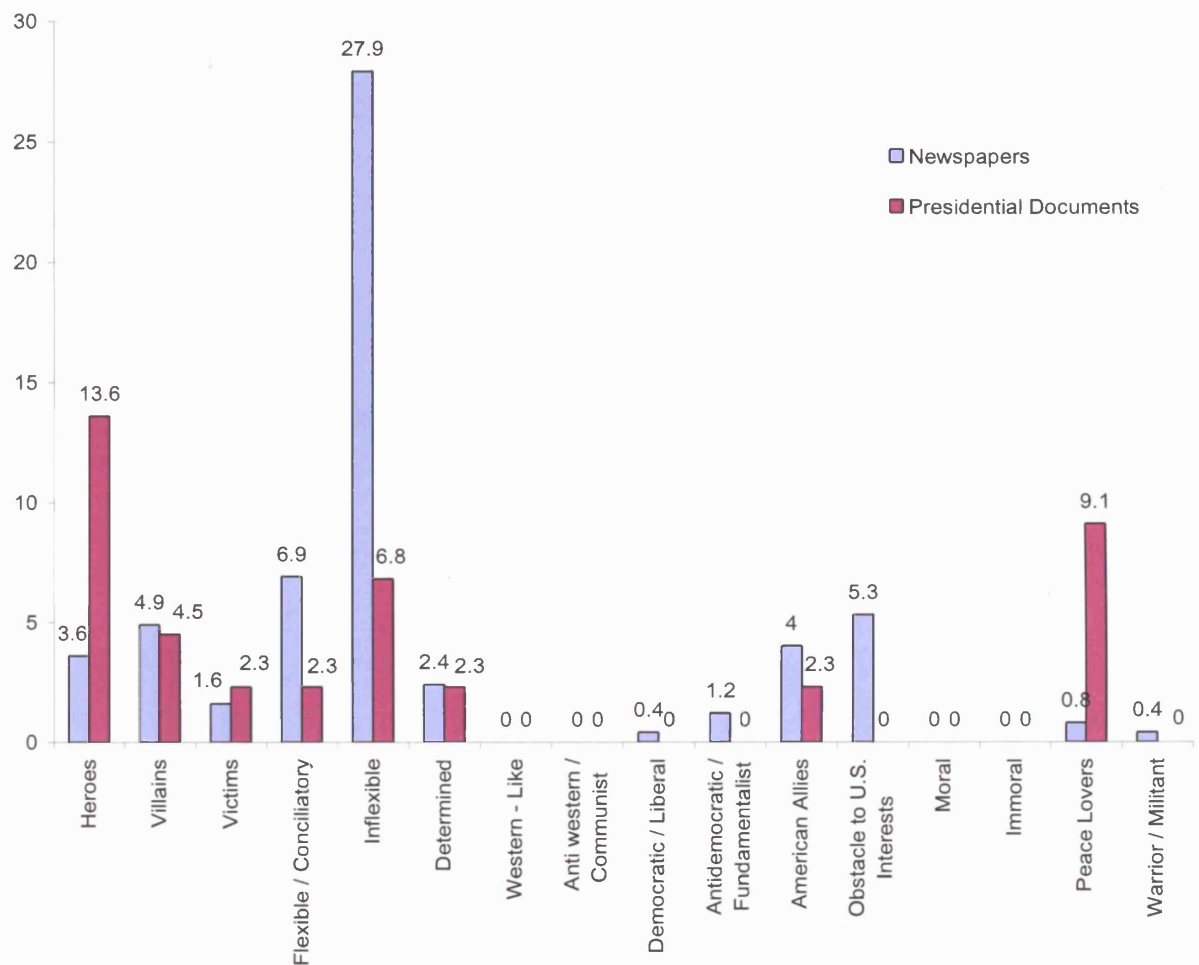


Figure 5.2. Images of Israelis in newspapers and Presidential documents 1977-79: A comparison by percentage.

Note. All N/A values were omitted for clarity purposes. N/A newspapers=40.5%; N/A Presidential documents=56.8%.

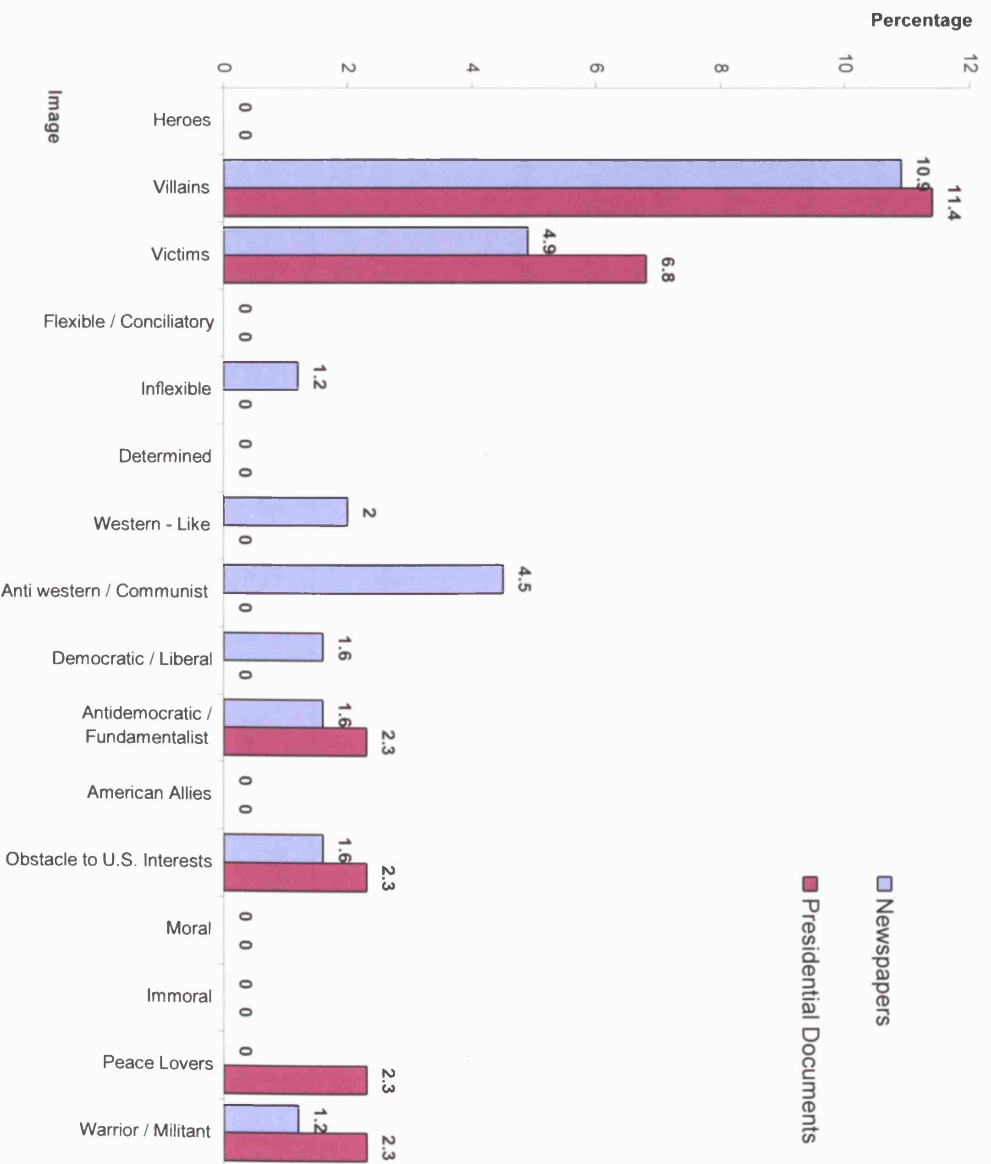


Figure 5.3. Images of Palestinians in newspapers and Presidential documents 1977-79: A comparison by percentage.

Note. All N/A values were omitted for clarity purposes. N/A newspapers=70.4%; N/A Presidential documents=72.7%.

The portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians in newspapers and Presidential documents.

A comparison between the dominant images of Israelis and Palestinians in newspapers and Presidential documents neither supports nor refutes the third hypothesis (see Figures 5.2 and 5.3 and Table 5.3). Although a difference existed between the portrayal of Israelis in the newspapers and the President's documents, both sources showed a similar portrayal of the Palestinians. This might be explained by the fact that until Sadat's visit, the Palestinian issue has been considered only a marginal factor in the whole Arab-Israeli conflict. As a result, the press tended to disregard the Palestinians as a group with national aspirations and focused mainly on their terrorist activities. By 1977, the press has not yet developed a complete sense toward the Palestinians and have easily adopted the President's attitudes. As for the Israelis, by that time the media had almost 30-year experience with this nation, enabling them to demonstrate more independent, crystallized attitudes towards this group.

Table 5.3

*Images of Israelis and Palestinians in Newspapers and Presidential Documents:
A Comparison by Percentage*

Image	<u>Israelis</u>		<u>Palestinians</u>	
	Newspapers	Gov. Docs	Newspapers	Gov. Docs
Heroes	3.6 (n=9)	13.6 (n=6)		
Villains	4.9 (n=12)	4.5 (n=2)	10.9 (n=27)	11.4 (n=5)
Victims	1.6 (n=4)	2.3 (n=1)	4.9 (n=12)	6.8 (n=3)
Flexible/Conciliatory	6.9 (n=17)	2.3 (n=1)		
Inflexible Decision Makers	27.9 (n=69)	6.8 (n=3)	1.2 (n=3)	
Determined Decision Makers	2.4 (n=6)	2.3 (n=1)		
Western-Like			2.0 (n=5)	
Anti-Western/Communist			4.5 (n=11)	
Democratic/Liberal	0.4 (n=1)		1.6 (n=4)	
Antidemocratic/Fundamentalist/ Radical	1.2 (n=3)		1.6 (n=4)	2.3 (n=1)
American Allies	4 (n=10)	2.3 (n=1)		
Obstacle to American Interests	5.3 (n=13)		1.6 (n=4)	2.3 (n=1)
Moral				
Immoral				
Peace Lovers	0.8 (n=2)	9.1 (n=4)		2.3 (n=1)
Warrior/Militant	0.4 (n=1)		1.2 (n=3)	2.3 (n=1)
N/A	40.5 (n=100)	56.8 (n=25)	70.4 (n=174)	72.7 (n=32)
Total	100 (n=247)	100 (n=44)	100 (n=247)	100 (n=44)

As shown in Figure 5.2 and Table 5.3, the President tended to portray the Israelis with images considered more positive than the newspapers. As such, in the newspapers, Israelis were portrayed as heroes in 3.6% of the applicable cases, while in the President's documents the rate was of 13.6%. Similarly, while in newspapers Israelis image as inflexible reached 27.9%, which is a more negative way of portrayal, in the Presidential documents it was rated 6.8%. The same trend exists when looking at the image of peace lovers that is considered a positive-oriented image. Thus, in the Presidential documents, the image of Israelis as peace lovers reached 9.1%, while in the newspapers this image was rated only 0.8%.

Nevertheless, some images were rated almost the same or retained the same proportion in both newspapers and Presidential documents. For example, referring to the Israelis, the image of villains reached almost the same rate in both sources (4.9%; 4.5% respectively) similar to the trend showed with respect to the Palestinians (10.9%; 11.4% respectively).

The relatively large number of categories under the variable image, in which many of their cells showed low values (see Table 5.3), made it difficult to subject this variable to statistical testing. Therefore, the researcher clustered all images according to their direction: Positive or negative (see Table 5.4). Images under the positive category included heroes, victims, flexible/conciliatory, determined decision makers, Western-like, democratic/liberal, American allies, moral, peace-lovers. Images under the negative category included villains, inflexible decision makers, anti-Western/Communist, antidemocratic/ fundamental, obstacle to American interests, immoral, and warrior/militant.

Table 5.4 presents a comparison between the type of document and its effect on the portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians separately. It reveals that for Israelis, significant association existed between the type of document and the image direction

($\chi^2(2) = 13.25, p < 0.01$). As such, when the type of document was newspapers, Israelis were portrayed more negatively (39.6% negative; 19.8% positive), while when the type of document was the presidential papers, Israelis were portrayed more positively (31.8% positive; 11.3% negative). As for the Palestinians, no significant association existed between the type of document and the image direction ($\chi^2(2) = 0.191, p > 0.05$). Overall, Table 5.4 shows that both newspapers and Presidential documents tended to portray the Palestinians almost the same way with respect to all categories (positive 8.5%; 9% respectively and negative 21%; 18.1% respectively).

Table 5.4

Image Direction of Israelis and Palestinians in Newspapers and Presidential Documents 1977-79: A comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Israelis		Palestinians	
	Newspapers	Pres. Docs	Newspapers	Pres. Docs
Positive	49 (19.8%)	14 (31.8%)	21 (8.5%)	4 (9%)
Negative	98 (39.6%)	5 (11.3%)	52 (21%)	8 (18.1%)
N/A	100 (40.4%)	25 (56.8%)	174 (70.4%)	32 (72.7%)
Total	247 (100%)	44 (100%)	247 (100%)	44(100%)

The portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians in editorials.

H4: In editorial coverage of U.S. policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Palestinian image is more negative than the Israeli image

The results presented in Figure 5.4 refuted the fourth hypothesis. It shows that in general, editorials tended to portray both the Israelis and the Palestinians more negatively than positively (40% vs. 25%; 30% vs. 7.5% respectively). While no significant association existed between the nationality (Israeli or Palestinian) and the image direction ($\chi^2(2) = 7.443, p > 0.05$), it seems as if editorials tended to criticize both the Israelis and the Palestinians.

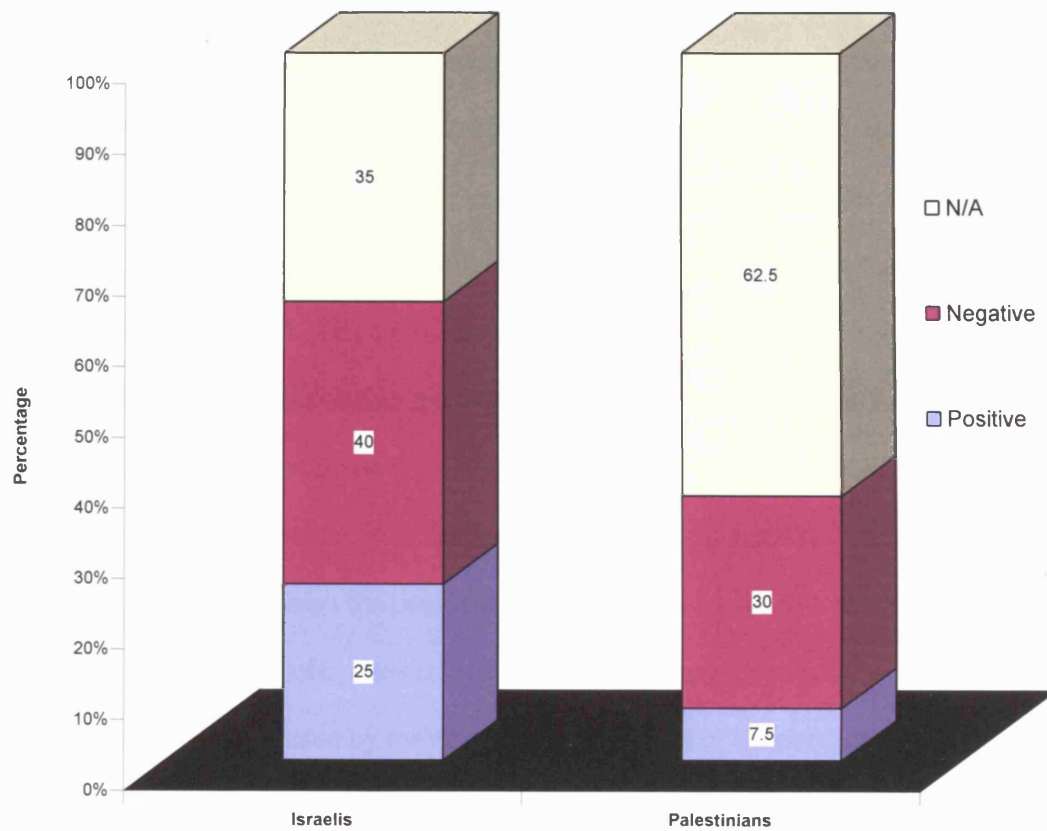


Figure 5.4. Image direction of Israelis and Palestinians in editorials 1977-79:

A comparison by percentage.

Note. ($\chi^2=7.443, p>0.05$)

The Effect of Images on Foreign Policy

H5: The direction of the press' portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians has no effect on U.S. policy toward either group.

One of the conventional wisdoms in media-government relationship is that because foreign policy decision-makers and the political elite get much of their information from the media, the way the media depicts foreign issues and the involved parties somewhat affects the making of U.S. policy. In order to examine whether or not the press' portrayal of each group (Israelis or Palestinians) affected the government's policy, foreign policy issues were examined against the preceding newspapers' coverage of the conflict. Thus, the researcher tracked the dominant images of the Israelis and the Palestinians as appeared in the press during the three-months period prior to the President's actual communication of a specific policy statement.

The results emerged from the image/policy comparisons supported the fifth hypothesis, showing that in general, there was no association between the images of the Israelis and/or the Palestinians as they appeared in the press and the subsequent U.S. stated foreign policy (see Tables 9 through 13 of Appendix B). The image preceding a favourable policy towards either group did not necessarily match the nature of the policy issue by being a positive or favourable image. Therefore, foreign policy issues seemed to be determined by the U.S. administration independently, being unaffected by the newspapers' portrayal of the involved parties.

For example, applying a Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians. When the President firmly supported a Palestinian self-rule, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. However, unexpectedly, the dominant image of the Palestinians was more negative (14%) than positive during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement (See Table 5.5). As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Palestinians and the President's position toward the establishment of a Palestinian autonomy in the territories.

Table 5.5

Images Preceding the President's Statement Supporting a Palestinian Self-Rule: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	8 (14.2)	4 (7%)
Negative	28 (49.2%)	8 (14%)
N/A	21 (36.8%)	45 (78.9%)
Total	57 (100%)	57 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: December 29, 1977 - March 30, 1978.

Similarly, Supporting economic/military aid to Israel is considered a policy that benefits the Israelis, however contradicts the Palestinians interests. When the President firmly supported this policy, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Israelis in the newspapers. At the same time, an ongoing negative coverage of the Palestinians would be expected to be followed by such an Israeli-compatible policy statement. Nevertheless, Table 5.6 reveals that while the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative as expected for such relationship to occur (18.1%), the dominant image of the Israelis was also negative (34.9%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward American economic and military aid to Israel.

Table 5.6

Images Preceding the President's Statement Supporting Aid to Israel: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	15 (22.7%)	6 (9%)
Negative	23 (34.9%)	12 (18.1%)
N/A	28 (42.4%)	48 (72.7%)
Total	66 (100%)	66 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: December 8, 1977 - March 9, 1978.

The Role of the Press in foreign Policy: Active vs. Passive

Source of foreign policy information.

Table 5.7 provides insights into the role of newspapers as sources for foreign policy information. Both, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* relied mostly on U.S. officials to gather foreign policy related information. This included the President and/or members of his staff (44.9%), or the State Department (23.5%). Therefore, because the executive branch was the primary source for foreign policy information, it is reasonable to conclude that the information conveyed by the President was the one covered in the press. The press was only rated third as a source for foreign policy information (21.1%). It is important to clarify that the category referred to as press included editorials and news analyses. However, these items mostly debated the existing foreign policy issues rather than provided alternative information or ideas to the President's public statements.

Table 5.7

Source of Israeli-Palestinian Policy 1977-79: Frequency and Percentage

Source of Foreign Policy	n	%
White House/Administration	111	44.9
State Department	58	23.5
Congress/Congressmen	6	2.4
Palestinian Officials	2	0.8
Israeli Officials/ Press	5	2
Former Presidents/Officials	2	0.8
U.S. Press	52	21.1
Unnamed/Unattributed	3	1.2
Other	8	3.2
Total	247	100

The effect of type of coverage on the position of the press towards U.S. official foreign policy.

Unlike the news stories, editorials represent a newspaper's position towards both domestic and foreign policy issues. It is widely agreed that editorials tend to express more independent and critical thinking than news articles regarding various policies, providing an arena for a wider range of opinions regarding the President's decisions and policies. Therefore, the variable press position towards U.S. stand on the Israeli-Palestinian foreign policy was analyzed, separating between news articles and editorials.

Table 5.8 reveals that a significant association existed between the type of coverage (whether a news article or editorial) and the position presented towards U.S. stand on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ($\chi^2(3) = 55.3, p < 0.001$). According to Table 5.8, there were differences between news articles and editorials' attitudes with respect to their opinions towards the administration's handling of foreign policy. In general, news articles tended to express less independent opinion than editorials. The majority of the articles under the news articles category were rated as N/A (64.3%), indicating no expression of opinion in their coverage, while only 10% of the editorials did not include any opinion in their coverage. However, when news articles included opinions in their coverage, they tended to be more unfavourable (20.8%) than favourable (8.2%) towards the administration's stated policy. As for the editorials, they tended to express opinion in most applicable cases with a nearly equal distribution of the favourable (42.5%) and unfavourable (45%) cases.

Table 5.8

Distribution of Type of Coverage by Press Position towards U.S. Stand on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1977-79

<u>Type of Coverage</u>	<u>Press Position towards U.S. stand on the Israeli Palestinian Conflict</u>				
	Unfavourable	Neutral	Favourable	N/A	Total
News article	43 (20.8%)	14 (6.8%)	17 (8.2%)	133 (64.3%)	207
Editorial	18 (45%)	1 (2.5%)	17 (42.5%)	4 (10%)	40

Note. $\chi^2(3) = 55.3, p < 0.001$

Serving as an indicator for the existing attitudes regarding domestic and foreign policy, editorials provided insights on the position of the press towards the American Israeli-Palestinian related policy. In order to track down the press' level of support in the government's policy, the category press as a source of foreign policy has been cross-tabulated with the level of acceptance of this policy. Table 5.9 shows that a significant association existed between the press as a source of information and the position presented in the press toward the U.S. foreign policy stand, ($\chi^2(2) = 10.65, p < 0.01$). According to Table 5.9, when the press was the source of foreign policy information either via editorial columns or news analyses, it tended to criticize the official foreign policy rather than to accept it (50% vs. 36.5% respectively). The results show that no neutral positions have been presented, and most items included a distinct position towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its related American official stand.

Table 5.9

The Position of the Press towards the U.S. Stand on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1977-79

<u>Source of Policy</u>	<u>Press Position towards U.S. Policy</u>				
	Unfavourable	Neutral	Favourable	N/A	Total
U.S. Press	26 (50%)	—	19 (36.5%)	7 (13.4%)	52

Note. $\chi^2(3) = 10.65, p < 0.05$

*Case study II (1993-1994): The Oslo Accords and the Beginning of the
Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process*

Historical-Political Background

The Israeli election of 1992 marked the beginning of a new decade in the history of the Middle East. The newly elected left-wing Israeli government made a commitment to achieve peace and normalization in all fronts including the Palestinians and Israel's Arab neighbours. On September 1992, short after the Israeli elections, the Norwegians offered to host and sponsor a series of Israeli-Palestinian talks to end the enmity and confrontation and to achieve a comprehensive peace settlement between the conflicting parties. The Declaration of Principles (DOP) signed on September 13, 1993 at the White House sealed the ongoing negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This agreement provided for a staged Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza, a partial withdrawal of the IDF from Palestinian territories, mutual recognition, special security and economic provisions and timetable for Israeli final status negotiations. It was also agreed that this transitional period would not exceed five years and would lead to a permanent settlement based on U.N. Resolution 242 and 338 (Laqueur & Rubin, 2001, pp. 413–422). Nevertheless, the DOP deliberately left problematic issues such as the status of Jerusalem, the Palestinian refugees, the Jewish settlements and borders, unsolved.

A mixture of euphoria and confrontation characterized the year after the signing of the DOP. First, the DOP generated a strong opposition from both the Israeli and the Palestinian sides. However, the more immediate concern was the violent opposition of projectionist elements in the Palestinian community and of the right-wing Jewish settlers. Much of the Palestinian opposition was violent involving attacks on Israeli soldiers and civilians and also on Palestinians who supported the accord. Similarly, the activities of the Jewish settlers also contributed to the violence and unrest. These activities involved

demonstration, blocking roads in the West Bank and Gaza, and assaults on Palestinians and their property.

Although this unrest threatened the implementation of the Israeli-PLO accord, both sides took measures to execute the agreement. As such the withdrawal of the Israeli military forces from the cities of Jericho and Gaza began the Palestinian autonomy in those places. At the same time, the world community engaged with fundraising activities to help the Palestinian Authority establish and build its apparatuses.

U.S. Foreign Policy Orientation

During President Clinton's 1992 election campaign he presented himself as a candidate mostly concerned with domestic issues, placing international affairs in general and the Middle East in particular at the bottom of his policy agenda (Dumbrell, 1997; Hadar, 1994; Hames, 1999). Nevertheless, Clinton acknowledged that foreign policy couldn't be ignored (Dumbrell, 1997, p. 178). As such, during his first term in office, Clinton's Middle East policy was characterized by ad hoc measures that involved no major military and diplomatic resources. Thus, when the outcome of this limited involvement was desirable, it could have enhanced Clinton's stand internationally or domestically, however when it failed, the responsibility fell on the regional players (Hadar, 1994, p. 64).

Therefore, not surprisingly, American diplomats had been only "aware of the secret discussions" (Christopher, 1998 p.77) between the Israelis and the PLO rather than involved in them. Periodically, the State Department was briefed and updated about the Oslo meetings, but it chose to ignore that channel. Furthermore, there is no indication that President Clinton knew anything at all (Hyland, 1999, p. 158).

Nevertheless, the DOP was signed in a ceremony at the White House in Washington. The Norwegians understood that the U.S. involvement in the accord is vital in order to achieve maximum visibility and to set a stage for an international fundraising for the Palestinians in the west Bank and Gaza (Tessler, 1994, p. 753). Thus, in a scene

that seemed as if was taken from the signing of the Camp David accords in 1979, the Israeli Primer Minister, Rabin and PLO chairman, Yasir Arafat signed the DOP witnessed by the U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Scholars and foreign policy specialists widely believe that Clinton's limited success in achieving genuine breakthroughs in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during his first term rests on the fact that Clinton's administration did not act as an impartial and unbiased broker (Christison, 2000; Hadar, 1994; Quandt, 2001; Zunes, 1994). As such, Clinton's team has turned out to be more hospitable to Israel's basic policies than any other administration before. For example, until Oslo, the Clinton administration had refused all contacts with the PLO and even after Oslo refused to speak positively of a possibility of a Palestinian independent state (Quandt, 2001, p. 26). Similarly, Clinton's administration termed the Jewish settlements as a "complicating factor" in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations rather than an "obstacle to peace" or "illegal," as previous administrations referred to them (Hadar, 1994; Noyes, 1997). Moreover, when asked about the construction of Jewish housing in the occupied territories including East Jerusalem, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs replied: "There is some allowance for—I wouldn't use the word 'expansion' but certainly continuing some activity—construction activities in existing settlements" (Neff, 1993, p. 42). In addition early in Clinton's first term, the U.S. began to deemphasize U.S. reliance on U.N. Resolution 242 as the starting point for negotiations, a policy that was compatible with the Israeli preference (Christison, 2000, p. 297).

As for the status of Jerusalem, the Clinton administration also showed a shift from the policy held by previous U.S. administrations. In the years following the 1967 war, the U.S. emphasized that the city should be unified, but its final status should be determined by negotiations as part of a comprehensive peace settlement (Zunes, 1994, p. 83). On April 1994, the U.S. abstained from a section of a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning

the February massacre at the Mosque in Hebron, objecting a paragraph which referred to the Arab part of Jerusalem as occupied territory. Unlikely to previous foreign policy cases, this policy also gained extensive support in Congress who called the President to cast a veto against a U.N. resolution referring to Jerusalem as an occupied territory (p. 88).

Scholars have been debating whether or not President Clinton's Middle Eastern policy during his first term achieved substantial accomplishments. Clinton's advocates asserted that Oslo I and II, the Hebron Agreement, the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty, and the advances on the Syrian front all marked this administration's successes. In contrast, others emphasized that in both the Israeli-Palestinian Accords and the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty, U.S. involvement was marginal, but they had been successful because both sides dealt directly with each other. In addition, critics of Clinton's foreign policy often asserted that by becoming an advocate of Israel's policy, Clinton's team failed to play the role of the honest broker and failed to act as a global superpower, imposing its own vision and agenda on the region.

In the second case study (1993-1994), a total of 44 articles from *The New York Times*, 50 articles from *The Washington Post* and 28 items from *The Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States* were subject to content analysis. The following section discusses the results obtained from data processing through statistical procedures, while taking into account the political situation characterized this period.

Foreign Policy Issues in Newspapers and Presidential Documents

H1: The more favourable the President's attitude toward the Palestinian cause, the more favourable the press' attitude toward the Palestinian cause.

H2: The more favourable the President's attitude toward the Israeli cause, the more favourable the press' attitude toward the Israeli cause.

In order to address the first and second research hypotheses, the attitudes towards different foreign policy issues in both Presidential documents and newspapers, were compared. Although the researcher did run statistical tests for significance, the results were found to be irrelevant to the relationship between the press coverage of policy issues and the Presidential attitudes toward these same policies. The reason rests on the fact that there could be other factors that might have entered the equation and affected the attitudes of the press.

A comparison between the newspapers and Presidential documents supported these hypotheses, showing a general agreement in the attitudes towards various foreign policy issues in both sources (see Tables 1 through 8 of Appendix C). For example, as Table 5.10 shows, in general, both the newspapers and the Presidential documents showed the same attitude direction, supporting U.S. economic/military aid to Israel with 13.8% compared to 25% respectively, while only the newspapers showed extremely low rates of disapproval (1.1%) for this policy.

Table 5.10

Position towards Economic/Military Aid to Israel in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	1 (1.1%)	
Favourable	13 (13.8%)	7 (25%)
N/A	80 (85.1%)	21 (75%)
Total	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

Similarly, as Table 5.11 shows, in general, both sources supported U.S. providing economic aid to the Palestinians with 14.9% compared to 7.1% respectively. However, it is noticeable that the press showed higher support rates for this policy than the government documents. In addition, both sources showed no reference with respect to the unfavourable category.

Table 5.11

Position towards Economic Aid to the Palestinian Authority in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	14 (14.9%)	2 (7.1%)
N/A	80 (85.1%)	26 (92.9%)
Total	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

In conclusion, the results seem to support H1 and H2, showing a general agreement between both sources. In other words, it seems as if the press did not reflect an independent line, inevitably reporting based on the President's agenda and attitudes. Furthermore, even in cases that showed a difference in the actual numbers (percentages), the general direction remained the same.

The Portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians

H3: In the coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the press follows the line of the President with respect to the portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians.

The results from both parameters of portrayal, i.e., frames and images, neither supported nor refuted the third hypothesis as both parameters showed contradicting results. While the frame of reference tended to be similar in both the newspapers and the Presidential documents, the portrayal was different in both types of documents.

Frame of reference.

The press' coverage of U.S. foreign policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict between 1993 to 1994 tended to reflect the larger political context created by the Oslo Accords and the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations. As Figure 5.5 shows, Presidential documents reflected the prevailing optimistic atmosphere created by the peace talks with a dominant frame of a conflict resolution scored 57% (n=16).

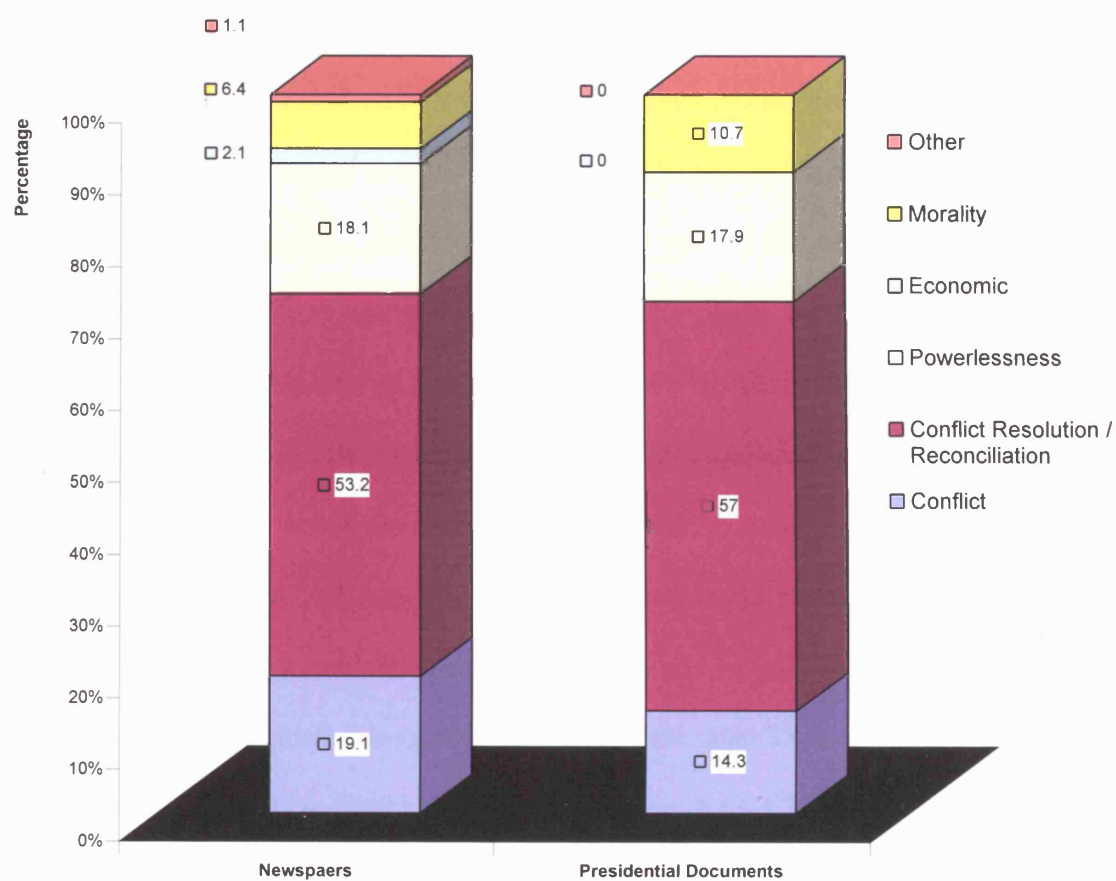


Figure 5.5. Newspapers and Presidential documents: Dominant frame by percentage.

The press showed a similar trend to the one presented in Presidential documents with 53.2% (n=50) of the items reflecting the frame of conflict resolution/reconciliation. Conflict was the second dominant frame scored 19.1% (n=18) in newspapers and 14.3% (n=4) in Presidential papers, mostly representing the difficulties and crises that characterized the year following the signing of the Oslo Agreements (see also Table 9, Appendix C).

Nevertheless, a comparison between the newspapers and the President's documents reveals that the President tended to colour the reality with more optimistic colours. As such, in Presidential documents, the frame referred to as conflict resolution/reconciliation scored higher than in the newspapers (57% vs. 53.2%). Similarly, the frame referred to as conflict scored lower in Presidential documents than in newspapers (14.3% vs. 19.1%).

Dominant images in newspapers and Presidential documents.

Figure 5.6 reveals that in the newspapers, there was no single dominant image for the Israelis, but an array of both negative and positive images that were rated almost the same. For example, the contradicting images of villains and victims were rated 5.3%, while the images of American allies and peace lovers were rated 7.4%. Although the image of warriors/militant received a relatively high score (9.6%), it should not be treated as the dominant image because only two cases created the difference between this image and the second highly rated images. This mixture of images could be explained by the fact that the Oslo Accords created a transition period in which the Israelis were transformed from suppressors, (image created by the first *Intifada*) into peace-lovers, willing to negotiate with their bitter enemy for this heroic goal. As for the Palestinians, their dominant image in the newspapers was of villains scored 16% (n=15).

The portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians in newspapers and Presidential documents.

A comparison between the dominant images of Israelis and Palestinians in newspapers and Presidential documents reveals that a difference existed between Israelis' portrayal in the newspapers than their portrayal in the President's documents.

It is important to understand the political context in which the American diplomatic efforts took place when looking at the data gathered from the Presidential documents. Initially, the American involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian talks was minor if not absent. Even in the first year after the signing of the Oslo Agreements, the U.S. kept a distance from the negotiations, being involved especially with diplomatic endeavours to raise funds for the Palestinian Authority.

Figures 5.6 and 5.7 show that in Presidential public communications, several dominant images existed for the Israelis, all corresponded with a generally positive direction (heroes 21.4%; peace lovers 21.4%; victims 14.3%). In contrast, the dominant Palestinian image in the Presidential papers was of villains with 17.9% (n=5).

As Figure 5.6 shows, the President tended to portray the Israelis with images considered more positive than the newspapers. While in Presidential documents the Israelis were portrayed as heroes in 21.4% of the applicable cases, in the newspapers, this image scored only 2.1%. Similarly, while in newspapers Israelis' image as warriors/militants, which is a more negative way of portrayal, was rated 9.6% (n=9), the Presidential documents contained no such image at all. As for the Palestinians, Figure 5.7 shows that no distinct pattern existed when comparing the portrayal of this group in both the President's documents and the newspapers (see also Table 10 in Appendix C).

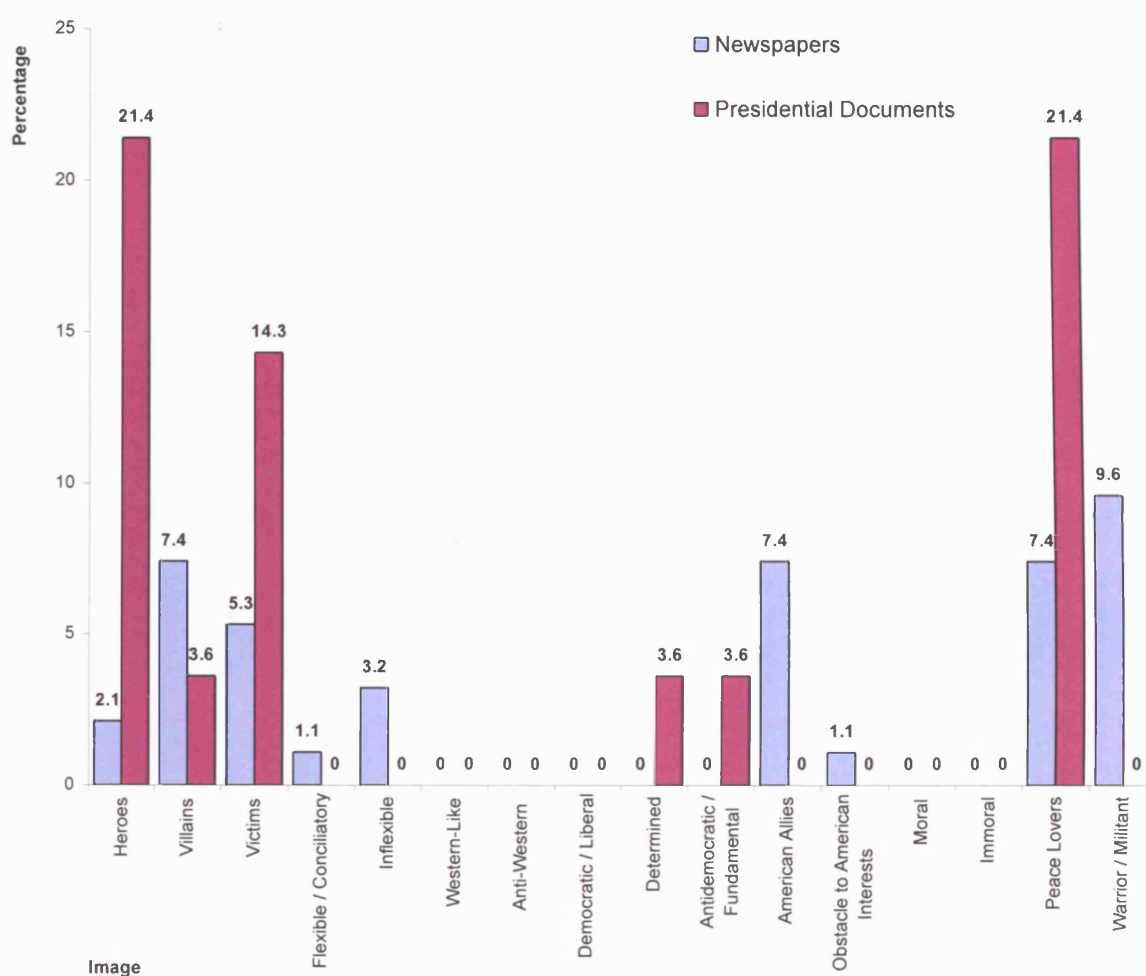


Figure 5.6. Images of Israelis in newspapers and Presidential documents

1993-94: A comparison by percentage.

Note. All N/A values were omitted for clarity purposes. N/A newspapers=54.3%; N/A Presidential documents=32.1%.

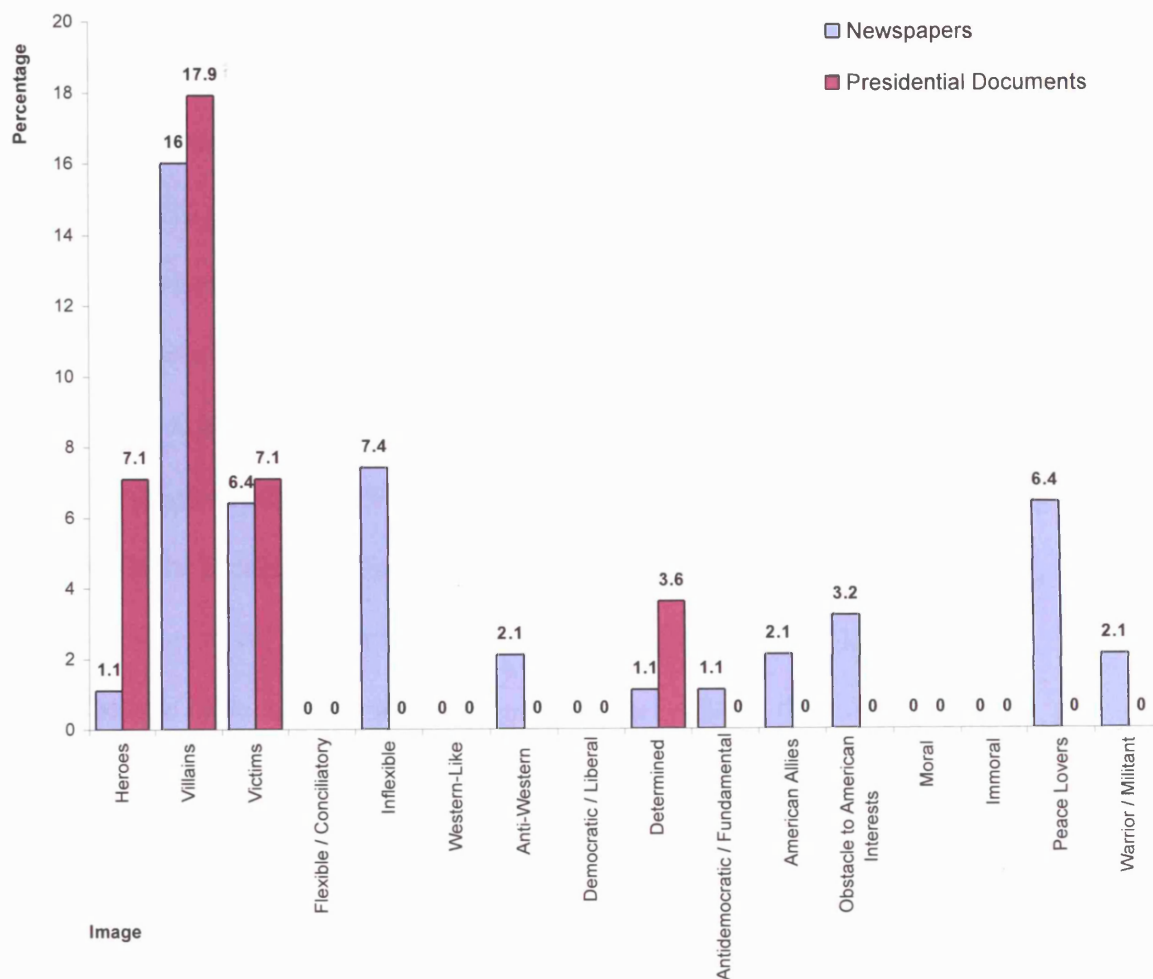


Figure 5.7. Images of Palestinians in newspapers and Presidential documents

1993-94: A comparison by percentage.

Note. All N/A values were omitted for clarity purposes. N/A newspapers=51.1%; N/A Presidential documents=57.1%.

The relatively large number of categories under the variable image, in which many of their cells showed low values, made it difficult to subject this variable to statistical testing. Therefore, the researcher clustered all images according to their direction: Positive or negative (see Table 5.12). Images under the positive category included heroes, victims, flexible/conciliatory, determined decision makers, Western-like, democratic/liberal, American allies, moral, and peace-lovers. Images under the negative category included villains, inflexible decision makers, anti-Western/Communist, antidemocratic/fundamental, obstacle to American interests, immoral, and warrior/militant.

Table 5.12 presents a comparison between the type of document and its dominant portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians separately. It reveals that for Israelis, significant association existed between the type of document and the image direction ($\chi^2 (2) = 13.8, p < 0.01$). As such, when the type of document was newspapers, Israelis were portrayed more positively (23.3% positive; 21.2% negative). Similarly, when the type of document was the Presidential Papers, Israelis were portrayed more positively (60.7% positive; 7.1% negative). As for the Palestinians, no significant association existed between the type of document and the image direction ($\chi^2 (2) = 1.59, p > 0.05$). Table 5.12 shows that the newspapers tended to portray the Palestinians more negatively than the Presidential documents (31.9% vs. 17.8% respectively).

Table 5.12

Image Direction of Israelis and Palestinians in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A comparison by Frequencies and Percentages

Direction	<u>Israelis</u>		<u>Palestinians</u>	
	Newspapers	Pres. Docs	Newspapers	Pres. Docs
Positive	22 (23.3%)	17 (60.7%)	16 (17%)	5 (17.8%)
Negative	20 (21.2%)	2 (7.1%)	30 (31.9%)	5 (17.8%)
N/A	51 (54.3%)	9 (32.1%)	48 (51.1%)	16 (57.1 %)
Total	94 (100%)	28(100%)	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

The portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians in editorials.

H4: In editorial coverage of U.S. policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Palestinian image is more negative than the Israeli image

It is impossible to conclude about the editorial portrayal based on the results presented in Figure 5.8 because of the low number of relevant cases (see also Table 11, Appendix C). Nevertheless, it seems as if the result supported the fourth hypothesis, showing that in general, editorials tended to portray the Israelis more positively than the Palestinians.

The Effect of Images on Foreign Policy

H5: The direction of the press' portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians has no effect on U.S. policy toward either group.

In order to examine whether or not the press' portrayal of each group (Israelis or Palestinians) affected the President's policy, foreign policy issues were examined against the preceding newspapers' coverage of the conflict. Thus, the researcher tracked the dominant images of the Israelis and the Palestinians as appeared in news coverage during the three-months period prior to the President's actual communication of a specific policy statement.

The results that emerged from the image/policy comparisons neither supported nor refuted the fifth hypothesis (see Tables 12 through 16 of Appendix C). While in most cases, there was no association between the images of the Israelis and/or the Palestinians and the subsequent U.S. stated foreign policy, some cases showed some sort of association between the image of either group and the policy direction. For example, supporting economic/military aid to Israel is considered a policy that benefits the Israelis, however to some extent contradicts the Palestinians interests. When the President firmly supported this policy, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Israelis in the newspapers.

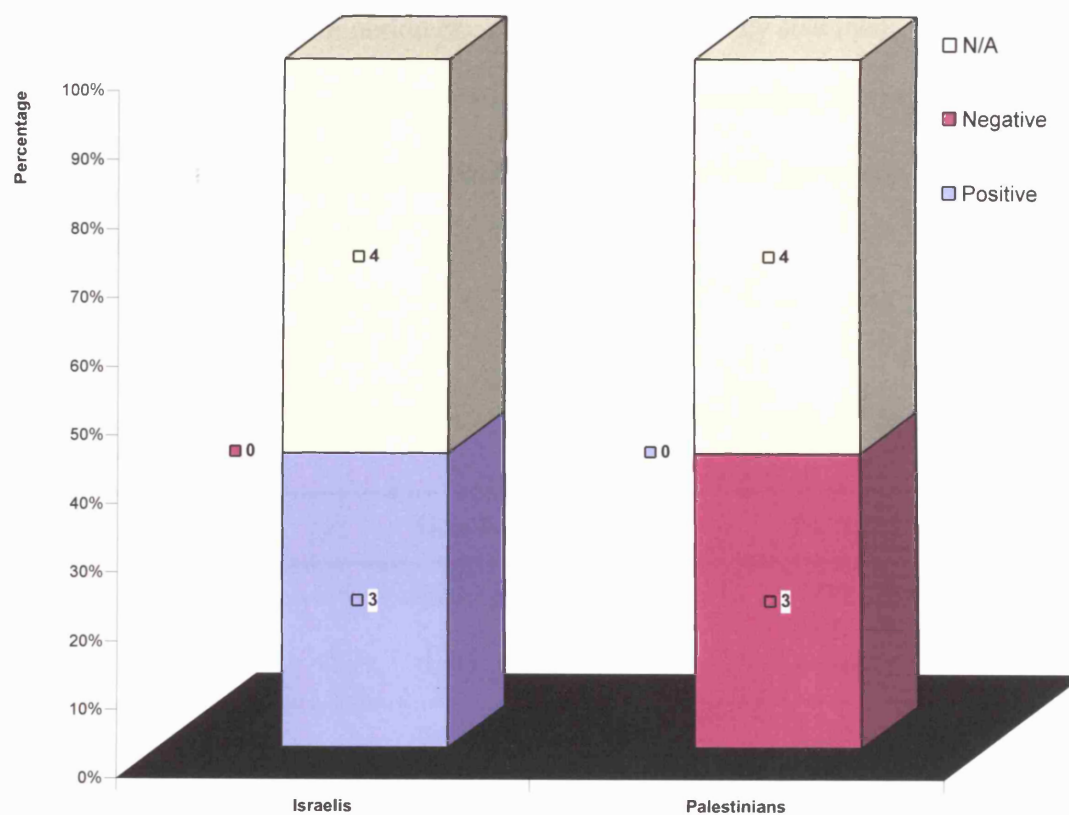


Figure 5.8. Image direction of Israelis and Palestinians in editorials 1993-94:

A comparison by percentage.

At the same time, an ongoing negative coverage of the Palestinians would be expected to be followed by such an Israeli-compatible policy statement. Nevertheless, Table 5.13 reveals that while the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative as expected for such relationship to occur (37.5%), the dominant image of the Israelis was positive (37.5%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was some sort of association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward providing American economic and military aid to Israel.

Table 5.13

Images Preceding the President's Statement Supporting Aid to Israel: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	6 (37.5%)	2 (12.5%)
Negative	1 (6.25%)	6 (37.5%)
N/A	9 (56.25%)	8 (50%)
Total	16 (100%)	16 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: November 10, 1993 – February 9, 1994.

A different picture emerged from the image/policy comparison with respect to U.S. support for direct talks with the PLO. As this policy meets the Palestinian interests, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. Nevertheless, Table 5.14 reveals that the dominant image of the Palestinians was unexpectedly negative (23.8%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward conducting direct dialog with the PLO.

The results imply that no clear-cut conclusions can be drawn from this case about portrayal's effect on foreign policy, but it is more likely that the association found was more coincidental than systematic.

Table 5.14

Images Preceding the President's Statement Supporting Direct Dialog with the PLO: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	14 (33.3%)	2 (4.8%)
Negative	2 (4.8%)	10 (23.8%)
N/A	26 (62%)	30 (71.4%)
Total	42 (100%)	42 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: August 13, 1993 – November 12, 1993.

The Role of the Press in Foreign Policy: Active vs. Passive

Source of foreign policy information.

Table 5.15 provides insights about the newspapers role as sources for foreign policy information. The two newspapers relied mostly on U.S. officials to gather foreign policy related information. This included the President and/or members of his staff (43.6%), or the State Department (29.8%). The press, which included editorials and news analyses, was rated third as a source for foreign policy information (18.1%).

Table 5.15

Source of Israeli-Palestinian Policy 1993-94: Frequency and Percentage

Source of Foreign Policy	n	%
White House/Administration	41	43.6
State Department	28	29.8
Congress/Congressmen	2	2.1
Israeli Officials/ Press	2	2.1
Former Presidents/Officials	2	2.1
U.S. Press	17	18.1
Unnamed/Unattributed	2	2.1
Total	94	100

The effect of type of coverage on the position of the press towards U.S. official foreign policy.

This section attempts to explore issues related to media-government relationship in the context of foreign policy. In order to explore whether or not the press agrees with the President's stated policy, the variable press position towards U.S. stand on the Israeli-Palestinian foreign policy was analyzed, separating between news articles and editorials. It is essential to isolate the editorial category because editorials are known to reflect the newspapers' position on a given issue.

Table 5.16 reveals that significant association existed between the type of coverage (whether a news article or editorial) and the position it took towards U.S. stand on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ($\chi^2(3) = 16.7, p < 0.001$). According to Table 5.16, there were differences between news articles and editorials' attitudes with respect to their opinions towards the administration's handling of foreign policy. In general, news articles tended to express less independent opinion than editorials. The majority of the articles under the news articles category were rated as N/A (69%), indicating no expression of opinion in their coverage, while all editorials under study included some sort of opinion in their coverage. However, when news articles included opinions in their coverage, they tended to be more unfavourable (21.8%) than favourable (6.9%) towards the administration's stated policy. As for the editorials, they tended to express opinion in most applicable cases with a nearly equal distribution of favourable (42.9%) and unfavourable (57.1%) cases (the difference in the percentage rates is based on only one case and therefore insignificant).

Table 5.16

Distribution of Type of Coverage by the Position of the Press towards U.S. Stand on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

<u>Type of Coverage</u>	<u>Press Position towards U.S. stand on the Israeli Palestinian Conflict</u>				
	Unfavourable	Neutral	Favourable	N/A	Total
News article	19 (21.8%)	1 (1.1%)	6 (6.9%)	60 (69%)	87
Editorial	4 (57.1%)	--	3 (42.9%)	--	7

Note. $\chi^2(3) = 16.7, p < 0.001$.

Serving as an indicator for the existing attitudes regarding domestic and foreign policy, editorials provided insights on the position of the press towards the American Israeli-Palestinian related policy. In order to track down the press' level of support in government policy, the category press as a source of foreign policy has been cross-tabulated with the level of acceptance of this policy. Table 5.17 shows that significant association existed between the press a source of information and the Position presented in the press toward the U.S. foreign policy stand, ($\chi^2(3) = 8.1, p < 0.05$). According to Table 5.17, when the press was the source of foreign policy information, either via editorial columns or news analyses, it tended to criticize the official foreign policy rather than to accept it (52.9% vs. 23.5% respectively).

Table 5.17

The Position of the Press towards the U.S. Stand on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1993-94

<u>Source of Policy</u>	<u>Press Position towards U.S. Policy</u>				
	Unfavourable	Neutral	Favourable	N/A	Total
U.S. Press	9 (52.9%)	1 (5.9%)	4 (23.5%)	3 (17.6%)	17

Note. $X^2(3) = 8.1, p < 0.05$

*Case study III (2000-2001): The al-Aqsa Intifada and the
Israeli-Palestinian Confrontation*

The Historical-Political Background

After three years with the right-wing Likud party in government, the Israeli elections of 1999 brought back the Labour party to government with Ehud Barak as a Prime Minister. The new government made a commitment to pursue peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours and to accelerate the negotiations with the Palestinians to achieve a permanent settlement. As such, instead of implementing the third redeployment of Israeli forces from the territories, Barak insisted on moving directly to the final status talks (Hammami & Tamari, 2001, p. 7). In order to do so, on July 2000, President Clinton hosted the Camp David summit in which both Barak and Arafat participated. However, the summit collapsed after 11 days with no final settlement because both parties failed to agree on the complex issues of the status of Jerusalem and the Palestinian refugees and the Jewish settlements.

The collapse of the Camp David summit, the stagnation of the negotiations, the continuation of the Israeli occupation and the Palestinian frustration were all accumulated reasons that had led to the outbreak of the second Palestinian uprising, the *al-Aqsa Intifada*. However, the immediate trigger that caused the violent confrontation was Israeli right-wing politician, Ariel Sharon's visit to Temple Mount on September 28, 2000 and the shooting deaths of demonstrators at the site. Yet, some asserted that with this violent confrontation, the Palestinians sought to achieve political goals, mainly the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital base on the 1967 borders, as well as the return of the Palestinian refugees.

Carrying on until these very days, this confrontation evolved from a Palestinian armed struggle combined with a civil popular uprising in which Palestinian civilians threw stones and firebombs at IDF soldiers and Jewish settlers, into a deadly confrontation that

included Palestinian suicide bombers and terrorist activities against Israeli civilians within Israeli cities. In turn, these attacks were followed by aggressive Israeli retaliation assaults on the Palestinians. On February 2001, Prime Minister Barak was defeated by Likud leader Ariel Sharon, who formed a unity government and a broad coalition. Sharon announced that no negotiation would occur unless Arafat publicly called for an end to the violence. Since the election of Prime Minister Sharon, both Israelis and Palestinians have engaged with secret and public talks, at times mediated by American and European representatives, to stop the violence and return to the negotiations table, yet unsuccessfully. The period began in September 2000 and continues to these very days saw only escalation in the violence, terrorist attacks, military assaults and retaliation from both sides.

U.S. Foreign Policy Orientation

As opposed to Clinton's first presidential term, during his second term in office the U.S. took a much more direct and active role in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. As such, during Netanyahu's Premiership, Clinton acted vigorously to move the peace process forward, intervening personally to bring both Netanyahu and Arafat to the negotiation table. With Barak as a Prime Minister, Clinton identified his last opportunity to conclude a peace agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians and therefore, worked more intensively to have this mission accomplished.

The failure of the Camp David summit to achieve the ultimate settlement for the Israelis and the Palestinians on July 2000 was one of the catalysers for the outbreak of the second *Intifada*. President Clinton publicly blamed Arafat for the summit's collapse, threatening to reassess U.S. relations with the Palestinian Authority and to move U.S. embassy to Jerusalem (Sicherman, 2002, p. 166). As Clinton term came close to its end, Clinton engaged, however unsuccessfully, with several attempts to bridge the Israeli and the Palestinian positions.

In his last attempt, Clinton proposed to create a Palestinian state in about 95% of the West Bank and Gaza, a Palestinian sovereignty over the Arab neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem, to limit the right of return to the Palestinian state itself, and to deploy international force along the future Israeli-Palestinian border (Lancaster, 2000, p. A17). While both Barak and Arafat accepted this programme, with major reservations, the gaps were too wide to bridge in the short time left to both Clinton and Barak in government. Clinton left office with no significant achievement in the Arab-Israeli conflict, but with unprecedented violence between Israelis and Palestinians.

President George W. Bush began his term in presidency by separating himself from the obvious failure of Clinton's approach. As a presidential candidate, Bush and his foreign policy advisors often criticized Clinton's close involvement in the search for Middle East peace (Sipress, 2001a, p. A1). The Bush campaign said that Israelis and Palestinians were pushed towards a deal that neither side was ready for and therefore, the U.S. should not intervene in the confrontation (Sackur, 2001, ¶ 2). Adhering to the notion that U.S. foreign involvement must be strictly tied to "vital national interests," President Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell adopted a hands-off policy (Toensing, 2000, p.2).

Both, Bush and Powell, indicated their support for the Israeli view that in the absence of Palestinian renouncement of the violence, little diplomacy could be done and the Palestinian leader would be unwelcome in the White House. While purposely ignoring Arafat, President Bush assured Israeli Prime Minister, Sharon, that the U.S. will not impose a peace agreement on the Middle East, giving him the freedom to pursue his approach toward negotiations with the Palestinians. (Sipress, 2001b, p. A22). The Bush administration also showed support for Israel casting a Veto on the U.N. Security Council

resolution that called for an international protection force in the West Bank and Gaza (Lynch, 2001, p. A19). Nevertheless, the Bush administration strongly criticized the Israelis each time they engaged with expansion of Jewish settlements including those in East Jerusalem (Sipress, 2001b, p. A22).

As the Israeli-Palestinian violence grew, the Bush administration found itself more involved in the conflict, attempting to at least, halt the violence if not to renew the peace negotiations. The month of May 2001 marked a change in direction for the Bush administration that assumed a high profile role in the Middle East. It began with the administration's adoption of the Mitchell Report, which proposed a resumption of security cooperation and confidence-building steps, as a launch pad for renewal of the peace negotiations. From that time on, Bush started dispatching his envoys to the region, starting with Assistant Secretary of State, William Burns, CIA Director, George Tenet and even Secretary of State, Colin Powell all came to reinforce the a cease-fire between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Thus, during the first year of the *al-Aqsa Intifada*, the U.S. administration has transformed from a hands-off, detached policy into being more involved in the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. As William Burns stated during his first visit to the region, “active American engagement in the Middle East is a necessity, not an option” (Sipress, 2001c, p. A17).

In the Third case study (2000-2001), a total of 115 articles from *The New York Times*, 105 articles from *The Washington Post* and 32 items from *The Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States* were subject to content analysis. The following section discusses the results obtained from data processing through statistical procedures, while taking into account the political situation characterized this period.

Foreign Policy Issues in Newspapers and Presidential Documents

H1: The more favourable the President's attitude toward the Palestinian cause, the more favourable the press' attitude toward the Palestinian cause.

H2: The more favourable the President's attitude toward the Israeli cause, the more favourable the press' attitude toward the Israeli cause.

In order to address the first and second research hypotheses, the attitudes towards different foreign policy issues in both the Presidential documents and the newspapers, were compared. Although the researcher did run statistical tests for significance, the results were found to be irrelevant to the relationship between the press coverage of policy issues and the Presidential attitudes toward these same policies. The reason rests on the fact that there could be other factors that might have entered the equation and affected the attitudes of the press.

A comparison between the newspapers and Presidential documents neither supported nor refuted these hypotheses, showing a fluctuation in the levels of agreement on policy issues in both sources (see Tables 1 through 8 of Appendix D). While some cases showed similar attitudes in both types of documents, other cases showed deviation from the attitudes appeared in the President's papers. As such, similar trends were traced with respect to aid to Israel (6.25% and 3.2% respectively), aid to the Palestinians (3.1% and 3.6% respectively), and retaining settlements blocs (3.1% and 3.6% respectively). At the same time, a lack of compatibility existed between both sources' with respect to other issues such as opposition to the Palestinians' Right of Return (0% and 6.4%) and Greater Israel (3.1% and 13.6% unfavourable).

For example, Table 5.18 shows that with respect to the policy of retaining settlement blocs in areas within the West Bank and Gaza, both the newspapers and the Presidential documents tended to accept this idea with rates of 3.6% and 3.1% respectively.

Table 5.18

Position towards Retaining Settlement Blocs in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	8 (3.6%)	1 (3.1%)
Unclear	4 (1.8%)	
N/A	208 (94.5%)	31 (96.8%)
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

Conversely, Table 5.19 shows that with respect to Israel's right to retain the Whole Land of Israel, newspapers generally opposed this policy issue (13.6%), however at the same time they showed some sort of a doubt that was indicated by the rate of the unclear category (4.5%). The low unfavourable rate in the government documents (3.1%) was based on only one case, and therefore is inappreciable.

Table 5.19

Position towards Israel's Right of the Whole Land of Israel in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	30 (13.6%)	1 (3.1%)
Unclear	10 (4.5%)	
Favourable		
N/A	180 (81.8%)	31 (96.8%)
Total	220(100%)	32 (100%)

These results should be looked carefully because is quite obvious that when coming to deal with complex issues such as the Right of Return or unilateral separation, the President (purposely) showed no indication of opinion, while newspapers showed sporadic indication of opinions. This trend highlights the reluctance of the U.S. administration to deal with complex issues publicly and the newspapers' reflection of this policy uncertainty.

The Portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians

H3: In the coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the press follows the line of the President with respect to the portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians.

The results stem from both parameters of portrayal, i.e., frames and images, partially supported the third hypothesis. While the frame of reference tended to be similar in both newspapers and Presidential documents, the press showed more independence when portraying the Israelis. At the same time, the portrayal of the Palestinians in both the press and the Presidential documents showed a similar direction.

Frame of reference.

The coverage of U.S. foreign policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict between 2000 to 2001 tended to reflect the larger political context created by the crisis referred to as the *al-Aqsa Intifada*. As Figure 5.9 shows, in Presidential documents the dominant frame was of a conflict scored 75% (n=24) and the second dominant image was of conflict resolution/reconciliation with a score of 15.6% (n=5).

Similarly, in newspapers 70.4% (n=155) of the items reflected the frame of conflict as result of the Palestinian violent uprising that were followed by the Israeli aggressive retaliation. Conflict resolution was the second dominant frame scored 16.8% (n=37) that mostly represented the attempts, however unsuccessful, to halt the violence and revive the peace process (see also Table 9 of Appendix D).

Dominant images of Israelis and Palestinians.

It is important to understand the political context in which the American diplomatic efforts took place when looking at the data gathered from the Presidential documents. Initially, the Americans detached themselves from the conflict, refusing to intervene. As the violence escalated, the U.S. government acknowledged its important role in bringing an end to the violence and therefore, entered a phase of extensive diplomatic activity in the region.

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Figure 5.10 shows that in six communications, the U.S. President viewed the Israelis ambivalently. As such, in the Presidential papers, the two conflicting images of villains and victims seemed almost the same (15.6% and 12.5% respectively). As for the Palestinians, Figure 5.11 shows that their dominant image in Presidential documents was of villains with 25% ($n=8$), while the image of victims was rated almost with 12.5%.

In addition, Figure 5.10 reveals that in the newspapers, the dominant image of the Israelis was of villains rated 70.4%, followed by another category of victims

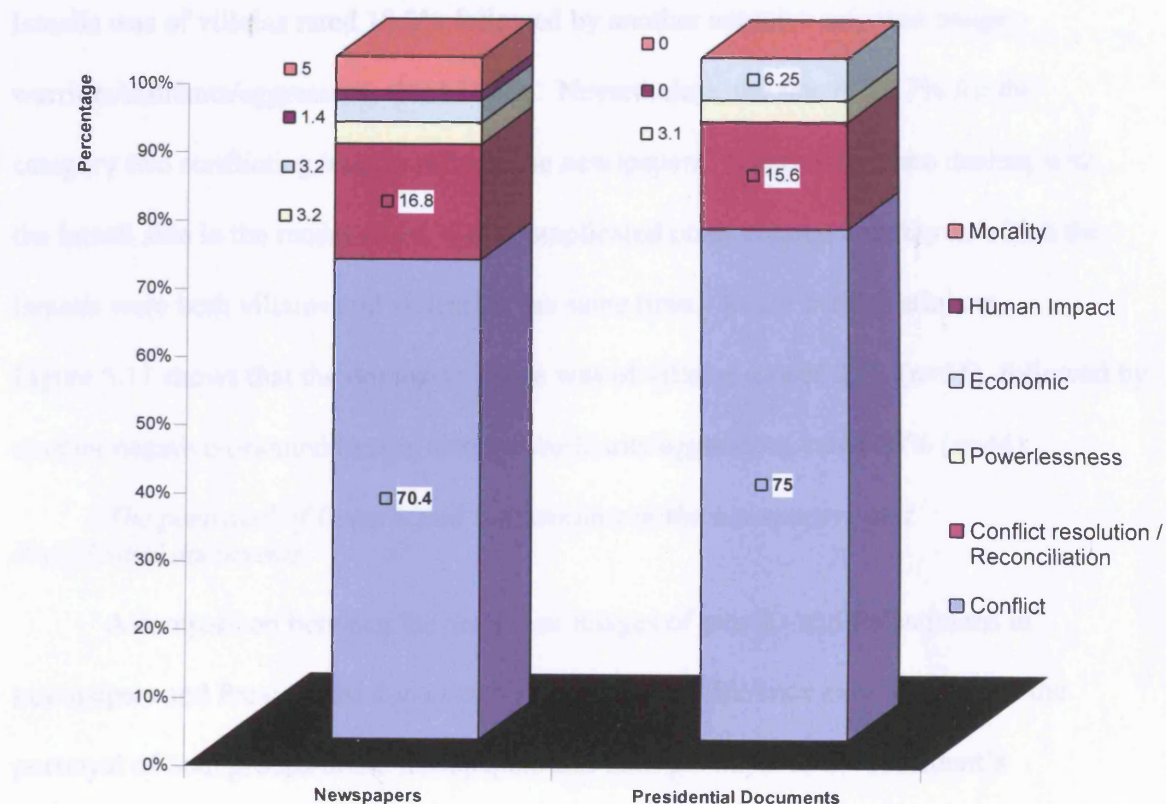


Figure 5.9. Newspapers and Presidential documents 2000-01: Dominant frame by frequency.

Figure 5.10 shows that in his communications, the U.S. President viewed the Israelis ambivalently. As such, in the Presidential papers, the two conflicting images of villains and victims scored almost the same (15.6% and 12.5% respectively). As for the Palestinians, Figure 5.11 shows that their dominant image in Presidential documents was of villains with 25% (n=8), while the image of victims was rated second with 12.5%.

In addition, Figure 5.10 reveals that in the newspapers, the dominant image of the Israelis was of villains rated 18.2% followed by another negative-oriented image, warriors/militants/aggressors, rated 14.5%. Nevertheless, the rate of 12.7% for the category two conflicting images reflects the newspapers' uncertainty when dealing with the Israeli side in the recent crisis. This complicated crisis created a reality in which the Israelis were both villains and victims at the same time. As for the Palestinians, Figure 5.11 shows that the dominant image was of villains scored 25% (n=55), followed by another negative-oriented image, warriors/militants/aggressors, rated 20% (n=44).

The portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians in the newspapers and Presidential documents.

A comparison between the dominant images of Israelis and Palestinians in newspapers and Presidential documents reveals that a difference existed between the portrayal of both groups in the newspapers and their portrayal in the President's documents. As Figure 5.10 shows, the President tended to portray the Israelis with images considered more positive than the newspapers (see also Table 10, appendix D). Whereas in the newspapers Israelis portrayal as villains scored 19.1%, in the Presidential documents this category was rated 12.5%. Similarly, while in the newspapers Israelis portrayal as victims was rated 6.8%, in the Presidential documents this category was rated 12.5%. As for the Palestinians, Figure 5.11 reveals that Presidential documents tended to portray the Palestinians more positively than the newspapers, except of the category villains where both the newspapers and the Presidential documents showed an agreement (rated 25% in both).

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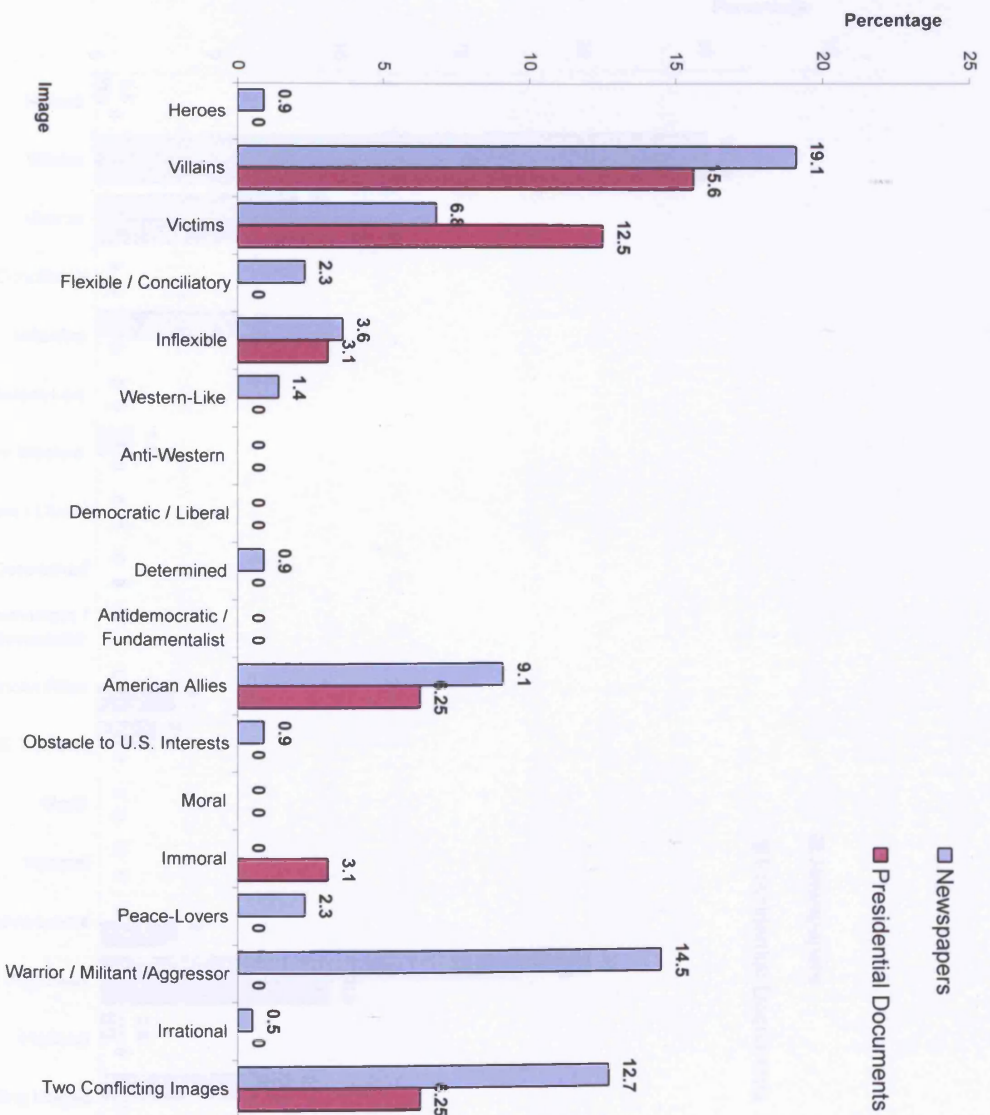


Figure 5.10. Images of Israelis in newspapers and Presidential documents

2000-01: A comparison by percentage.

Note. All N/A values were omitted for clarity purposes. N/A newspapers=25%; N/A Presidential documents=56.25%.

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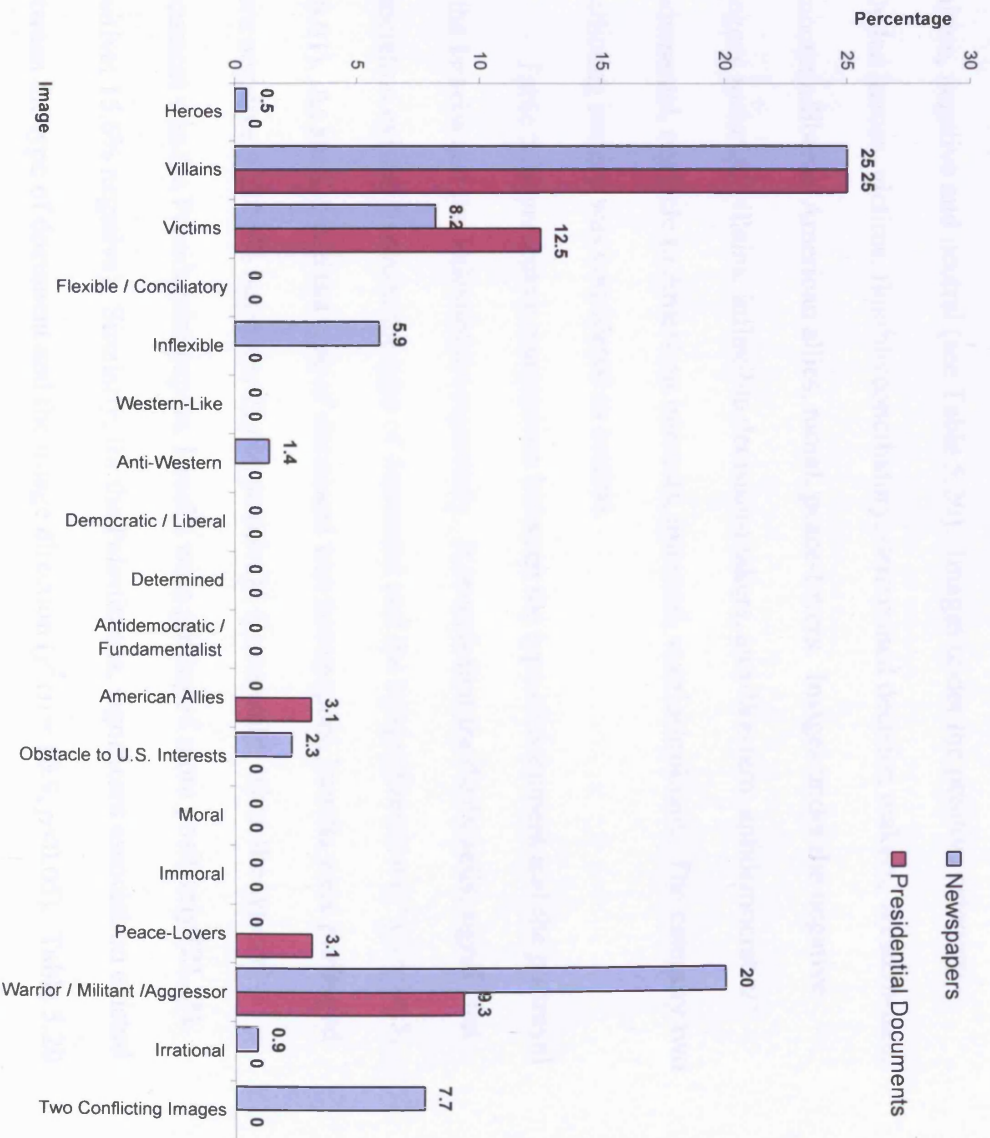


Figure 5.11. Images of Palestinians in newspapers and Presidential documents 2000-01: A comparison by percentage.

Note. All N/A values were omitted for clarity purposes. N/A newspapers=28.2%; N/A Presidential documents=47%.

Fore example, the image of Palestinians as warriors/militants/aggressors (negative) was rated 9.3% in Presidential documents compared to the newspapers where it was rated 20%. Similarly, the image of Palestinians as victims (positive) was rated 12.5% in Presidential documents compared to a rate of 8.2% in the newspapers.

The relatively large number of categories under the variable image, in which many of their cells showed low values, made it difficult to subject this variable to statistical testing. Therefore, the researcher clustered all images according to their direction: Positive, negative and neutral (see Table 5.20). Images under the positive category included heroes, victims, flexible/conciliatory, determined decision makers, Western-like, democratic/liberal, American allies, moral, peace-lovers. Images under the negative category included villains, inflexible decision-makers, anti-Western, antidemocratic/fundamental, obstacle to American interests, immoral, warrior/militant. The category two conflicting images was considered as neutral.

Table 5.20 presents a comparison between the type of document and the portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians separately. It reveals that for the Israelis, significant association existed between the type of document and the image direction ($\chi^2 (3) = 14.5$, $p < 0.01$). As such, when the type of document was newspapers, Israelis were portrayed more negatively (38.6% negative; 23.6% positive). Conversely, when the type of document was the Presidential papers, Israelis were portrayed more positively (21.8% positive; 15.6% negative). Similarly, for the Palestinians, significant association existed between the type of document and the image direction ($\chi^2 (3) = 10.9$, $p < 0.05$). Table 5.20 shows that when the type of document was newspapers, Palestinians were portrayed more negatively (55.4% negative; 8.6% positive). Similarly, when the type of document was the Presidential papers, Palestinians were portrayed more negatively than positively (34.3% negative; 18.8% positive).

Table 5.20

Image Direction of Israelis and Palestinians in Newspapers and Presidential Documents 2000-01: A comparison by Frequencies and Percentages

Direction	<u>Israelis</u>		<u>Palestinians</u>	
	Newspapers	Pres. Docs	Newspapers	Pres. Docs
Positive	52 (23.6%)	7 (21.8%)	19 (8.6%)	6 (18.8%)
Negative	85 (38.6%)	5 (15.6%)	122 (55.4%)	11 (34.3%)
Neutral	28 (12.7%)	2 (6.25%)	17 (7.7%)	
N/A	55 (54.3%)	18 (56.25%)	62 (28.2%)	15 (46.8%)
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

The portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians in editorials.

H4: In editorial coverage of U.S. policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Palestinian image is more negative than the Israeli image

The results presented in Figure 5.12 strongly supported the fourth hypothesis, showing that a significant association existed between the nationality (Israeli or Palestinian) and the image direction ($\chi^2 (3) = 26.847, p < 0.001$). Thus, in editorials, the Palestinians were portrayed more negatively than the Israelis (80.3% vs. 37.7% negative). However, looking at the nationality variable reveals that editorials tended to convey a more critical view of both nationalities.

The Effect of Images on Foreign Policy

H5: The direction of the press' portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians has no effect on U.S. policy toward either group.

In order to examine whether or not the press' portrayal of each group (Israelis or Palestinians) affected government's policy, foreign policy issues were examined against the preceding newspapers' coverage of the conflict. Thus, the researcher tracked the dominant images of the Israelis and the Palestinians as appeared in news coverage during the three-months period prior to the President's actual communication of a specific policy statement.

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The results that emerged from the image/policy comparison are strongly supportive of the fifth hypothesis (Tables 5.2 through 5.6 and Appendix D). As such, all seven except the first showed no association between the image of the Israeli and/or the Palestinian conflict and/or the U.S. status foreign policy. The only case that showed a weak association between the image and foreign policy was that related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

For example, supporting the notion that Israel's status as a superpower should be part of the U.S. foreign policy is associated with a positive image of Israel.

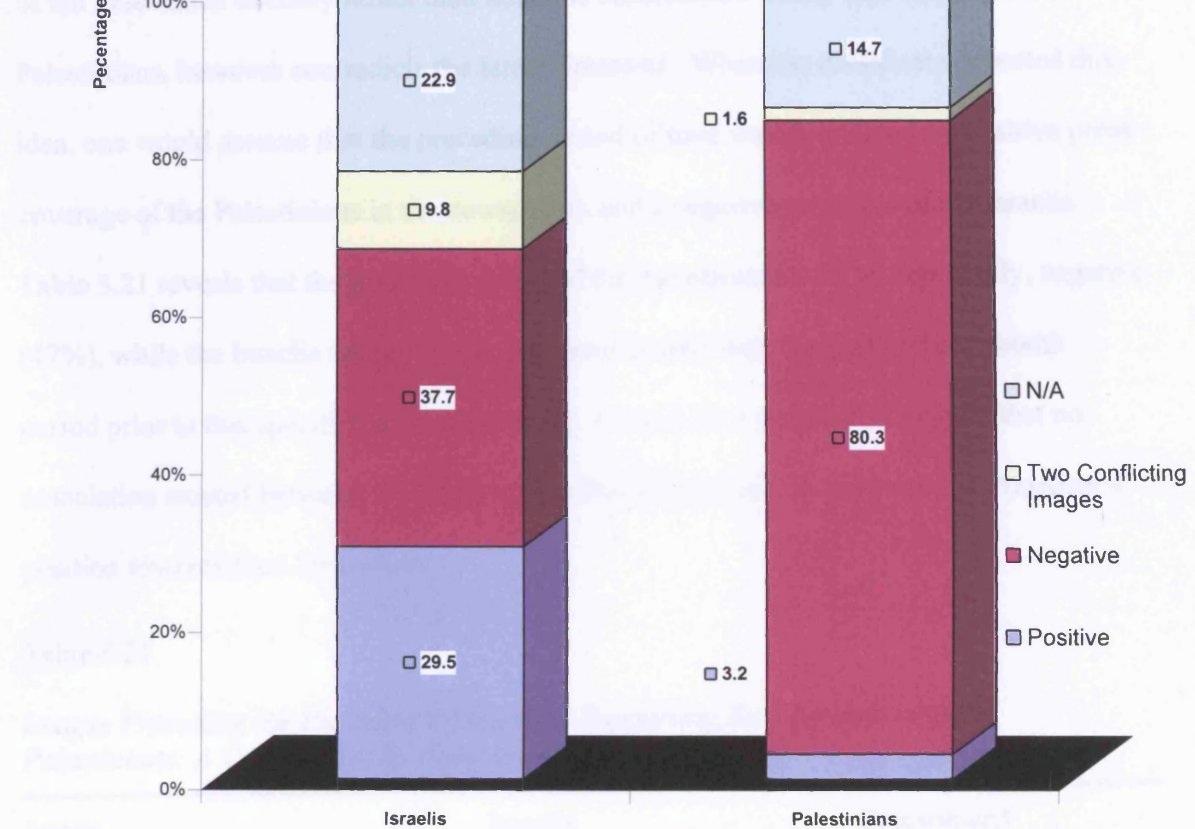


Figure 5.12. Image direction of Israelis and Palestinians in Editorials 2000-01: A comparison by percentage.

Note. ($\chi^2 (3) = 26.84, p < 0.001$).

The results that emerged from the image/policy comparisons strongly supported the fifth hypothesis (Tables 12 through 16 of Appendix D). As such, all cases except for one showed no association between the images of the Israelis and/or the Palestinians and the subsequent U.S. stated foreign policy. The only case that showed some association between the image and stated policy was this related to retaining settlement blocs.

For example, supporting the notion that areas within East Jerusalem should be part of the Palestinian territory rather than Israeli is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians, however contradicts the Israeli interests. When the President supported this idea, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by positive press coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers and a negative coverage of the Israelis. Table 5.21 reveals that the dominant image of the Palestinians was, unexpectedly, negative (47%), while the Israelis are portrayed in a more neutral way during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that no association existed between the image of the Palestinians and Israelis and the President's position towards East Jerusalem.

Table 5.21

Images Preceding the President's Statement Supporting East Jerusalem to the Palestinians: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	19 (25%)	4 (5.1%)
Neutral	9 (11.6%)	3 (3.9%)
Negative	18 (23.3%)	36 (47%)
N/A	31 (40.3%)	34 (44%)
Total	77 (100%)	77 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: August 10, 2000 – January 7, 2001.

Similarly, supporting the establishment of an independent Palestinian state is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians and their interests, yet to some extent contradicts the Israeli Interests. When the President firmly supported this idea, one would

assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. Nevertheless, Table 5.22 reveals that the dominant image of the Palestinians in the press was negative (47%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Palestinians and the President's support for a Palestinian state.

Table 5.22

Images Preceding the President's Statement Supporting an Independent Palestinian State: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	19 (25%)	4 (5.1%)
Neutral	9 (11.6%)	3 (3.9%)
Negative	18 (23.3%)	36 (47%)
N/A	31 (40.3%)	34 (44%)
Total	77 (100%)	77 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: August 10, 2000 – January 7, 2001.

The Role of the Press in Foreign Policy: Active vs. Passive

Source of foreign policy information.

Table 5.23 provides insights about the two newspapers as sources for foreign policy information. The two newspapers relied mostly on U.S. officials to gather foreign policy related information. This included the President and/or members of his staff (39.1%). The press category, which included editorials and news analyses, was rated second as a source for foreign policy information (30.5%).

Table 5.23

Source of Israeli-Palestinian Policy 2000-01: Frequency and Percentage

Source of Foreign Policy	n	%
White House/Administration	86	39.1
State Department	42	19.1
Congress/Congressmen	7	3.2
Israeli Officials/ Press	--	--
Former Presidents/Officials	9	4.1
U.S. Press	67	30.5
Unnamed/Unattributed	1	0.5
Other	8	3.6
Total	220	100

The effect of type of coverage on the position of the press towards U.S. official foreign Policy.

This section attempts to explore issues related to press-government relationship in the context of foreign policy. In order to explore whether or not the press agrees with the President's stated policy, the variable press position towards U.S. stand on the Israeli-Palestinian foreign policy was analyzed, separating between news articles and editorials. It is essential to isolate the editorial category because editorials are known to reflect the newspapers' position on a given issue.

Table 5.24 reveals that significant association existed between the type of coverage (whether a news article or editorial) and the position presented towards U.S. stand on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ($\chi^2(4) = 39.4, p < 0.01$). According to Table 5.24, a similar trend existed in both news articles and editorials with respect to their acceptance or disapproval of the President's policy. Nevertheless, the difference between the items stems from the values that each of the categories received. In general, news articles tended to express a less independent opinion than editorials. The majority of the articles in the news articles category were rated as N/A (62%), indicating no expression of opinion in their coverage, while most editorials under study included some sort of opinion in their coverage. However, when news articles included opinions in their coverage, they tended to be more unfavourable (27.2%) than favourable (5.7%) towards the administration's stated policy. Similarly, the editorials, which tended to express opinion in most

applicable cases, showed higher unfavourable rates (59%) than favourable rates (19.7%) towards the president's stated foreign policy.

Table 5.24

Distribution of Type of Coverage by the Press' Position towards U.S. Stand on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

<u>Type of Coverage</u>	<u>Press Position towards U.S. stand on the Israeli Palestinian Conflict</u>					
	Unfavourable	Neutral	Favourable	Unclear	N/A	Total
News article	43 (27.2%)	2 (1.3%)	9 (5.7%)	7 (4.4%)	98 (62%)	159 (100%)
Editorial	36 (59%)	--	12 (19.7%)	2 (3.3%)	11 (18%)	61 (100%)

Note. $\chi^2(4) = 39.4, p < 0.01$.

Serving as an indicator for the existing attitudes regarding domestic and foreign policy, editorials provided insights on the position of the press towards the American Israeli-Palestinian related policy. In order to track down the press' level of support in the administration's policy, the category press as a source of foreign policy has been cross-tabulated with the level of acceptance of this policy. Table 5.25 shows that significant association existed between the press a source of information and the Position presented in the press toward the U.S. foreign policy stand, ($\chi^2(4) = 58, p < 0.01$). According to Table 5.25, when the press was the source of foreign policy information either via editorial columns or news analyses, it tended to criticize the official foreign policy rather than to accept it (53.7% vs. 17.9% respectively).

Table 5.25

The Position of the Press towards the U.S. Stand on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

<u>Source of Policy</u>	<u>Press Position towards U.S. Policy</u>					
	Unfavourable	Neutral	Favourable	Unclear	N/A	Total
U.S. Press	36 (53.7%)	1 (1.5%)	12 (17.9%)	3 (4.5%)	15 (22.4%)	67 (100%)

Note. $\chi^2(4) = 58, p < 0.01$

Press–Government Relationship

H6: In the U.S. foreign policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the tone of the President affected the press coverage more than vice versa.

This hypothesis can be addressed by integrating the results of all three case studies. The relevant parameters for this hypothesis include the elements that were compared in both Presidential documents and the press. These parameters include source of policy, frame, policy issues coverage, dominant images and image effect on foreign policy. The conclusion drawn from an overall examination of the results partially supported the sixth hypothesis. An integration of all cases showed that in general the press tended to conform to the President's tone and line rather than demonstrated independence of coverage.

The fact that the major source of policy information was either the White House or the State Department generated an inevitable agreement between the positioning of the story in both the Presidential documents and the press. Because journalists did not seek alternative information from political specialists or members of Congress the coverage overwhelmingly conformed to the President's view of a given situation. Moreover, it had a significant effect on the frames that the press used to structure the narrative. Similarly, in most cases, a general agreement existed in the direction of the President's attitudes and the attitudes of the press regarding each specific policy.

However, the result regarding image-policy relationship showed no clear-cut conclusions. While in most cases there was no evidence for relationship between the direction of image and the consequent policy issue, there were some cases in which such relationship has been traced. However, it seems as if such concurrence was occasional rather than systematic.

Nevertheless, the parameter of image as appeared in the press showed a transformation from the dependence pattern to a more independence one over time. As such, in the first case study the press tended to depict the Israelis and the Palestinians the

same way the President depicted them, in the second and third case studies there was evidence of deviance from the President's images. It seems as if the press developed its own sense of understanding and set of concepts about this prolonged conflict. Similarly, a deviance from the President's line was also found in cases where the press was the source of policy information, such as news analyses and editorial pages. In these items, the press showed a more independent thinking, providing criticism of the administration's policy; however, it never suggested any alternative policies.

In sum, the results that emerged from processing the data show that in general, the press had no effect on U.S. foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Even in cases where the press criticized the administration's policy, such as in editorials and news analyses, they failed to provide with alternative ideas that might be considered or adopted by the government. Similarly, the results show that although it changed over time, the press' portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians had no effect on government's policy. With U.S. policy toward the conflict becoming more certain, the press' role became more marginal in its ability to affect policy. Furthermore, the results imply that foreign policy is determined by the interplay between relevant political institutions, and is more likely to be changed and adjusted according to the geo-political and international circumstances at hand.

CHAPTER VI

Congress, Foreign Policy and the Media

The previous chapter provided the results based on a content analysis of both Presidential documents and newspapers. The picture that emerged pointed to two phenomena that are interrelated to some extent. First, the President and his executive branch seemed to be the initiators and executors of U.S. foreign policy. Second, the prestige press showed a lack of interest in Congressional activity on foreign policy, thus, Congressional activity could not be used as a source of foreign policy information. Data analysis of the three case studies revealed that Congress as a source of foreign policy information was marginalized if not ignored by the press. As Tables 2, 6, and 10 showed Congress as a source of information received extremely low rates (2.4%, 2.1% and 3.2% respectively) comparatively to the energetic activity and lively debates that characterized the daily work of this institution.

The Press coverage of foreign policy showed a pattern of monolithic coverage of the President and his executives (see Tables 2, 6 and 10) as if they were the only players in this realm. In practice, however, foreign policy formulation has never been done in a vacuum, but was a process that developed and changed from one presidency to another, according to both the international circumstances and domestic influential elements. One of the internal factors—whose influence on foreign policy has long been debated—is the U.S. Congress. Political scientists have generally agreed that Congress has some degree of influence on U.S. foreign policy, especially in setting the boundaries for the executive branch regarding what it cannot do outside U.S. borders.

Being aware of the importance of Congress in foreign policy decision-making, this chapter explores the Congress's role in determining U.S. policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Based on a content analysis of Congressional documents, the researcher attempted to complete the picture of the media-government relationship as

Congress is, after all, part of the U.S. governing apparatus. As such, this chapter covers aspects related to the relationship between the President and the legislature, as well as their changing roles throughout the American history. It also reviews the characteristics of media coverage of Congress.

Based on the analysis of Congressional documents, the researcher intends to answer the following research questions:

Q1: What was the range of issues discussed by Congress?

Q2: How did Congress portray the Israelis and the Palestinians in their communications?

Q3: Which foreign policy decisions and positions did the Congress favour?

Q4: Did Congress provide alternative policies to these supported by the President?

Q5: Did Congress criticize the President or the executive branch for their policy?

Q6: What role, if any, did Congress play with respect to U.S. policy formulation toward the conflict?

Q7: How did the press cover Congressional debates regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

Q8: What conclusions can be drawn about the relationship between Congress and the press?

Two Approaches to Congress Involvement in Foreign Policy

The American governmental system is characterized by a division of powers between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. While these branches of government are often described as “equal and coordinate,” political scientists have long asserted that in the foreign policy sphere, their powers and influences are not equal. The early work that deals with the Congress-President relationship in the field of international relations is known as “*The Two Presidencies*” theory. Political scientist Aaron Wildavsky argued that there were two different presidencies. The one, related to domestic policy, was

often subject to debate, politics, and Congressional pressure. The other, related to foreign policy, enjoyed an independence, respect, and prestige that enabled the President to manage the external relations of the country almost autonomously (as cited in Rohde, 1994, p. 101).

This theory became the subject of continuous criticism in following decades and research in this field produced inconsistent and uncertain results. Most analyses have found that from the early days of George Washington's administration until the present day, the President and Congress have struggled for control over foreign relations. In addition, it was widely agreed that while there was a presidential advantage on foreign issues as compared to domestic ones, Congress' behaviour has fluctuated, ranging from highly influential to extremely passive in foreign policy decision-making (Rohde, 1994, p. 101). Thus, during some periods (e.g., the era from WW II until the end of the Vietnam War), executive authority in the foreign relations sphere was dominant. In other periods (e.g., during the 1930s and the 1970s), the Congressional voice has been more significant (Crabb & Holt, 1980, p. 213).

Nevertheless, scholars have asserted that any discussion about the way foreign policy is made in the U.S. must begin by recognizing that in this process, the President is the most important actor, and the executive is the most important branch of government. (Ripley & Lindsay, 1993, p. 18). As such, Congress' powers are only limited to telling the White House what it cannot do beyond America's borders. Yet the power to decide what the United States will undertake in its relations with other countries, and to implement specific programmes, resides with the President and the executive branch (Crabb & Holt, 1980, p. 3).

Scholars have generally distinguished between two major modes of Congressional behaviour with respect to foreign policy. These types have been characterized as the supportive Congress and the assertive Congress. The supportive model further

distinguished between three levels of support, including acquiescence and passivity, bipartisanship, and Division-of-Labour (Crabb, Antizzo & Saredidine, 2000). A review of the literature showed, however, that Congressional behaviour has fluctuated throughout American history, depending on the political circumstances, the strength of the President, and the nature of the decision at hand.

Assertive Congress

The notion of a dominant and assertive Congress in dealing with external issues begins from the period of the Revolutionary War, in which Congress asserted its powers by shaping the course of events leading to the separation of the American colonies from Great Britain and negotiating a peace settlement with the British government. Congress continued to play an active role in foreign policy decision-making until the pre-WW II era (Crabb et al., 2000; Crabb & Holt, 1980; Ripley & Lindsay, 1993).

As WW II approached, the U.S. found itself drawn into a conflict for which it was almost totally unprepared. It also became evident that the sources of information lawmakers used in the formulation of foreign policy decisions were often faulty and misleading (Crabb et al., 2000, pp. 157-159). As such, the President took the lead role in foreign policy and the Congressional mode of behaviour turned to become more supportive of his initiatives.

During the two decades after the Vietnam War, Congress has fought to regain the power it lost to the executive branch. The nationwide post-Vietnam trauma, coupled with the Watergate affair and the resignation of President Nixon, brought the presidential office into its lowest position in the Post WW II era. Members of Congress started filling the political vacuum, asserting an active role for themselves in U.S. foreign policy making (Crabb et al., 2000; Mann, 1990).

Some scholars concluded that the phenomenon of Congressional activism in dealing with foreign policy was associated with periods of weak presidential leadership (Crabb et al., 2000; Henahan, 2000). In addition, they argued that forceful legislative intrusions in foreign policy were associated with periods characterized by extensive public opinion and interest groups involvement regarding America's international role. Others found that Congress became more dominant when involved in structural policy decision-making. The term structural policy refers to how resources are used, and in the defence realm, aims at procuring, deploying, and organizing military personnel and material (Ripley & Lindsay, 1993, p. 19). Nevertheless, the pattern of legislative activism in foreign affairs has not become the norm in the decision-making process in the United States.

Supportive Congress

The era from the end of WW II until the mid-1970s witnessed an escalation in presidential influence in the realm of foreign policy, beginning with the phenomenon later known as the "imperial presidency" (Crabb et al., 2000; Ripley & Lindsay, 1993). During this period, members of Congress increasingly began defining their role in foreign policy as one of deferring to the wishes of the President (Ripley & Lindsay, 1993, p. 4).

Evidence of executive dominance at the expense of Congressional activity can be found in a number of empirical works, which mostly predated the Vietnam War (Henahan, 2000; Ripley & Lindsay, 1993). As such, the executive was often able to dominate foreign policy decision-making with the President and his administration initiating the most important foreign policy proposals, achieving their desired outcome in most of the cases. Congress' role was rather minimal, shifting away from the initiation of policies towards legitimating and modifying the policies drawn up by the executive branch (Henahan, 2000, p.9).

Ripley & Lindsay found that the President's power over the Congress was substantial, especially when dealing with strategic and crisis policies. While in strategic policy—which specifies the goals and tactics of defence and foreign policy—Congress involvement has been minor, during crises, Congress exerted almost no power at all in policy formulation (1993, p. 19).

Scholars have identified three levels of Congressional supportive behaviour in the realm of foreign policy, distinguishing between a mere acquiescence, bipartisanship, and Division-of-Labour. Throughout American history, acquiescence was the most widespread mode of Congressional behaviour, while the bipartisanship and Division-of-Labour modes were exceptional patterns in executive-legislative relations in dealing with foreign policy issues.

The first level of behaviour is related to Congressional deference to executive authority or acquiescence (Crabb et al., 2000; Ripley & Lindsay, 1993), in which Congress may pass resolutions authorizing the President's goals and objectives or simply apply minimal intervention. However, the fact that lawmakers agree with the executive in dealing with foreign policy issues does not necessarily mean that international issues are being dealt on a bipartisan basis.

The second level, referred to as the bipartisanship mode, assumes a high degree of unity between the executive and legislative officials with Congress using certain acceptable procedures designed to achieve the mutual goal (Crabb et al., 2000, p. 169). Post-war diplomatic experience has indicated that bipartisanship behaviour was limited almost exclusively to American foreign policy toward the Soviet Union and Western Europe (p. 172).

The third level of support, referred to as the Division-of-Labour model, is mostly represented by the policy-making during the Gulf War in which the foreign policy making process followed a unique pattern (Crabb et al., 2000). First, there was a highly visible and

ominous threat that jeopardized the security and diplomatic interests of the U.S. and its allies abroad. Second, less controversy existed among the President, his advisors, and most members of Congress, as well as the vast majority of the American people (p. 174). Third, the existence of strong public opinion followed by pressure group activity—all supportive of the Bush foreign policy—greatly affected Congressional behaviour. Fourth, this model was also associated with the presence of the most experienced and informed President in the foreign policy field in the history of American diplomacy (p. 175). As such, the legislative branch overwhelmingly supported the policies decided on by the White House, and provided the resources along with other measures required to achieve America's goals abroad.

A review of the models that described the Congress-President relationship in the sphere of international relations shows that in practice, the role Congress chooses to play in foreign policy constantly changes. The work of Congress is affected by several factors, such as international events, the American public, the President's strength, and the nature of a given policy. Nevertheless, a review of the literature leads to the conclusion that in foreign policy, the role of the legislative branch remains largely a reactive one. It is difficult and almost impossible for Congress to impose on the White House a course of action abroad to which the President is strongly opposed. Congress has greater success in preventing the White House from undertaking certain actions abroad to which lawmakers are opposed.

Although the president is indeed the central factor in foreign policy formulation, scholars have agreed that Congress also possesses certain unique powers, which in turn, affect foreign policy decision-making. First, Congress's legislative power can grant or withhold funds for foreign policy ventures and programmes. Second, Congress's power to give a base of legitimacy to American foreign policy is essential to this process. Third, Congress can scrutinize the activities of executive agencies and impose its guidelines on

their operations. Fourth, Congress can limit the President's use of armed forces for foreign policy purposes (Crabb & Holt, 1980, pp. 217-218).

How Congress Influences Foreign Policy

Although scholars have generally agreed that the President and the State Department are the most prominent actors in the formulation and execution of foreign policy, they have also recognized the important role Congress plays in this arena. As such, Congress uses a set of direct and indirect means to influence foreign policy decision-making. These include substantive legislation, anticipated reaction, procedural legislation, diplomacy, and framing opinions. This section will review the tools Congress uses to affect foreign policy.

Committees remain the centre of Congressional actions in most foreign policy matters, providing a platform to exert both direct and indirect means of influencing foreign policy. Research has pointed out that in most cases, committee members are the effective policy leaders, and committees are the point of origin for the vast majority of legislative measures shaping foreign policy (Smith, 1994, p. 155). Thus, through legislation, members of Congress are able to dictate the content of foreign policy. However, despite the increase in legislative activity, most observers have contended that "legislative victories on foreign policy remain the exception rather than the rule" (Ripley & Lindsay, 1993, p. 23).

The difficulties Congress faces in passing foreign policy legislation rest on several conceptions. First, the inherent advantageous position of the President over the Congress in this field. Second, the notion that adverse policy will jeopardize U.S. relations with other nations or undermine the negotiating position of the President. Third, it is widely perceived that the flexible nature of foreign relations should not be limited by rigorous laws. (Lindsay, 1994b; Ripley & Lindsay, 1993). As a result, Congress often tends to change policy without passing legislation, using indirect tools and techniques.

The first indirect technique Congress uses to influence foreign policy refers to anticipating reactions (Ripley & Lindsay, 1993). Thus, both Congress and the executive branch attempt to anticipate one another's behaviour and modify their own accordingly. As such, the atmosphere on the Capitol Hill determines the executive's perception regarding which policy options are politically feasible. As such, by anticipating the position of Congress, presidents sometimes revise a programme that has been already unveiled. Nevertheless, Congressional opposition does not always alter the executive's policy, and presidents often take the risk of dictating their own preferences despite the risk of Congressional backlash (pp. 27–28).

A second indirect technique refers to the procedural legislation. Through this method, Congress seeks to change the identity of those who participate in foreign policy decision-making or to influence the way decisions are made. This is done, for example, by establishing new agencies within the executive branch that will be more supportive of Congressional policy preferences (Lindsay, 1994a, p. 117).

A third indirect technique refers to Congress engagement in diplomatic endeavours (Crabb & Holt, 1980; Lindsay 1994a, 1994b; Mann, 1990). This type of indirect, however influential, tool can take one of three forms: Lone-Ranger diplomacy, invited participation, and routine contacts with foreign governments (Lindsay 1994a, p. 120). Being the least successful strategy, the Lone-Ranger diplomacy refers to efforts made by individual members of Congress to conduct their own foreign policy. At times, members of Congress are invited by the President to participate in diplomatic negotiations and in the practice of appointing representatives, Senators observers, advisers, or delegates to international conferences is not rare. Finally, the increase in direct communications between members of Congress and foreign leaders has led to an increased number of meetings between members of Congress and foreign officials. Although these contacts mostly involve a mere

exchange of information, they certainly limit the President's ability to shape negotiations to his own favour (P. 124).

A fourth indirect technique exerted by Congress is framing of opinions. In this way, members of Congress seek to change the climate of opinion surrounding a given policy. The underlying concept is that the change in opinions of both the public and the political elite will lead to a policy change. Among the techniques used to influence opinions are committee hearings, reports, speeches, and appearances on radio and television shows, as well as the writing of opinion pieces in major newspapers. (Ripley & Lindsay, 1993, Lindsay, 1994a). Crabb & Holt pointed out that public communication attributed to Senators, especially on foreign policy issues, is newsworthy and influences the attitudes of executive policy makers (1980, p. 50). Although this technique compels presidents to react quickly and sometimes to change their policy, framing does not always work. Occasionally, presidents are willing to pay a high political cost to advance their own policy agenda, changing the style rather than the content of a policy (1994a, p. 137).

Congress and the Media

As noted before, framing of opinions can bring extensive political profit to members of Congress as long as it receives public exposure. Capturing the media's attention is therefore one of the major and most complicated tasks in which members of Congress are engaged. According to Lindsay, the media give Congress the means to overcome the obstacles related to shaping policy through legislation. He added that getting the media's attention is often the best weapon for forcing the administration to reverse its course of action or to build public support for new policy initiatives (1994a, p. 134). Senators and Representatives desiring media coverage can acquire it through various communication vehicles. These include press releases, press conferences and briefings, weekly news columns, interviews in radio and television programmes, as well as floor speeches.

Congress Use of Publicity

Publicity has long had a variety of uses by Congress as by all legislative bodies. Scholars have asserted that the basic motivation of members of Congress is to be re-elected. As such, their most important goal is to develop in the voter the image of an active, dedicated representative (Clapp, 1974, p 138). In a reality in which showing activity is the goal, the media have an important role in conveying this image. Nevertheless, members of Congress are not motivated only by the purpose of re-election, but by other goals and agendas that they wish to promote. Thus, an effective publicity can help a member achieve not only re-election, but also public policy expertise and influence both within the institution and in Washington (Cook, 1989, p. 86).

Members of Congress also need the assistance of the media to introduce new ideas and develop support for them (Dunn , 1974, p. 240). In turn, those who initiated the ideas can act as authoritative sources, and build a reputation for policy leadership. Moreover, the media's attention toward an issue can mobilize outside groups that further enhance coverage, which in turn, encourages other officials to join the crowd (Cook, 1989, p. 86).

Scholars have asserted that the relationship between Congress and the media is rather symbiotic. On one hand, Congress seeks publicity for the reasons stated above, while on the other hand, they use the media as a source of vital information on what is going on in the House, in Washington, in the nation, among the public, and in the world (Cook, 1989; Dunn, 1974). By turning to the media for information and new ideas, members of Congress can evaluate their own activities (Dunn, 1974, p. 242). Officials also learn from the media how to order their priorities, deciding where to place emphasis in the policy making process. In addition, by turning to the editorial pages of both national and local press, members of Congress can assess constituency reaction to various ideas and policies (p. 243).

Members of Congress are aware of the central role of the media in lightening or downplaying their own agendas. Although they invest extensive efforts to gain publicity, media coverage of Congress is rare compared to coverage of the President. In addition, many blame the media for the poor public image of the typical member of Congress, and complain that reporters distort information and fail to emphasize the important things.

Characteristics of Media Coverage of Congress

Since WW II, the press has generally held Congress in low esteem. This trend has intensified in recent years, and Congress has been either ignored or criticized by the media. Previous research on media coverage of Congress reached similar findings concluding that coverage of Congress was generally unfavourable and critical. Most coverage tended to emphasize scandal, sensationalism, and turmoil, contributing to the legislator's weak reputation (Coursen-Parker, 1994; Lichter & Amundson, 1994; Mann & Orenstein, 1994; Rozell, 1994). A comprehensive study of press commentary from three news weeklies and three dailies during ten important periods since WW II found that press coverage of Congress focused on scandal, partisan rivalry, and inter-branch conflict, rather than on the more complex subjects such as policy process and institutional concerns (Rozell, 1994, p. 109). According to these findings, the press portrayed the nation's legislators as self-interested, self-indulgent politicians who exploit the legislative process for personal gain (p. 110).

Not only the print media but also the electronic media showed a poor treatment of Congress in their coverage. An examination of three networks' coverage of Congress from 1972 through 1992 revealed two major trends. First, the amount of Congressional coverage has declined dramatically. Thus, since 1979, when the House began to allow proceedings to be televised on C-SPAN, the major networks appeared to have lost interest in its ongoing activities. Second, the focus of the coverage has changed from dealing with policy issues to covering scandal. At the same time, the news format has become more

adversarial, with more stories focusing on individual or institutional conflicts, featuring a more negative tone of coverage (Lichter & Amundson, 1994, p. 139).

Furthermore, even media practitioners have acknowledged that the media has grown increasingly hostile toward Congress. A survey of 331 senior members of the national news media supported previous research findings regarding the nature of media coverage of Congress (Coursen-Parker, 1994, p. 166). It also found that radio talk show hosts were among the most hostile of journalists in their attitudes toward Congress. Television journalists, as a group, although not as hostile as talk show hosts, appeared to be more hostile than their print and wire services colleagues (pp. 167–168).

While media coverage of Congress is rare compared to the coverage of the President, Senators tend to get the bulk of exposure. Senators are considered more interesting news targets than Representatives for several reasons. First, many Senators openly aspire to higher political office, so journalists pay close attention to potential presidential candidates (Dunne, 1974; Hess, 1991; Mann and Orenstein, 1994). Second, the Senate generally considers questions of broad public policy more openly than the House of Representatives (Dunn, 1974, p. 245). Third, the Senate draws greater attention because it has exclusive domain over the confirmation of presidential appointees and the ratification of treaties (Hess, 1991, p. 97). Fourth, in order to survive and advance to higher political office, most senators must “make news” by the reporter’s definition of the term. In efforts to become national celebrities, Senators are often engaged in sensational behaviour that, in turn, attracts the media (Matthews, 1974, p. 257). Although Representatives, in contrast to Senators, rarely make it into the national media, they assume a better position in the local or regional media. Since Representatives usually have deeper roots within their constituencies than do Senators, they can provide the media with stories with a local angle and thus gain more coverage (Dunn, 1974, p. 245).

Why is the media coverage of Congress so scarce and so harsh?

Scholars and media practitioners have long speculated about the reasons for both the quantity and quality of media coverage of Congress. The lack of coverage of Congressional activity lies first in the fact that both print and electronic media have limited space and time for coverage, and therefore only prominent issues are being published (Blanchard, 1974, p. 171). Moreover, the public is not really interested in the day-to-day work of Congress, but in the final decisions on important issues (pp. 171–172). Thus, media coverage addresses the public rejection of daily Congressional news. Another view holds that issues most likely to make news are easily described, have clearly characterized sides, affect a large part of the audience, and come with straightforward reform remedies. Because the media have difficulty to convey the complexities of the legislative process to the average audience, they tend to ignore complex, unfamiliar and specialized issues—typically handled by Congress (Cook, 1989; Rozell, 1994). Finally, all agree that the key news-maker is the President and the executive branch. Routine Congressional activities are not considered as important as many other Washington stories. As such, Capitol Hill correspondents often lose stories to their counterparts in the White House, the State Department or the Pentagon (Cook, 1989, p. 46). However, what makes Congress newsworthy to editors is its involvement with other institutions or its response to presidential initiatives (Cook, 1989; Rozell, 1994).

Scholars have emphasized that more aggressive, scandal-oriented media coverage of Congress has emerged after the Watergate scandal. Dye and Zeigler pointed to “a post Watergate code of ethics,” in which journalists sought out scandal, looking into the personal lives of officials and other areas once considered off limits (1989, p. 212). In addition to the post-Watergate nature of coverage, scholars have asserted that the media’s concentration on scandal and conflict rests on the fact that policies and the legislative process are considered dull and detached from everyday life, while rivalries and inter-

branch conflicts are considered more colourful and interesting (Rozell, 1994, p. 110). As previously explained, the media generally avoid conveying complex procedural, legislative-oriented stories because of the audience's lack of interest; however, they will do so when stories are related to scandals and can be explained in terms of, and as reactions to, inter-branch, partisan, or personal rivalries (p. 111).

U.S. Congress and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The theoretical background serves as a foundation for a practical examination of the scope of Congressional foreign policy activity regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict between September 2000 and August 2001. This analysis evaluates various aspects related to the golden triangle, Congress-foreign policy-media, by analyzing the content of Congressional documents of both the House and Senate. These documents include speeches, tributes, reports, discussions about proposed resolutions and bills, as well as debates prior to the voting on actual acts. These documents were selected for analysis because they provide a window into a wide range of positions held by members of Congress. In addition, these documents deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in various contexts, providing a more complete picture of Congress' treatment of this conflict. Finally, these documents were selected because their content is available for the examination by both the public and the media.

A total of 62 items constituted the sample of Congressional documents. Texts were obtained from the Congressional records located in the on-line database of the United States Government Printing Office. In order to locate the relevant documents, the researcher used an internal search engine within this Web Site, sorting the database according to the following key words: *Middle East Conflict, PLO, Palestinians, Israel, Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza Strip, Arafat (Yasir Arafat)*. To ensure that only the relevant items were included for analysis, a secondary selection was performed by scanning each item and ensuring it met the standards previously set. Documents for analysis included

items that discussed both the Israelis and the Palestinians during the period between September 2000 and August 2001. The researcher decided to focus on only one case study because in all three case studies, the press showed a similar pattern of coverage of the Congress. Therefore, it would be possible to illustrate media-Congress-foreign policy relations by analyzing this particular case, assuming that the same relationship existed in the other cases.

Q1: The Range of Issues Discussed by Congress

The outbreak of the *al-Aqsa Intifada* marked the collapse of the peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians. All attempts to stop the violence and revive the peace negotiations during the first weeks of the crisis were unsuccessful. Recognizing the dangerous potential of this crisis to destabilize the whole region, the U.S. administration made continuous efforts to restore calm rather than to focus on specific policy issue. In the wake of escalating violence, dealing with specific policy issues seemed irrelevant. As such, in their communications, President Clinton and his successor, Bush, became focused more on urging both sides to stop the violence rather than on articulating their vision or position toward one issue or another.

In contrast to the President, Congress was busy with formulating and debating resolutions, bills, and acts to address the situation. In addition, Congress discussed a wider range of issues, expressing clear-cut positions toward the crisis. By comparing the presidential documents with congressional documents, it seems as if each branch focused on a distinct set of themes, so that both branches complemented each other with respect to the range of issues within their scope of responsibility.

In public communications, Congress often dealt with more complex issues than the President, such as the origins of the current conflict and its global and national implications. Speakers frequently used background information, using various sources and

evidence to support their arguments whereas the President's assertions were more simplistic and superficial.

Congress' work evolved out of four basic assumptions which drew on my analysis. First, the Palestinian violence was a strategic decision by the Palestinian Authority (PA) to gain political ends. Second, that Israel made unprecedented concessions in efforts to achieve peace. Third, that Israel was and is the greatest ally of the U.S. Fourth, that Israel was a tiny country surrounded by enemies who threatened to destroy her. Although there were other voices, calling for a more balanced approach toward the Israelis and Palestinians, the range of issues handled by Congress mainly derived from these basic notions.

Among other issues and policies debated in Congress, the following were the most often observed topics in Congressional communications:

1. The outcome and implications of the Camp David summit
2. The origins of and reasons for the Palestinian violence
3. Israel's position in the conflict
4. The question of Jerusalem
5. Aid to Israel
6. Restrictions on the Palestinians
7. The Palestinian State
8. U.N. anti-Israel resolutions
9. Criticism of the President and the administration
10. U.N. observers
11. The effects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on U.S. national security, energy crisis and global terrorism

Q2: Congress Portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians

Traditionally, the U.S. Congress has been the most pro-Israeli actor among the foreign policy making groups—the President and his executive branch, the State and Defence Departments. Reasons for this behaviour vary from the influence of a strong pro-Israeli lobby to a reflection of the American public's sincere sentiment towards Israel. Since the establishment of the State of Israel, public opinion polls have repeatedly shown that the American people as a whole have been sympathetic toward Israel.

A review of Congressional documents between September 2000 and August 2001 showed that the recent Israeli-Palestinian confrontation reinforced the pro-Israeli sentiment among members of Congress. Congress held the Palestinians as the solely responsible party for the failure of the Camp David II Summit and the subsequent crisis. As such, Congress continuously condemned the Palestinians for both the inciting and maintaining of the violence, while overwhelmingly advocating the Israeli positions, justifying their retaliation assaults as actions of self-defence.

Congress's portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians was dichotomous, generally reflecting these notions. As such, Congressional communications made a clear-cut distinction between the "good guys" and the "bad guys" in the conflict. In contrast to the Presidential documents and the newspapers, the images Congress used to portray both groups were more blatant, explicit and graphic, using plain descriptive terms, adverbs, and adjectives.

Congressional communications made a clear distinction between negative and positive images. In order to map the images, the researcher clustered all images into three main categories: Negative, positive and neutral. The negative category included images such as terrorists, mob, guerrilla, antidemocratic/totalitarian, corrupted regime, Iraqi ally, and other related images. The positive category included images such as victims, America's ally, the besieged state, peace-lovers and democracy. The neutral category

included both negative and positive images for each group that appeared in the same item.

As Figure 6.1 shows, a significant association existed between the nationality (Israeli or Palestinian) and the image that dominated the Congressional documents

($\chi^2(3) = 48.64, p < 0.001$). Thus, in Congressional documents, the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative (43.5%), while the dominant image of the Israelis was positive (43.5%). In general, in Congressional communications the descriptions of both groups was so explicit and clear, so that readers could easily label them as either good or bad (see also Table 1 of Appendix E).

Peace-lovers vs. violence-chooser.

In Congressional documents, the Palestinians were held responsible for the failure of the Camp David summit. For example, Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY) said “the Israeli government demonstrated the willingness to make sweeping concessions at Camp David. Unfortunately, Mr. Arafat rejected it... We cannot have peace if only one side is making concessions and the other side continues to hang on to its strident demands.” (*Terrorism & violence*, 106th Cong. 2000). Furthermore, Congress often blamed the Palestinians for a planned, government-orchestrated violence to achieve their political ends. “I am stunned also that after seven years of good faith negotiations all too many Palestinians still see violence as the means to achieve their ends.” In contrast, the Israelis were constantly depicted as peace-lovers who made unprecedented efforts to reach a peace agreement: “Let alone how much more Israel can sacrifice in the name of peaceful compromise... Prime Minister Barak went further than anyone dreamed... and even those exceedingly generous and courageous offers were rejected.” (*Conference report*, 106th Cong., October 12, 2000).

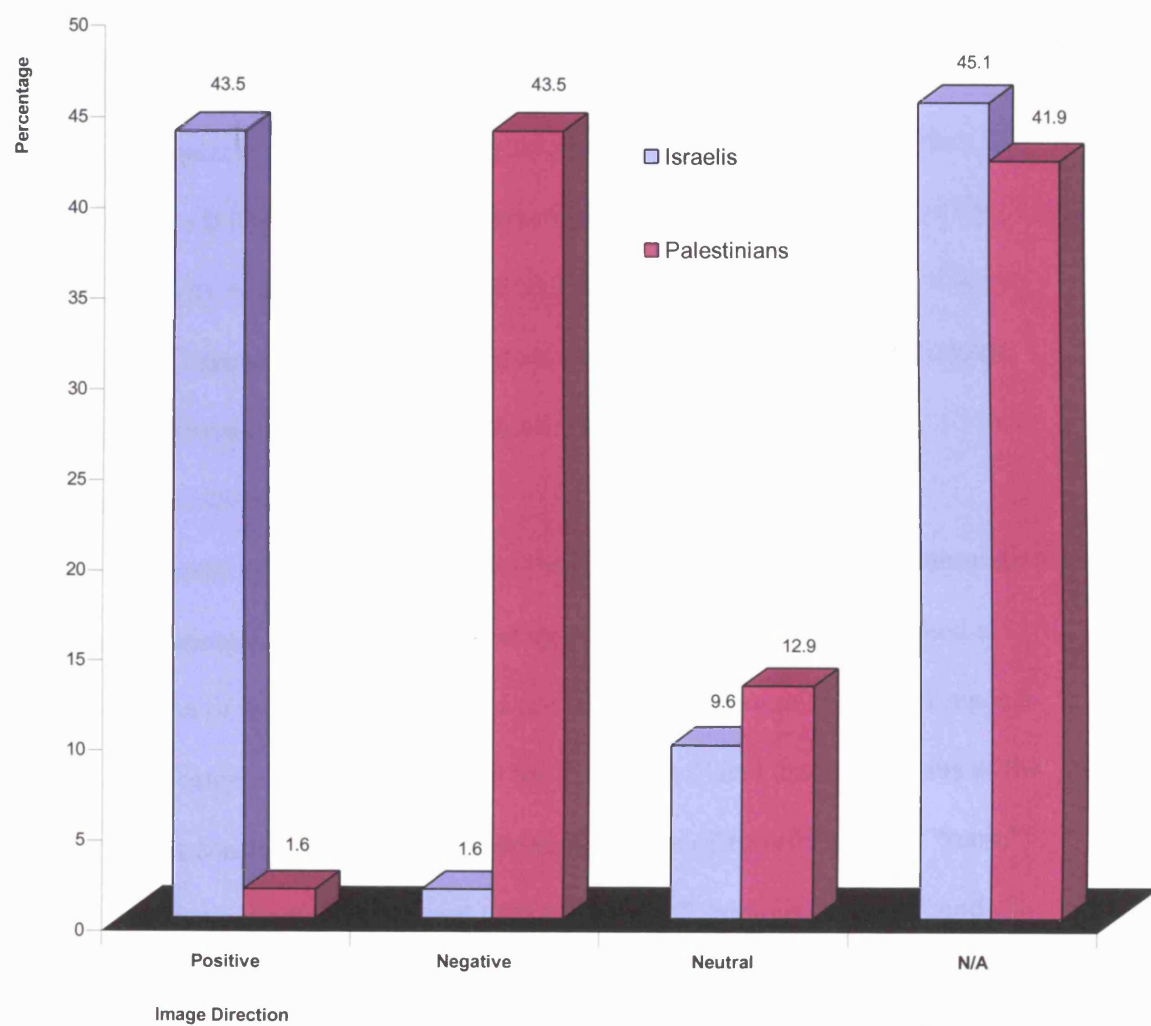


Figure 6.1. The portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians in Congressional documents by percentage.

Note. ($\chi^2(3) = 48.64, p < 0.001$).

The Israeli image of peace-lovers vs. the Palestinian image of violence-producers were reinforced by Congress that often stated “the violent Palestinian riots...result directly from the fact that Yasir Arafat did not prepare his people for peace” (*Terrorism & violence*, 106th Cong., October 12, 2000). In addition, Congress emphasized that the PA used various tools such as its official media to incite violence. Congress often contended that the Palestinians violence was inherent, beginning with the education of children to prefer violence to peace: “The difficulties in the peace process are enormous. They are generational. There is absolutely no likelihood of success if the schoolchildren in the Palestinian Authority schools are going to be taught hatred and violence...how to go to heaven by getting themselves killed in the process of killing others and destroying the peace process.” (*Statements*, 106th Cong., October 24, 2000).

Victims vs. villains.

The extremely violent characteristic of the latest Israeli-Palestinian confrontation followed by Palestinian suicide bombers, and aggressive Israeli retaliation invited a colourful depiction of the parties involved in the conflict. In general, Congress made a clear distinction, categorizing the Israelis as the “good guys” and the Palestinians as the “bad guys” in this conflict. As such, the Palestinians were often referred to as “mob,” “guerrilla,” and “terrorists” who engaged with “barbarian,” “vicious,” “brutal” and “inhumane” acts. For example: “Apparently a mob of Palestinians broke into the police station, slaughtered the Israeli soldiers, and paraded their bodies through the streets (*Violence in the Middle East*, 106th Cong., October 24, 2000). Or, “the PA unleashed its malicious, disguised as disorganized, riots...for the purpose of causing as much violence and death as possible“ (*Remember elections*, 106th Cong., November 3, 2000).

Moreover, members of Congress frequently associated between the Palestinian leadership and the Iraqi leader who has been the symbol for all the world’s evil in the eyes of Americans and other Western audiences since the Gulf War: “The Palestinians have

been cursed with leaders who have always seemed to be wrong for the times. In WW I, Palestinian leaders sided with the Turks against the British; in WW II, with the Nazis against the allies; in the cold war, with the soviets against the west; and in the Persian Gulf War, with Saddam against the coalition of the allies (*The Middle East*, 107th Cong., July 9, 2001). Paralleling the Palestinians with the Iraqis contributed to the de-legitimization of the Palestinian leadership as the terminology used to describe the Iraqi hateful leader implied also on the Palestinians. As Rep. Sherman (D-CA) stated “I am... intrigued by the recent decision of the Palestinian authority to send some of its wounded people to Baghdad for treatment...It shows the close alliance between Arafat...and the Butcher of Baghdad...They were sent to Baghdad as a sign of solidarity between the Palestinians and Saddam Hussein and an endorsement and thank you to Saddam Hussein for resisting the peace process” (*The Middle East*, 107th Cong., July 9, 2001).

In addition, Congress often emphasized that the Palestinian Authority has deliberately and manipulatively been using children and civilians in this violent confrontations to gain the world sympathy for its cause. “Arafat attempts to dictate Israeli concessions...through the manipulation of young children as “martyrs in training.” (*Gilman condemns*, 106th Cong., Oct 12, 2000). While in contrast to the Palestinian immoral behaviour, “Israel defence force have exercised remarkable restraint in the face of lethal violence orchestrated by the leadership of the PA that deliberately pushes civilians and young people to the front lines” (*Recent violence*, 106th Cong., October 26, 2000).

Democratic vs. totalitarian.

The image of Israel as a democratic country that shares the American values of freedom and justice was dominant in Congressional communications. As Senator Kyl (R-AZ) argued: “Talk about robust democracy. It exists in Israel. You have very strongly held views by different citizens in Israel and they fight it out” (*The Middle East*, 107th Cong., July 9, 2001). Israel is not only a democracy, but it shares the most sacred

American values such as freedom: “Now is the time for us to publicly reaffirm our commitment to the freedom-seeking people of Israel (*Middle East crisis*, 106th Cong., October, 12, 2002). In contrast, the PA often described as a totalitarian, fundamental and corrupted regime that was at odds with the American values and principles. As Congress stated, “We have to recognize...that as long as the leadership of the other side...primarily the PLO is not democratically based but is totalitarian...there will continue to be a conflict. The key to peace is a more democratic and much less corrupt leadership...The Palestinians have been cursed with leaders who have always seemed to be wrong for the times” (*The Middle East*, 107th Cong., July 9, 2001).

American ally.

Congressional documents portrayed Israel as a country with an enduring, alliance with the U.S. Thus, members of Congress made repeated references to the ties that bind both countries. This theme was repeatedly used by Congress to emphasize the importance of supporting Israel during its hard times. It has been frequently asserted that “it will also signal to nations across the Middle East and around the world that the American people stand by Israel—our democratic ally and closest partner in the Middle East peace” (*Concerning violence*, 106th Cong., Oct 26, 2000). In addition, “we [the U.S.] are a bedrock ally of Israel and always will be” (H. Rep. No. 106-997, 2000).

The besieged state.

Regardless of Israel’s real military and economic strength, Congress has consistently depicted Israel as the besieged state surrounded by enemies who constantly threatened to destroy her. By using this image, Congress has been able to justify its decisions to provide Israel with unprecedented financial and military aid, or to defend aggressive Israeli reaction to the Palestinian violence. As Rep. Nadler (D-NY) argued: “Surrounded by enemies, plagued by acts of vicious terrorism, which have claimed the lives of countless civilians, many specifically targeted at children and other non-

combatants, Israel has nonetheless maintained its commitment to a free, open and democratic society" (*Congratulating Prime Minister*, 107th Cong., Feb, 13, 2001).

Similarly, "Americans have to understand that tiny, little Israel, the only democracy in that part of the world—surrounded by some of the worst tyrannies in the world—is having a very difficult time right now" (National Defence Authorization, 106 Cong., October 12, 2000).

A review of Congressional documents from the first year of the *al-Aqsa Intifada* showed that members of Congress adhered to images that were widespread in the U.S. during the 1960s and the 1970s. Although there were voices in Congress that called for a more balanced and even-handed treatment of the Israelis and the Palestinians in this conflict, these voices were minor. Those who supported a more balanced attitude generally held both the Israelis and the Palestinians responsible for the crisis, viewing both sides as victims as well as villains. Nevertheless, the predominant image of Israelis in Congress was positive while the image of the Palestinians was mainly negative.

Q3, Q4: Congress Foreign Policy Decisions and Prevailed Positions

A review of Congressional documents and presidential documents reveals that there was a division-of-labour between the Congress and the executive in terms of the range of policy issues handled by each branch. Thus, both branches seemed to complement each other with each side providing input to the formulation of American foreign policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Congress as a whole did not propose any alternative policy to a one adopted by the president, but provided additional policies. Moreover, while the President tended to show a more general vision treating both sides of the conflict as much equally as possible, Congress was more obvious in its attitudes and intentions, proposing concrete measures to address the conflict.

As Congress held the Palestinians responsible for inciting and maintaining the violence, this institution proposed various policies to address this crisis. The Palestinian

attempt to unilaterally declare a Palestinian State shortly after the failure of the Camp David negotiations faced a bipartisan opposition from Congress. As such, Congress issued a list of measures to be taken by the U.S. should a Palestinian State be declared. These included opposing a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian State, withholding diplomatic recognition, prohibiting of all U.S. assistance to the Palestinians, as well as downgrading the PLO office in Washington D.C.

While continuously praising the Israelis, referring to their concessions in the Camp David negotiations as far-reaching, Congress viewed the Palestinians as the main cause for the violence. As such, it frequently condemned the PA, blaming it for educating the Palestinian people for violence, as well as planning and encouraging terrorism. As opposed to the administration that viewed Arafat the legitimate Palestinian leader, Congress recognized—in the very early stages of the conflict—that Arafat was not the partner with whom the Israelis could negotiate a peace settlement. As a result, Congress issued various bills and resolutions not only condemning the PA, but also imposing concrete diplomatic and economic restrictions on it. These limitations included cutting U.S. funds for non-humanitarian causes, closing the PLO offices in Washington D.C., and the designation of the PLO as a terrorist organization. Although, not being fully implemented, these restrictions expressed the negative sense of the Congress with respect to the Palestinians and the measures this branch was ready to take against them.

Led by the notion that Israel is the real victim in this confrontation, the U.S. Congress enthusiastically adopted resolutions to further strengthen the Jewish state. As such, they approved acts supporting military and economic aid to Israel, urging the President to “lobby” the Israeli cause among America’s world allies. In addition, the growing anti-Israel tone in the U.N. generated a series of Congressional resolutions condemning U.N. decisions and reaffirming the American commitment and support for

Israel. Thus, throughout the year, Congress has prepared several resolutions to be the official U.S. policy against future U.N. anti-Israel decisions.

Although U.S. official position on Jerusalem was straight forwarded, advocating Israel's yielding parts of East Jerusalem to the Palestinians, Congress' position regarding this issue varied. Nevertheless, the legislature enthusiastically advocated the relocation of the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, expressing Congress' recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. As Representative Tancredo (R-CO) argued, "moving the embassy to Jerusalem is consistent with U.S. policy and does not infringe on the remaining issues of conflict over East Jerusalem" (*Jerusalem embassy*, 107th Cong., Feb 13, 2001).

In sum, during the first year of the *al-Aqsa Intifada*, the U.S. Congress worked vigorously to affect U.S. policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In some cases Congressional policies indeed became the official U.S. position. This is mainly referred to appropriation legislation with respect to the Israelis and the Palestinians, as well as U.S. support for Israel in the U.N. Although it is unclear whether or not the administration officially and publicly adopted Congress position with respect to the legitimacy of Arafat as the Palestinian leader or blaming the Palestinians for the violence, it clearly contributed to the framing of opinions in the White House. For example, in October 2000, Clinton expressed impatience with Arafat's behaviour, blaming him for the failure of the negotiations and threatening to revisit the U.S. Palestinian relationship. At this same time, Congress started expressing its doubts regarding the legitimacy of Arafat as the Palestinians leader. In addition, since the election of President Bush, Arafat has never been invited to the White House, signalling a sense of frustration with the Palestinian way. This policy corresponds with dominant Congressional views.

Q5: Congress Position on the President's Policy

As Figure 6.2 shows (see also Table 2, Appendix E), Congress generally did not tend to express its opinion toward the President's policy decisions; however, when it did the tone and language were more critical than supportive (16.1% vs. 4.8%).

Congress criticism of President Clinton was different in substance from that of President Bush. Members of Congress mainly criticized Clinton's role in the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations and the subsequent crisis. Some asserted that President Clinton was too intervening, dictating the terms of the future agreement, while others saw the President's behaviour as too neutral. As for President Bush, criticism focused on the administration's hands-off policy, urging the President to play a more active role. Congress also questioned the official U.S. stand on U.N anti-Israel activities during both presidents' terms. Whether because of Congress' criticism or because of the growing concern about the dire consequences of the violence on the region, Bush showed some deviance from its initial hands-off strategy during April-May 2001.

Q6: The Role of Congress in U.S. Foreign-Policy Formulation

An analysis of Congressional documents reveals that although the White House remained dominant in the consideration and execution of the available foreign policy options, Congress played an important role in affecting U.S. policy, both directly and indirectly. By using their legislative power, members of Congress have been able to push the President to take certain measures to support Israel or to put more pressure on the Palestinians. Congress has frequently used the foreign and military programmes as a leverage to achieve other foreign policy objectives. It has often put conditions on foreign aid, designed to induce particular behaviour by the Palestinians. As such, Congress sought to stop the Palestinian violence and the anti-peace propaganda by withholding U.S. funds to the Palestinian Authority. Conversely, Congress consistently supported Israel by approving financial and military aid to this country.

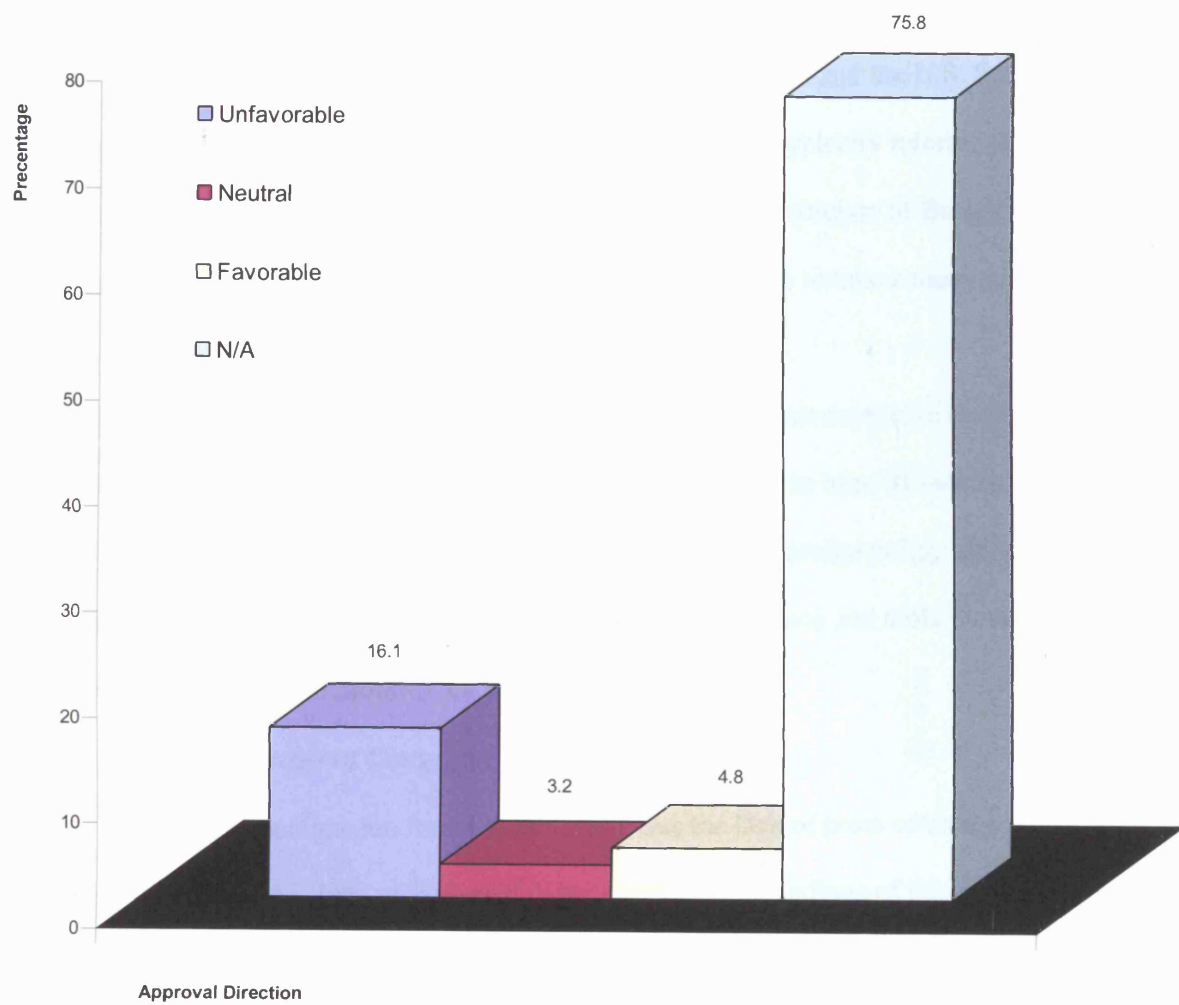


Figure 6.2. The position of Congress toward U.S. Israeli-Palestinian policy

In terms of indirect influence, Congress used the tools of framing of opinions to affect the executive's policy. Although it is hard to identify a direct effect of Congress on the President, it is reasonable to assume that Congressional resolutions, debates and discussions might have had some influence on the President's positions towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It has certainly contributed to reinforcing the administration's sense with respect to the conflict. As such, Arafat has never been invited to the White House and the U.S. President has never put a genuine pressure on the Israelis to halt their assaults, typically referred to as self-defence by the administration. In addition, Congress's growing criticism of Bush's hands-off policy seemed to somewhat reinforce the administration's decision to take a more active role in the conflict during May 2001.

It seems that foreign policy decisions made by Congress did not contradict those of the President, but complemented the range of options that were available to him. It seemed as if all the participants in foreign policy decision-making shared similar foreign policy guidelines, and by virtue of their different constitutional responsibilities, experience and tools, both branches made distinct contributions to the common effort.

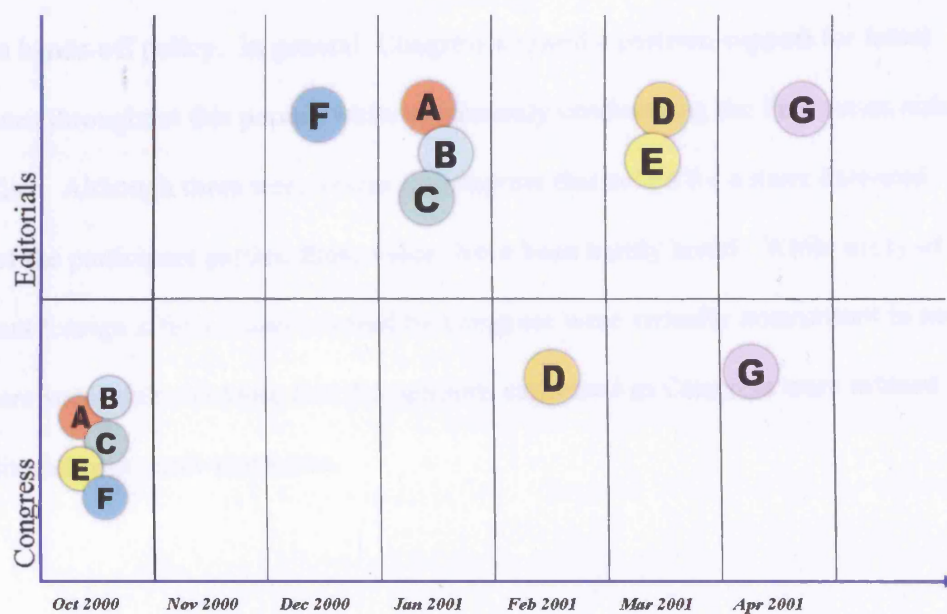
Q7, Q8: The Press Coverage of Congress

An unexpected phenomenon found in this study was the lack of press coverage for both Congressional activity and debate with respect to the conflict. The findings of this study further support the conclusions of previous research about the nature of media coverage of Congress. Despite the important role of Congress in foreign policy formulation, especially in the Middle East, the press disregarded Congress's contribution to this process. As illustrated, Congress dealt with a wider range of foreign policy issues, differing from those discussed by the President and the executive branch. Congress issued policy resolutions that significantly affected both the Israelis and the Palestinians. In addition, the background information provided by Congress could have contributed to a better understanding of the conflict, unfolding some of the conflict's deepest layers—those that have not surfaced in the President's public communication. All of these could have contributed to a comprehensive press coverage

of the conflict and the government's policies. Nevertheless, the press adhered to its monolithic coverage of U.S. foreign policy, providing only the executive's version of the story.

Another interesting point was the high level of correspondence between the mood and topics that predominated Congressional communications and that reflected in the editorials, especially regarding the evaluation of U.S. foreign policy. As such, editorials tended to convey the same arguments expressed by Congress regarding both Clinton's and Bush's foreign policies. For example, during the beginning of President's Bush term, both Congress and the press criticized the lack of U.S. involvement in the conflict rather than suggesting alternative tactics for specific policies. An examination of both Congressional documents and the press reveals that the content of editorials was based on the views and attitudes expressed in Congress. As such, Congress initially expressed its dissatisfaction with the administration's hands-off policy on early April 2001, while both newspapers followed, covering this topic in late April 2001. In addition, the arguments raised by both sources were similar. From that time on, both sources seemed to echo each other when dealing with assessing official U.S. foreign policy.

While news articles showed no interest in Congress as a source of policy information, it seems as if Congressional debates served as a pool of ideas for editorials. As such, the issues of the Palestinian media's role in inciting violence, the Palestinians use of children in the conflict, the notion of the generous offer of Barak and U.N policy on Israel—were all topics initiated in Congress and infused into the editorial pages (see Figure 6.3). Although Congressional topics did not constitute the main subject of an article, editorials mentioned them in their arguments and as parts the whole piece. Similarly, there was also evidence of mutual infusion of topics when members of Congress occasionally used editorials to demonstrate their position on a topic. For example, Senator Max Cleland (D-GA) presented an editorial piece from the New York Times maintaining that Arafat is the obstacle to peace and questioned Arafat's capability to become a reliable partner in the peace process (*The Middle east Peace Process*, 107th Cong., June 5, 2001). Senator Cleland asked that the article will be placed in the record, urging his colleagues to give it a thoughtful attention.



ISSUE **A** – The violence was planned and organized by the Palestinian Authority (PA)

ISSUE **B** – The role of the Palestinian media in enticing the violence

ISSUE **C** – The PA's cynical use of children in the conflict

ISSUE **D** – Relocating U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem

ISSUE **E** – U.N. biased treatment against Israel

ISSUE **F** – Prime Minister Barak's generous offer at Camp David, which was rejected by Chairman Arafat/the Palestinians

ISSUE **G** – Criticism U.S. administration hands-off policy

Figure 6.3. Sequence of Congressional and editorial communications on selected Israeli-Palestinian conflict related topics

The 2000–2001 Congressional communications were conducted in an atmosphere of highly unusual circumstances. The Israeli-Palestinian peace seemed to collapse, turning more violent than any such previous confrontation, with potential to lead to a regional war. In addition, the presidential elections created a transformation in American foreign policy, from one that was highly involved in the conflict to another one, that at least initially, advocated a hands-off policy. In general, Congress showed a partisan support for Israel and its actions throughout this period, while consistently condemning the Palestinian side of the conflict. Although there were voices in Congress that called for a more balanced treatment of the participant parties, these voices have been hardly heard. While many of the important foreign affairs issues covered by Congress were virtually nonexistent in news articles, there was subtle evidence that the opinions expressed in Congress were infused into the editorial pages and vice versa.

CHAPTER VII

Discussion and Conclusions

The extent of the news media's influence on American foreign policy has long been debated by scholars, policy-makers and media practitioners, however with no clear-cut conclusions. This study attempted to further contribute to the understanding of the media-government relationship in the realm of foreign policy. More specifically, it attempted to explore this relationship as they emerge from the press coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Being one of the most highly covered international conflicts, and a major concern of the American foreign policy establishment, both adversaries have been constantly competing for the media's attention in the hope of influencing policy outcomes. This study was designed to explore whether or not these efforts are justified and whether the press is truly so powerful in affecting foreign policy. Based on three case studies reflecting turning points in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this study analyzed items from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the *Public Papers of the President of the U.S.* and *Congressional Records*—all focused on U.S. foreign policy towards this conflict.

This chapter summarizes the results that emerged from the study, providing explanations for the data produced. In general, as much as this study is innovative regarding the press-government relationship, more than this, it contributes to the understanding of foreign policy formation and the press' role in this process. The underlying notion that emerges from this study is that in foreign policy making, the political process is more likely to influence the press coverage than vice versa. Thus, as governments are the primary initiators of foreign policy, the press is much more likely to react to government's decisions rather than to initiate them. In addition, the press coverage of foreign policy is only one factor among the many that are involved in the foreign-policy decision-making process. Other factors include international circumstances, diplomatic

efforts, national interest, interest groups, and public opinion, as well as other direct and indirect elements.

Press-Government Relationship

This study generally supports the school of thought that contends that the media are passive actors in foreign policy, reflecting the government's perspective rather than influencing it. Government's influence on the press was evident in various parameters throughout the study:

- First, what the American audience learnt about foreign policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was mostly reported through the filtering perspectives of the White House and the State Department, rather than originated by the journalist on the scene. Thus, the primary source of information for the press was either the administration or the State Department, with an obvious absence of alternative sources that might have been able to provide contradicting or additional information. While the views of the executive branch dominated the press' discourse, Congressional debates were marginalized, somewhat appearing only in editorials. An examination of Congressional communications showed that this institution discussed a wide range of foreign policy issues and alternatives; however, those topics were not included in the press coverage. Instead, the President and his administration determined the agenda of the press.
- Second, there was high level of correlation between the government's degree of support for a certain foreign policy issue and the press support for it, implying that the press simply covered what the government said.
- Third, the press tended to adopt the frames that the President used when it reported a story.
- Fourth, although a similar trend existed in the portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians in both sources, a slight difference has been noticed in the portrayal of the Israelis. As both the press and the President showed a similar trend in depicting the

Palestinians in a more negative light, the press showed more independence, deviating from the government's line when it portrayed the Israelis more negatively.

While conformity with the government's line was evident in both the coverage of specific policy issues and in the portrayal of the conflict, the press showed high degrees of disapproval for the government's general policy. Opinion expression and evaluation of policy were more apparent in editorial pages rather than in news articles, although they existed in both formats. This distribution is expected however, as news articles are more committed to norms of objective coverage, while editorials, by definition, are more at liberty to express opinions. Nevertheless, the criticism of the press did not seem to reflect a change in policy.

A review of both, Congressional documents and the editorial pages of both papers partially supported Lance Bennet's "indexing hypothesis." The viewpoints expressed on the editorial pages mirrored only part of the political elite's debate, showing a narrow range of agreement and disagreement—either supporting or opposing the President's general policy. The press did not cover the policy alternatives suggested by Congressional resolutions and bills. The fact that the press could only generally criticize the government's policy implies that the press failed to provide the deep layers of this conflict to its audience. As such, it could not provide the government with a genuine analysis of alternative policies, nor could it influence government's policy decisions. It seems as if journalists were either not Middle East experts or were reluctant to propose their insights to the government. By doing so, they perpetuate the notion that the press may provide information but cannot affect policy outcomes. In order for the press to be influential, it must do more than merely show disapproval: It must propose concrete alternative solutions and ideas either directly or indirectly through the voices of other sources.

The Portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Media portrayal of international players has become a central aspect in media effect on foreign policy. This idea is especially pronounced in international conflicts, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Because this discussion is built on the foundation of case studies, images should be considered and understood as part of the political, historical context in which they appear. As such, the negative image of inflexible decision-maker, as stemmed from the extensive peace negotiations, is not equal to the negative image of terrorist or aggressor, as emerged from the recent violent confrontation. Therefore, the discussion about the portrayal of the conflict is made considering each case study separately.

The study reveals that throughout these cases, the Palestinians were generally portrayed more negatively than the Israelis in both the press and in the government documents. In addition, Presidential documents showed a more balanced way of portraying the Israelis and the Palestinians compared to the press that was more distinct in its portrayal. This trend rests on the fact that presidential foreign-policy communications are mostly directed at the international community, so that word usage and style are therefore more closely controlled. This is true especially when handling international conflicts, as the President's considerations are more diplomatically-oriented, he tends to be less radical in his portrayal of the antagonists.

1977–1979: The Camp David I Peace Negotiations

In this first case, the context in which all communications were made was that of the peace negotiations between Israel and Egypt. In general, the press tended to portray both the Israelis and the Palestinians more negatively than positively. Nevertheless, the image of the Israelis did not equal that of the Palestinians. The Israelis were portrayed as inflexible decision-makers, an image driven by the context of the peace negotiations. This

negative-oriented image mainly reflected the perspective of the administration, whose aim was to conclude a peace deal between Israel and Egypt, while Israel's insistence on excluding the Palestinian problem from the final agreement was the main obstacle to achieving this goal.

While the Israelis image stemmed from the context of the negotiations, the Palestinians' image as villains was still driven by the traditional concepts that were dominant during the late 1960s and the 1970s. The Palestinians status as an entity with political aspirations was a marginal factor in the press coverage and was discussed only within the larger context of the Egyptian-Israeli peace talks. As such, the Palestinians' dominant image as villains encompassed the specific references of extremists, terrorists and guerrillas. Similarly, editorial portrayal of the Israelis and Palestinians reflected the trend of the news articles' portrayal, containing more negative images of both parties.

A possible explanation for the traditional portrayal of the Palestinians stems from the fact that the political aspect of the Palestinian problem was relatively new. As President Carter was the first to view the Palestinian problem from a political, national perspective, the press had not yet adjusted its portrayal to this new standpoint. Furthermore, during that time, the press had not yet developed a sense of understanding of the Palestinian component in the larger Arab-Israeli conflict, let alone the fact that this issue was the core of the larger conflict. Therefore, the press adhered to the prevailed conventions, portraying the Palestinians as terrorists.

While President Carter demonstrated genuine understanding of the Palestinian problem and especially its centrality in the whole conflict, his communications demonstrated a more balanced style toward the antagonists. As a result of the historic Egyptian-Israeli peace negotiations, in presidential communications, the Israelis were portrayed more positively, with a dominant image of heroes that were willing to negotiate with one of their bitter enemies. It is important to note, however, that although President

Carter showed unprecedented sympathy and understanding towards the Palestinians, altering U.S. policy toward them, in his communications, the Palestinians' dominant image was still of villains.

1993–1994: The Post-Oslo Year

The years between the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and the signing of the Oslo Accords were characterized by a gradual change in the perception of the Palestinian problem, in both the U.S. administration and the press. The prominence and the attention the Palestinians gained thanks to Carter were reinforced during the 1980s by the Lebanon War and the first *Intifada*. As both events required the U.S. administration's close attention, they also generated massive press coverage and public attention.

The fact that the U.S. was excluded from the negotiations in Oslo, being brought onto the scene only in the final phase, created a lack of substantial official communications regarding the issue. In addition, during the first year after the Oslo Accords, the Israelis and the Palestinians took initial steps to implement the accords, requiring minimal U.S. intervention. These two elements are the reasons for the lack of substantial presidential communications and a concrete foreign policy towards the conflict. The relatively small amount of items for analysis in this case created a problem in reaching clear-cut conclusions; however, there are still a few points that can be drawn from the results.

The Oslo Accords occurred at a time when the U.S. administration was already aware of the centrality of the Palestinian problem. During that time, U.S. administrations were already developing the framework for the American policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, taking concrete steps to implement its principles. Another process that occurred in parallel was the dramatic change in the portrayal of the conflict. The Palestinian image became more positive, while Israel's image was severely damaged. The year following the Oslo Agreement saw a sense of uncertainty with respect to the portrayal of the Israelis in the press. While the press was still captured by the first *Intifada*'s

concepts of Israeli aggression and suppression, the unexpected peace accord of September 1993, compelled the press to change its portrayal of the Israelis to become more positive. Therefore, during the first year following the Oslo Accords, the range of Israel's negative image almost equalled the range of its positive image. The press uncertainty/confusion in depicting the Israelis during that time was evident in the prevailing contradictory images including villains, peace-lovers, and American allies at the same time.

While the press showed uncertainty when portrayed the Israelis, it did not change its traditional perspective toward the Palestinians, mainly portraying them as villains. The image of villains mainly referred to groups of extremist Palestinians who resisted the peace process, such as Hamas, rather than the Palestinian leadership or the Palestinian people who were perceived as supporters of the peace negotiations. By not following the mainstream, these opponents captured the attention of the press, which might explain why the dominant image of the Palestinians remained of villains, even in an era of peace. When examining the editorials separately, they showed a generally positive portrayal of the Israelis and a negative portrayal of the Palestinians.

In contrast to the press, which showed a more balanced treatment of the Israelis, the President overwhelmingly praised the Israelis for their role in the peace process, using various positive references. As such, in presidential communications, the Israelis' dominant image was of heroes, peace-lovers, and victims at the same time. Conversely, the dominant image of the Palestinians in presidential papers was of villains; however, this image was balanced by the positive image of victims that also rated highly. The Oslo Agreement caused an improvement in the image of the Palestinians because the administration had to legitimize both the Oslo Accords and their endorsement of this new order. In addition, portraying the Palestinians more positively helped in justifying the change in the administration's policy to accepting the PLO.

2000–2001: The al-Aqsa Intifada

The first year of the 21st century saw a total collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process that began with the failure of the Camp David negotiations on the final status of the Israeli-Palestinian settlement. The subsequent violence between the Israelis and the Palestinians severely damaged the images of both antagonists in both the press and in presidential communications.

In general, the images of both the Israelis and the Palestinians, as they appeared in the press coverage, tended to be negative. More specifically, the dominant images of Israelis and Palestinians were of villains and warriors/militants/aggressors. Nevertheless, the nature of the current conflict characterized by aggression, assaults and violence from both sides, has also led to two different portrayals of the Israelis. While the dominant image of the Israelis was negative, there were many cases in which the same article contained two conflicting images, of villains and victims. During the recent conflict, newspapers also tended to portray the Palestinians as warriors/militants (20%) providing a sense of legitimacy to violent Palestinian acts. This image is considered less negative than the one of terrorists, thus, the acts of Palestinian militants became more justifiable. However, when examining the portrayal of the antagonists in the editorials only, more consistency was shown with respect to the antagonists, with the Israelis portrayed more positively and the Palestinians more negatively. This trend reflected the fact that the editorials' blamed the Palestinians for the failure of the Camp-David II talks, and for inciting the violence.

Generally, the U.S. administration also held the Palestinian leadership responsible for the failure of the negotiations at Camp David II, blaming them publicly. Therefore, in presidential communications, the Palestinians were unequivocally portrayed negatively, with a dominant image of villains. In addition, the Israelis were portrayed both as villains and victims at the same time. Maintaining a balance in the portrayal of the Israelis may

have been related to the President's interest in bringing the peace process back on track and in maintaining an open communication channel with the Palestinians.

While the press and the President attempted to maintain a balanced portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians during the last confrontation, Congress showed a more dichotomous approach. The recent Israeli-Palestinian confrontation reinforced the pro-Israeli sentiment among members of Congress. Congress held the Palestinians as solely responsible for the failure of the Camp David II summit and the subsequent crisis. As such, Congress continuously condemned the Palestinians for both inciting and maintaining the violence, while overwhelmingly advocated the Israeli positions, justifying their retaliation assaults as acts of self-defence.

Congress's portrayal of the Israelis and the Palestinians was dichotomous, generally reflecting these notions. As such, Congressional communications made a clear-cut distinction between the "good guys" and the "bad guys" in the conflict. In contrast to the presidential documents and the newspapers, the images Congress used to portray both groups were more blatant, explicit and graphic, using plain descriptive terms, adverbs, and adjectives.

One explanation for the profound difference between the Presidential and the Congress style and representation is inherent in the audience to which these communications are directed. As such, though the President was actually communicating with a domestic audience, his communications were directed at the international public and governments. In order not to damage the U.S. position among the Arabs or jeopardize U.S. interests in the Middle East, the President tended to be more cautious and less blatant in his treatment of the antagonists. In contrast, Congress is more concerned with the local audience within the U.S., and especially with pressure groups and strong lobbies, and is therefore, more ready to pronounce more extreme views.

Press Portrayal and Foreign Policy

Another aspect related to media effect on foreign policy is the extent to which media portrayal of foreign conflicts leads to a change in the official policy towards the conflict. The importance of media portrayal of nations rests on the conventional wisdom that the media's use of symbols and images to depict a certain country, nation or population has the potential to affect responses to foreign policy issues and could have serious policy impact (Chang, 1993, p. 103). This study was based on publicly made communications such as presidential communications and press coverage. It did not include the policy meetings and discussions with advisors and specialists that the U.S. administration often holds when formulating foreign policy. Based on these sources, this study showed that images had no effect on the U.S. stand on various policy issues in the short term.

For example, it was President Carter who decided to change the policy towards the Palestinians in 1977, recognizing their political aspirations and legitimate right to a homeland. This was while the images of the Palestinians in the press were rather negative, depicting them as mainly terrorists and guerrillas. Only after Carter's initiative, did the press begin to portray the Palestinians in a more positive light, acknowledging the multiple dimensions of the Palestinian problem. Similarly, the Clinton Administration was willing to remove the ban on direct talks with the PLO as a result of the Israeli decision to negotiate with the PLO, and not as a result of the positive press images created by the first *Intifada*. In addition, although the press portrayed the Israelis and the Palestinians negatively, as being almost equally responsible for the current violence and conflict, U.S. policy remained highly supportive toward Israel, while excluding Arafat from the arena.

The question raised by this conclusion is, therefore, why do foreign governments invest so much effort in conveying positive images to the U.S.? Images are important because they motivate the U.S. administration to address the antagonists in its

communications. It compels the administration to “say something” to either one or both of the parties. Although images do compel the President to give an ad-hoc reaction, they are unlikely to change an existing policy. As international images are nurtured and built over time through interrelated political and social processes, the press, in particular and the media, in general, are only one subsystem that contributes to politicians’ perceptions of other nations. The power of press images to affect the political elite’s foreign policy decisions is limited when these images contradict those dominating other social and political agents, such as films, literature, academia and the individuals’ social environment. The study showed that images did not alter policy; however, that is not to say that nations should not invest in ongoing efforts to polish their images in the U.S. media. While images are more likely to be effective in the long run, they should be consistent, systematic, and built and assimilated into the American consciousness over time.

Two elements are necessary for an image to instantly affect foreign policy towards the conflict—*Consistent coverage* and *vital interest*. If the press consistently and repeatedly presents one-sided pictures of atrocities, aggressions, assaults and oppression, the U.S. is compelled to act; however its actions would most probably be *ad-hoc* and “cosmetic.” A fundamental policy change will occur only if the event covered takes place in a region that affects vital American interests. As long as the press shows victims and aggressions in both sides, such as in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a change in U.S. foreign policy is less likely to occur.

The Role of the Press in Foreign Policy

As has been observed, the press could not change or dictate U.S. foreign policies regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict nor could it affect the policy formulation process. The role of the press in this study was limited to functions such as defining and providing information about the situation, conferring legitimacy to an event by covering it, and propagating or criticizing foreign policy execution. This might be explained by Wolfsfeld

(1993) and Robinson's (2001, 2002) provisions for media influence. As U.S. Middle East policy is generally certain, having being built and formulated since the late 1940s, it is unlikely that the press alone would be able to change it. The case of the second *Intifada* brought another dimension to the press-foreign policy relationship, which is the degree of consensus/dissensus among the political elite (Wolfsfeld, 1993; Robinson, 2001, 2002). In this case, the degree of elite (U.S. administration and Congress) consensus regarding the parties involved in the conflict was quite high, as both generally held the Palestinians responsible for the violence, showing unequivocal support for Israel's position. This consensus prevented diverse news sources from entering the public discourse.

Although the press tended to criticize the existing U.S. foreign policy rather than support it, this criticism was neither powerful nor systematic. The lack of alternative sources of foreign policy information, or concrete suggestions for alternative policy issues have weakened the press attempts to criticize an existing foreign policy. The fact that the press ignored substantial foreign policy issues that emerged in Congressional discourse showed that it blocked alternative policy information and adhered to the administration's position. By making Congress's voice unheard, the press, to some extent, dictated the agenda, however not the actual policy. Even the editorial's potential to affect the political discourse has weakened, as the distribution of supportive and critical articles was very close and therefore balanced. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the press remained an external institution that transmitted information rather than one that participated in foreign policy formation.

Foreign Policy Formulation

While addressing the issue of press-government relationship, this study also provides insights on the process of foreign policy formation, concluding that the role of the press is external to this process. Since the Truman administration, the U.S. has pursued three basic objectives in its Middle East policy—security for the state of Israel, a reliable

flow of oil, and maintaining stability in the region. While the administrations have differed on the degree and type of intervention necessary to achieve these objectives, they have all agreed on the objectives themselves. This might explain why during the last fifty years, American Middle-Eastern policy has proved to be fairly monolithic, showing unifying, recurring patterns along with evidence of discontinuity and deviance. As such, the U.S. government acts upon its pre-determined foreign policy objectives, and is willing to adjust specific sub-policies to address actual circumstances and international developments. In other words, the situation on the ground compels the U.S. government to alter specific foreign policy issues, as long as the general pre-defined foreign policy guidelines are maintained.

In contrast to national policy, which can vary from one government to another, foreign policy shows general consistency and endures from one administration to another. Changes occurred only gradually over time and according to international circumstances. Throughout the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the U.S. developed basic foreign policy guidelines, such as maintaining the strong alliance with Israel, supporting U.N. Resolution 242 as a basis for peace agreements, supporting economic and military aid to Israel, and opposing the Jewish settlements in the areas considered occupied, while all other policy issues changed over time according to the development of the conflict and changes in the Middle East arena.

While President Carter's term marked a breakthrough in U.S. policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, he was still bounded by the traditional guidelines of U.S. foreign policy. The years From Carter to George W. Bush saw gradual changes in the attitudes of the administration toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but this was only a result of the geo-political situation in the Middle East, beginning with the Lebanon war, the first *Intifada*, and the Gulf War, through the Oslo Accords and the second *Intifada*. Each event added to or altered specific policy-related elements, while the foreign policy

framework remained consistent. Although in retrospect, U.S. policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has gone through fundamental changes, these changes occurred gradually over more than 20 years and as a result of the political changes in the Middle East.

This study provides several examples to support this argument. The first example is related to President Carter's initial support for the inclusion of a solution to the Palestinian problem within the Egyptian-Israeli peace plan. Eventually, he abandoned the issue as a result of political pressure to conclude a peace treaty both from within the U.S. and from outside the country. After realizing that the Palestinian issue threatened to collapse the peace negotiations, Carter agreed to change his initial policy for the sake of achieving peace between Egypt and Israel. Similarly, U.S. acceptance of the PLO at the end of 1993 occurred as a result of Israel's recognition of the organization. In addition, the U.S. decision to become more involved in the current conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians occurred only after the situation on the ground, the escalating violence, seemed to endanger the stability of the Middle East.

While showing that the U.S. is ready to adjust specific policies according to a given situation, it seems from this study that the U.S. policy has tended to follow Israel's lead. As such, President Carter renounced the notion of Palestinian self-determination, while President Clinton acknowledged the PLO and supported Prime Minister's Barak initiative to negotiate the final status even though the conditions were premature. Finally, President Bush's refusal to meet with the Palestinian Chairman, Arafat, a policy compatible with Israel's interests to downgrade Arafat's position, illegitimizing him and making him irrelevant to the Israeli-Palestinian political arena. In other words, it seems as if Israel set the boundaries for what would be considered legitimate in U.S. foreign policy discourse and the administrations generally followed these guidelines.

One reason for the general U.S. conformity with Israel's interests rests on the fact that Israel has long enjoyed overwhelming bipartisan support in the U.S. Congress. Despite the general perception of executive dominance over foreign policy—a perception that is often reinforced by the lack of media coverage of Congressional work—this study reveals that the U.S. Congress retains a central role in U.S. policy pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. During the first year of the current confrontation, Congress proved to be a dynamic participant in foreign policy formulation, from airing policy alternatives to turning them into actual policies through its legislative work. An example for Congressional power in foreign policy formulation was evident in October 2001 when Secretary Powell requested from Congress to block a Resolution against Arafat and the Palestinian Authority because of the need to form a world coalition against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan (Ben Horin, 2002, p. 27). In the realm of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Congressional activity can be distinguished between *participation* and *opposition*. On one hand Congress actually participated in foreign policy formation through its legislative work, while on the other hand, it proposed ideas that were opposed to those promoted by the executive branch.

Based on the last case study, Congress was found to have integrated direct and indirect modes of influence on policy decision-making. First, this institution performed its traditional role, affecting policies considered structural which involved allocating resources and determining their use. However, somewhat unexpectedly, Congress was also involved in policies considered strategic, providing different approaches and resolutions obligating the president to a certain behaviour in future decisions with respect to U.N. treatment of Israel and U.S. measures against Arafat and the PA. Congressional debates that were echoed throughout the branches of the political elite, informally and indirectly influenced the executive branch. Although the direct effect of these informal techniques cannot be measured, it seems likely that the administration constantly monitored and anticipated

Congress' reactions to its decisions and adjusted them accordingly, already during the formulation process. The other technique is related to Congress's effect on the political discourse through framing of opinions and promoting certain ideas among the political elite and the greater public through the newspapers' editorial pages. By consistently giving prominence to certain ideas—Arafat's central role in the violence, the Palestinian media and Israel's generous concessions—Congressional opinions became the conventional wisdom that was infused into the public's consciousness. By exerting these methods concurrently, Congress actually set the boundaries for the executive branch regarding what would be acceptable in terms of foreign policy towards the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Finally, this study supports the arguments made by Wolfsfeld (1993; 1997), which were further developed by Robinson (2000; 2001; 2002), who concluded that the government's level of control over the political environment determines the role of the media in political conflicts. In other words, if government policy is firm and certain, policy-makers are likely to resist the pressures of negative or critical media coverage. As demonstrated before, throughout the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, U.S. administrations have developed fundamental policy guidelines that shaped their policy. Except for events that required adjustments of specific policy issues, U.S. Middle Eastern policy in general, and that related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular, remained firm and certain. This partially explains why the role of the press in this context is limited to providing information rather than driving a policy change.

The Press is only Part of the Whole Picture

This study has determined that foreign policy making is the outcome of both a bargaining process between sub-systems in the political elite and their evaluation of the actual circumstances. Nevertheless, it also acknowledges the importance of external elements such as interest groups and lobbies, public opinion and the media. A crystallized and established foreign policy, such as the one relating to the Middle East, can be changed

only when all opposition groups unite and lead the change. The press by itself, as an opposition to the government's policy, is unlikely to lead a fundamental change in foreign policy, but are likely to lead a "cosmetic" one. As such, the role of the press in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has proved to be limited to providing information about a given situation and the related policies. While the press has often criticized certain policies, these pieces have been balanced by counter-arguments raised by other articles, so that their potential power to influence policy has been weakened.

In addition, although being in the focus of American foreign policy, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has never compelled an American military involvement, only a diplomatic one. As American soldiers have not yet trodden on Israeli or Palestinian soil, it is inevitable that both the public and the media would perceive this conflict as remote, regional, and unthreatening. With the absence of localization of the conflict (i.e., affecting oil prices or imperilling American soldiers' lives), American public opinion is less aggressive, with the result that U.S. government is less likely to alter its policy toward the conflict. The American public as a driving element of American foreign policy is more likely to become powerful when there is a threat—either real or imaginary—to its concrete and immediate interests. Nevertheless, media's role as an agent of change in the political and social order should not be underestimated. A change in foreign policy is most likely to occur as a result of a competition between political powers, including the media, and these changes will be gradual overtime rather than radical and instant.

Limitations

Despite the recent explosion of literature and research on the subject, there is remarkably little consensus on how the media affect foreign policy. Not surprisingly, as this study showed, the press-government relationship is far too complex an issue, involving many direct and indirect factors. There are inherent limitations in studies of this nature. First, this study was based on one specific model, and related only to the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict, and therefore should be viewed through the lens of this specific context. This implies that media effect on U.S. foreign policy might vary from one region to another and according to the nature of the situation, whether a conflict, a crisis, or a stable condition.

Second, this study examined only one portion of the media, two elite newspapers, while governments nowadays are exposed to various communication vehicles, such as the national and international print and electronic media as well as the Internet—all competing for their attention, all providing information about the world.

A third limitation refers to the attempt to simplify a complex process that occurs in multiple arenas and includes multiple players. As the effect of the press on the government is only one of many factors that interplay in this arena, it is difficult to reach a clear-cut conclusion based on the direct relationship between these two institutions. In order to get the complete picture, one should examine public opinion, interest groups, communications with international governments, the unpublished communications between the various power centres within the American government, including the intelligence and the army apparatuses and the U.S. Congress, as well as the invisible elements related to educational, cultural and social orientations of policy decision-makers. The news media are only one factor in this complex arena.

Fourth, content analysis by its very nature contains limitations related to subjective judgments and evaluations. As such analyses are often made by individuals with different perceptions and interpretations of words, phrases, images, and frames of reference, thus, this study should be viewed, considering these constraints.

Further Implications

This study draws implications for both theoretical and practical levels, integrating various disciplines such as mass media, domestic and international politics, as well concepts related to the history of the Middle East. On the theoretical level it adds to the

array of previous research on media and government, contributing to create a more complete picture of this relationship. It also shows that the nature of this relationship varies according to distinct variables, such as geographic region, nature of conflict and U.S. interests at stake. Mostly, the study suggests a framework for the understanding of the press and foreign policy in the context of international conflicts, providing useful tools for predicting U.S. policies in cases similar to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Finally, as much as this study is innovative regarding the press-government relationship, more than this, this work offers insights about the determinants of foreign policy formation and the role of the press in this process.

As for the practical level, being aware of the role of the press in international conflicts, foreign governments might consider concentrating their efforts on influencing the U.S. political elite and mobilize decision-makers to support their political causes. At the same time, if media practitioners consider themselves more than a mere mirror placed in a specific scene, they should be encouraged to reassess their performance, to provide alternative sources of information, in-depth analyses, experts opinions, background information and evaluations in order to portray a more complete picture of the world. Otherwise, the media show weakness in providing the public with substantial information necessary to make judgments and understand reality. Nevertheless, this study does not downplay the role of the press in international relations; it rather acknowledges the fact that media coverage of the world indeed sets the boundaries in which foreign policy is being made. While in this study, the press coverage found to be less effective in leading policy changes in the short term, its influence seems to be echoed in the long run. However, the concept of media effect on foreign policy over time is yet to be discovered.

Appendix A

Codebook for Newspapers Analysis

General

1. Date: day/month/year

2. Newspapers

1. The Washington Post
2. The News York Times

3. Type of Coverage

1. News article
2. Editorial/Op-Ed

4. Source of Israeli-Palestinian Policy

1. White House/Administration
2. State Department
3. Defence Department
4. Congress/Member of Congress
5. Civilians/Interest Groups
6. Palestinian Officials
7. Israeli Officials
8. U.S. press
9. Former Presidents/Officials
10. Unnamed/Unattributed
11. Other

The Portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

5. General Frame presented in an Item as a whole

1. Conflict
2. Conflict Resolution/Reconciliation
3. Powerlessness
4. Economic
5. Human impact
6. Morality
7. Other

6. Images of Israelis

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Heroes | 11. American Allies |
| 2. Villains | 12. Obstacle to American |
| 3. Victims | Interests |
| 4. Flexible/conciliatory | 13. Moral |
| 5. Inflexible Decision-Makers | 14. Immoral |
| 6. Determined Decision-Makers | 15. Peace Lovers |
| 7. Western-Like | 16. Warrior/Militant/Aggressor |
| 8. Anti-Western/Communist* | 17. Irrational |
| 9. Democratic/Liberal | 18. Two Conflicting Images*** |
| 10. Antidemocratic/
Fundamentalist | 19. N/A |

7. Images of Palestinians

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Heroes | 11. American Allies |
| 2. Villains | 12. Obstacle to American |
| 3. Victims | Interests |
| 4. Flexible/conciliatory | 13. Moral |
| 5. Inflexible Decision-Makers | 14. Immoral |
| 6. Determined Decision-Makers | 15. Peace Lovers |
| 7. Western-Like | 16. Warrior/Militant/Aggressor |
| 8. Anti-Western/Communist* | 17. Irrational |
| 9. Democratic/Liberal | 18. Two Conflicting Images*** |
| 10. Antidemocratic/
Fundamentalist | |

Note. *Items related to case I only.

**Items related to case II only.

***Items related to case III only.

Israeli-Palestinian Foreign Policy Issues

8. Position Presented in the Article toward the Palestinians Right for self-Rule/Autonomy*/**

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

9. Position Presented in the Article toward the Palestinians Right for an Independent State (Self-Determination)

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

10. Position Presented in the Article toward Alternative Solutions for the Palestinians*/**

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

11. Position Presented in the Article toward Fulfilling U.N. Resolution 242 as a Basis for Peace in the Middle East

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

12. Position Presented in the Article toward the Right of Return of the Palestinian Refugees to Areas within Israel***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

13. Position Presented in the Article toward the Right of Return of the Palestinian Refugees to Areas to be Defined in the Future as the Palestinian State***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

14. Position Presented in the Article toward Israel's Cede Sovereignty to the Palestinians over East Jerusalem***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

15. Position Presented in the Article toward Unilateral Separation of Israel from Areas under the Palestinian Authority***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

16. Position Presented in the Article toward the Deployment of International Forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

17. Position Presented in the Article toward the PLO as the Palestinians official, Legitimate Representative*/**

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

18. Position Presented in the Article toward Conducting Direct Talks with the PLO*/**

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

19. Position Presented in the Article toward the concept of "Greater Israel"

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

20. Position Presented in the Article toward Maintaining Settlement Blocs under Israel's Authority as Part of an Agreement with the Palestinians***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

21. Position Presented in the Article toward U.S. Economic and Military aid to Israel

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

22. Position Presented in the Article toward U.S. Economic aid to the Palestinians**/**

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

23. The Position of the Press toward the current U.S. Stand on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

Codebook for Presidential Documents Analysis

General

1. Date: day/month/year
2. Government Communication Type
 1. Press Release/Statement
 2. News Conference
 3. Speech/Address/Remark
 4. Message to Congress
 5. An Interview
 6. Other

The Portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

3. General Frame presented in the Document as a whole

1. Conflict
2. Conflict Resolution/Reconciliation
3. Powerlessness
4. Economic
5. Human impact
6. Morality
7. Other

4. Images of Israelis

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Heroes | 11. American Allies |
| 2. Villains | 12. Obstacle to American |
| 3. Victims | Interests |
| 4. Flexible/conciliatory | 13. Moral |
| 5. Inflexible Decision-Makers | 14. Immoral |
| 6. Determined Decision-Makers | 15. Peace Lovers |
| 7. Western-Like | 16. Warrior/Militant/Aggressor |
| 8. Anti-Western/Communist* | 17. Irrational |
| 9. Democratic/Liberal | 18. Two Conflicting Images*** |
| 10. Antidemocratic/
Fundamentalist | 19. N/A |

Note. *Items related to case I only.

**Items related to case II only.

***Items related to case III only.

5. Images of Palestinians

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Heroes | 10. Antidemocratic/
Fundamentalist |
| 2. Villains | 11. American Allies |
| 3. Victims | 12. Obstacle to American
Interests |
| 4. Flexible/conciliatory | 13. Moral |
| 5. Inflexible Decision-Makers | 14. Immoral |
| 6. Determined Decision-Makers | 15. Peace Lovers |
| 7. Western-Like | 16. Warrior/Militant/Aggressor |
| 8. Anti-Western/Communist* | 17. Irrational |
| 9. Democratic/Liberal | 18. Two Conflicting Images*** |

Israeli-Palestinian Foreign Policy Issues

6. Position Presented in the Document toward the Palestinians Right for self-Rule/Autonomy*/**

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

7. Position Presented in the Document toward the Palestinians Right for an Independent State (Self-Determination)

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

8. Position Presented in the Document toward Alternative Solutions for the Palestinians*/**

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

9. Position Presented in the Document toward Fulfilling U.N. Resolution 242 as a Basis for Peace in the Middle East

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

10. Position Presented in the Document toward the Right of Return of the Palestinian Refugees to Areas within Israel***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

11. Position Presented in the Document toward the Right of Return of the Palestinian Refugees to Areas to be defined in the Future as the Palestinian State***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

12. Position Presented in the Document toward Israel's Cede Sovereignty to the Palestinians over East Jerusalem***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

13. Position Presented in the Document toward Unilateral Separation of Israel from Areas under the Palestinian Authority***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

14. Position Presented in the Document toward the Deployment of International Forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

15. Position Presented in the Document toward the PLO as the Palestinians official, Legitimate Representative*/**

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

16. Position Presented in the Document toward Conducting Direct Talks with the PLO*/**

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

17. Position Presented in the Document toward the concept of "Greater Israel"

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

18. Position Presented in the Document toward Maintaining Settlement Blocs under Israel's Authority as Part of an Agreement with the Palestinians***

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

19. Position Presented in the Document toward U.S. Economic and Military aid to Israel

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

20. Position Presented in the Document toward U.S. Economic aid to the Palestinians**/**

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

21. Journalist's Position toward the current U.S. Stand on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

1. Unfavourable
2. Neutral
3. Favourable
4. Unclear
5. N/A

Appendix B

Results for Case Study I (1977-1979)

Foreign Policy Issues: Presidential vs. Press Attitudes

Table B1 shows that with respect to alternative solution for the Palestinians, in both, the newspapers and the Presidential documents the dominant attitude was of favourable towards this policy, rated 13.4% and 15.9% respectively.

Table B1

Position toward an Alternative Solution for the Palestinians in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	33 (13.4%)	7 (15.9%)
N/A	214 (86.64%)	37 (84.09%)
Total	247 (100%)	44 (100%)

Table B2 shows that with respect to the policy of a Palestinian State, both newspapers and Presidential documents showed a similar distribution of the various categories with unfavourable rates of 8.9% and 11.4%, and lower rates supporting this issue, 1.2%; 2.3% respectively. However, there was a substantial difference in the rates of the unclear category, being higher in Presidential documents (18.2%) than in newspapers (8.9%). This could be explained, again, by looking at the political context of President Carter's initial support for a Palestinian state, a position that was gradually abandoned as the Egyptian-Israeli talks matured.

Table B2

Position toward a Palestinian Independent State in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	22 (8.9%)	5 (11.4%)
Favourable	3 (1.2%)	1(2.3%)
Unclear	22 (8.9%)	8 (18.2%)
N/A	200 (81%)	29 (65.9%)
Total	247 (100%)	44 (100%)

Table B3 shows that with respect to conducting direct talks with the PLO, in both the newspapers and government documents the dominant attitude was of unfavourable, rated 2.4% and 4.5% respectively.

Table B3

Position toward Conducting Direct Talks with the PLO in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	6 (2.4 %)	2 (4.5%)
Favourable	4 (1.6%)	
Unclear	5 (2%)	
N/A	232 (93.9%)	42 (95.5%)
Total	247 (100%)	44 (100%)

Table B4 shows that with respect to the position towards fulfilling U.N. Resolution 242 as the formula for peace in the Middle East, in both the newspapers and Presidential documents the general trend was to accept this idea even though the values were higher in government documents compared to the newspapers (38% vs. 17% respectively).

Table B4

Position towards Fulfilling U.N. Resolution 242 in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	4 (1.6%)	
Favourable	42 (17%)	17 (38.6%)
N/A	201 (81.3%)	27 (61.4%)
Total	247 (100%)	44 (100%)

Table B5 shows that with respect to the establishment of Jewish settlements in the west Bank and Gaza areas, in both newspapers and Presidential documents the general trend was not to accept this idea with almost similar rates of 17% and 18.2% respectively.

Table B5

Position toward the Establishment of Jewish Settlements (Greater Israel) in the West Bank and Gaza Areas in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	42 (17%)	8 (18.2%)
Favourable	1 (0.4%)	
N/A	204 (82.6%)	36 (81.8%)
Total	247 (100%)	44 (100%)

Table B6 shows that both newspapers and government documents showed support for U.S. providing economic/military aid to Israel (11.3% vs. 11.4% respectively), while only the newspapers showed extremely low rates of disapproval (0.8%) for this policy.

Table B6

Position toward Economic/Military Aid to Israel in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	2 (0.8%)	
Favourable	28 (11.3%)	5 (11.4%)
N/A	217 (87.8%)	39 (88.6%)
Total	247 (100%)	44 (100%)

Press Portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Table B7

Newspapers and Presidential Documents: Dominant Frame by Frequency and Percentage

Frame	Newspapers	President Docs
Conflict	60 (24.3%)	6 (13.6%)
Conflict Resolution/Reconciliation	175 (70.9%)	34 (77.3%)
Economic		1 (2.3%)
Human Impact	3 (1.2%)	
Morality	1 (0.4%)	3 (6.8%)
Other	8 (3.2%)	
Total	247 (100%)	44 (100%)

Table B8

Image Direction of Israelis and Palestinians in Editorials: A comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	10 (25%)	3 (7.5%)
Negative	16 (40%)	12 (30%)
N/A	14 (35%)	25 (62.5%)
Total	40 (100%)	40 (100%)

Image Effect on Foreign Policy

Tables B9 through B13 present the relationship between the images and the policy position. Each table shows the results for a specific Israeli-Palestinian policy statement. The researcher clustered all images according to their direction: Positive, negative or N/A for articles that showed no specific image for either group. The values (frequencies and percentages) indicate the rates of the dominant images as appeared in both newspapers (*The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*) during the three-month period prior to the President's communication of each policy statement. The following will provide an explanation of the results appeared in each table.

The Establishment of a Palestinian Independent state is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians, however contradicts the Israeli interests. When the President firmly opposed a Palestinian independent state, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a negative coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. At the same time, an ongoing positive coverage of the Israelis would be expected to be followed by such an Israeli-compatible policy statement. Nevertheless, Table B9 reveals that while the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative as expected for such relationship to occur (18%), the dominant image of the Israelis was also negative (34.9%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Table B9

*Images Preceding The President's Statement Opposing an Independent Palestinian State:
A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage*

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	15 (22.7%)	6 (9%)
Negative	23 (34.9%)	12 (18%)
N/A	28 (42.4%)	48 (72.7%)
Total	66 (100%)	66 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: December 8, 1977 - March 9, 1978.

Applying U.N. Resolution 242 is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians, however at least partially, contradicts the Israeli interests. When the President firmly supported U.N Resolution 242 as a basis for agreement, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a negative coverage of the Israelis in the newspapers. At the same time, an ongoing positive coverage of the Palestinians would be expected to be followed by such a Palestinian-compatible policy statement. Nevertheless, Table B10 reveals that while the dominant image of the Israelis was negative, as expected

for such relationship to occur (49.2%), the dominant image of the Palestinians was also negative (14%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward fulfilling Resolution 242.

Table B10

Images Preceding The President's Statement Supporting U.N. Resolution 242: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	8 (14.2%)	4 (7%)
Negative	28 (49.2%)	8 (14%)
N/A	21 (36.8%)	45 (78.9%)
Total	57 (100%)	57 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: December 29, 1977 - March 30, 1978.

Opposing direct talks with the PLO is considered a policy that benefits the Israelis, however contradicts the Palestinians interests. When the President firmly opposed conducting direct dialog with the PLO, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Israelis in the newspapers. At the same time, an ongoing negative coverage of the Palestinians would be expected to be followed by such an Israeli-compatible policy statement. Nevertheless, Table B11 reveals that while the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative, as expected for such relationship to occur (26.8%), the dominant image of the Israelis was also negative (27.1%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward conducting direct dialog with the PLO.

Table B11

*Images Preceding The President's Statement Opposing Direct Dialog with the PLO:
A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage*

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	6 (23%)	
Negative	19 (27.1%)	7 (26.8%)
N/A	13 (50%)	19 (73.1%)
Total	26 (100%)	26 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: June 27, 1978 - September 28, 1978.

Accepting the PLO as the Palestinians legitimate representative is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians, however contradicts the Israeli interests. When the President firmly supported opposed this notion, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. At the same time, an ongoing negative coverage of the Israelis would be expected to be followed by such a Palestinian-compatible policy statement. Nevertheless, Table B12 reveals that for the Israelis, the distribution of the images was very close with 23% positive and 26.8% negative. However, the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative (26.8%) with no reference for positive image during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward accepting the PLO as the Palestinians legitimate representative.

Table B12

*Images Preceding The President's Statement Supporting PLO as the Palestinians
Legitimate Representative: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage*

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	6 (23%)	
Negative	7 (26.8%)	7 (26.8%)
N/A	13 (50%)	19 (73.1%)
Total	26 (100%)	26 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: June 27, 1978 - September 28, 1978.

Opposing the Jewish settlements in the areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians, however contradicts the Israeli interests. When the President firmly opposed the establishment of Jewish settlements, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. At the same time, an ongoing negative coverage of the Israelis would be expected to be followed by such a Palestinian-compatible policy statement. Nevertheless, Table B13 reveals that the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative (16.7%). Instead of gaining extremely high negative rates, as expected, the image distribution of the Israelis was equal (20.9% positive and 20.9% negative) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward the Jewish settlements.

Table B13

Images Preceding The President's Statement Opposing the Jewish Settlements: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	5 (20.9%)	1 (4.2%)
Negative	5 (20.9%)	4 (16.7%)
N/A	14 (50%)	19 (79.2%)
Total	24 (100%)	24 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: July 9, 1978 -October 10, 1978.

Appendix C

Results for Case Study II (1993-1994)

Foreign Policy Issues: President vs. Press Attitudes

The Oslo Agreement set a framework and a roadmap for a solution for the Palestinians. This framework included a self-rule for the Palestinians in distinct territories, and did not call for an alternative solution. Table C1 shows that with respect to alternative solution for the Palestinians, both, the newspapers and government documents showed a lack of interest in this policy issue because this was irrelevant due to the Oslo Accords.

Table C1

Position towards an Alternative Solution for the Palestinians in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable		1 (3.6%)
N/A	94 (100%)	27 (96.4%)
Total	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

Table C2 shows that with respect to the issue that deals with the creation of an independent Palestinian State, both newspapers and government documents showed a similar distribution of the various categories with unfavourable rate of 4.3% and 3.6% respectively.

Table C2

Position towards a Palestinian Independent State in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	4 (4.3%)	1 (3.6%)
Favourable		
Unclear	2 (2.1%)	
N/A	88 (93.6%)	27 (96.4%)
Total	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

Table C3 shows that with respect to conducting direct talks with the PLO, in both the newspapers and government documents the dominant attitude was of favourable, rated 29.8% and 10.7% respectively. However, the unclear category rated 7.1% in government documents reflected the debate within the administration regarding whether or not to initiate diplomatic relations with the PLO in the light of the Oslo Agreements.

Table C3

Position towards Conducting Direct Talks with the PLO in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	4 (4.3%)	
Favourable	28 (29.8%)	3 (10.7%)
Unclear	2 (2.1%)	2 (7.1%)
N/A	60 (63.8%)	23 (82.1%)
Total	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

Table C4 shows that in both the newspapers and government documents the trend was to accept the PLO as the Palestinian legitimate representative, rated 41.5% and 17.9% respectively. Both sources showed no reference to other position categories.

Table C4

Position towards the PLO as the Palestinians Legitimate Representative in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	39 (41.5%)	5 (17.9%)
N/A	55 (58.5%)	23 (82.1%)
Total	94(100%)	28(100%)

Table C5 shows that in both newspapers and government documents the trend was to accept Palestinian autonomy with rates of 43.6% and 14.3% respectively. In addition, both sources showed no reference to the unfavourable category.

Table C5

Position towards the Palestinians Right for Self-Rule/Autonomy in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	41 (43.6%)	4 (14.3%)
Unclear	4 (4.3%)	
N/A	49 (52.1%)	24 (85.7%)
Total	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

Table C6 shows that with respect to fulfilling U.N. Resolution 242 as the formula for peace in the Middle East, only the newspapers showed some sort of opinion (6.4% favourable), while in government documents there was no reference to this policy issue. This trend agrees with the prevailed administration policy at that time that was to disregard U.N. Resolution 242 as the opening point for territorial concessions.

Table C6

Position towards Fulfilling U.N. Resolution 242 in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	6 (6.4%)	
N/A	88 (93.6%)	28 (100%)
Total	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

Table C7 shows that with respect to the Jewish settlements only the newspapers showed some sort of opinion (4.3% unfavourable), while there was no reference to this policy issue in government documents. This trend tends to reflect the somewhat unclear U.S. policy regarding the settlements during Clinton's first term in office.

Table C7

Position towards the Establishment of Jewish Settlements (Greater Israel) in the West Bank and Gaza Areas in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	4 (4.3%)	
N/A	90 (95.7%)	28 (100%)
Total	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

Table C8 shows that with respect to East Jerusalem, both newspapers and government documents showed no genuine reference for this issue. While it is obvious that the President avoided dealing with this complex issue, newspapers showed a slight attempt to do so, however the results were too vague to analyze.

Table C8

Position towards East Jerusalem as an Occupied Territory in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	1 (1.1%)	
Unclear	4 (4.3%)	
N/A	89 (94.7%)	28 (100%)
Total	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

Press Portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Table C9

Newspapers and Presidential Documents: Dominant Frame by Frequency and Percentage

Frame	Newspapers	Government documents
Conflict	18 (19.1%)	4 (14.3%)
Conflict Resolution/Reconciliation	50 (53.2%)	16 (57%)
Powerlessness	17 (18.1%)	5 (17.9%)
Economic	2 (2.1%)	
Morality	6 (6.4%)	3 (10.7%)
Other	1(1.1%)	
Total	94 (100%)	28 (100%)

Table C10

Images of Israelis and Palestinians in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by percentage

Image	<u>Israelis</u>		<u>Palestinians</u>	
	Newspapers	Pres. Docs	Newspapers	Pres. Docs
Heroes	2.1 (n=2)	21.4 (n=6)	1.1 (n=1)	7.1 (n=2)
Villains	7.4 (n=7)	3.6 (n=1)	16 (n=15)	17.9 (n=5)
Victims	5.3 (n=5)	14.3 (n=4)	6.4 (n=6)	7.1 (n=2)
Flexible/Conciliatory	1.1 (n=1)			
Inflexible Decision Makers	3.2 (n=3)		7.4 (n=7)	
Western-Like				
Anti-Western/Communist			2.1 (n=2)	
Democratic/Liberal				
Determined Decision Makers		3.6 (n=1)	1.1 (n=1)	3.6 (n=1)
Antidemocratic/Fundamentalist/		3.6 (n=1)	1.1 (n=1)	
Radical				
American Allies	7.4 (n=7)		2.1 (n=2)	
Obstacle to American Interests	1.1 (n=1)		3.2 (n=3)	
Moral				
Immoral				
Peace Lovers	7.4 (n=7)	21.4 (n=6)	6.4 (n=6)	
Warrior/Militant	9.6 (n=9)		2.1 (n=2)	
N/A	54.3 (n=51)	32.1 (n=9)	51.1 (n=48)	57.1 (n=16)
Total	100 (n=94)	100 (n=28)	100 (n=94)	100 (n=28)

Table C11

Image Direction of Israelis and Palestinians in Editorials: A comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	3 (%)	
Negative		3 (%)
N/A	4 (%)	4 (%)
Total	7 (100%)	7 (100%)

Image Effect on Foreign Policy

Tables C12 through C16 present the connection between the images and the policy position. Each table shows the results for a specific Israeli-Palestinian policy statement. The researcher clustered all images according to their direction: Positive, negative or N/A for articles that showed no specific image for either group. The values (frequencies and percentages) indicate the rates of the dominant images as appeared in both newspapers (*The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*) during the three-month period prior to the President's communication of each policy statement.

The results presented in Tables C12-C16 show that in most cases, there was no association between the images of the Israelis and/or the Palestinians and the subsequent U.S. stated foreign policy. Nevertheless, some cases showed some sort of association between the image of either group and the policy direction and therefore no clear-cut conclusions can be drawn. The following section will explain in details the relationship between the images and each policy.

The Establishment of a Palestinian Independent state is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians, however contradicts the Israeli interests. When the President firmly opposed a Palestinian independent state, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a negative coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. At the same time, an ongoing positive coverage of the Israelis would be expected to be followed

by an Israeli-compatible policy statement. As Table C12 reveals, the dominant image of the Palestinians is negative (34.5%), and the dominant image of the Israelis is positive (31%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was some sort of association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Table C12

*Images Preceding The President's Statement Opposing an Independent Palestinian State:
A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage*

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	9 (31%)	2 (6.8%)
Negative	4 (13.7%)	10 (34.5%)
N/A	16 (55%)	17 (58.6%)
Total	29 (100%)	29 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: June, 14 1993 – September 13, 1993.

Applying Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians. When the President firmly supported a Palestinian Self-rule, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. Nevertheless, Table C13 reveals that unexpectedly, the dominant image of the Palestinians was more negative (37.5%) than positive during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Palestinians and the President's position toward the establishment of a Palestinian autonomy in the territories.

Table C13

Images Preceding The President's Statement Supporting a Palestinian Self-Rule: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	6 (37.5%)	2 (12.5%)
Negative	1 (6.3%)	6 (37.5%)
N/A	9 (56.3%)	8 (50%)
Total	16 (100%)	16 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: November 10, 1993 – February 9, 1994.

Supporting economic aid to the Palestinian Authority in the context of the Oslo Accords is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians. When the President supported this initiative one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. Table C14 reveals that the dominant image of the Palestinians was unexpectedly negative (43%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. However, in this case the distinction between positive and negative images is insignificant because the difference is affected by only one case. As such, it is impossible to assume the existence of association between the image of the Palestinians and the President's position toward economic aid.

Table C14

Images Preceding The President's Statement Supporting Economic Aid to the Palestinian Authority: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	1 (4.8%)	8 (38%)
Negative	13 (61.9%)	9 (43%)
N/A	7 (33.3%)	4 (19%)
Total	21 (100%)	21 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: February 4, 1994 – May 3, 1994.

Accepting the PLO as the Palestinians legitimate representative in the context of the Oslo Accords is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians and their interests. When the President firmly supported this notion, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. Nevertheless, Table C15 reveals that the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative (23.8%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Palestinians and the President's position toward accepting the PLO as the Palestinians legitimate representative.

Table C15

Images Preceding The President's Statement Supporting PLO as the Palestinians Legitimate Representative: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	14 (33.3%)	2 (4.8%)
Negative	2 (4.8%)	10 (23.8%)
N/A	26 (62%)	30 (71.4%)
Total	42 (100%)	42 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: August 13, 1993 – November 12, 1993.

Supporting an alternative solution for the Palestinians (such as a confederation with Jordan) is considered a policy that in some extent compatible with the Israelis, however contradicts the Palestinians interests. When the President firmly supported this policy, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Israelis in the newspapers. At the same time, an ongoing negative coverage of the Palestinians would be expected to be followed by such an Israeli-compatible policy statement. Nevertheless, Table C16 reveals that while the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative as expected for such relationship to occur (34.4%), the dominant image of the Israelis was positive (31%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was

some sort of association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward applying an alternative solution to the Palestinian problem.

Table C16

Images Preceding The President's Statement Supporting an Alternative Solution to the Palestinians: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	9 (31%)	2 (6.8%)
Negative	4 (13.7%)	10 (34.4%)
N/A	16 (55%)	17 (58.6%)
Total	29 (100%)	29 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: June 14, 1993 – September 13, 1993.

Appendix D

Results for Case Study III (2000-2001)

Foreign policy issues: Government vs. Press Attitudes

Table D1 shows that with respect to providing economic/military aid to Israel, in general, both, the newspapers and government documents supported this policy (3.2%; 6.25%).

Table D1

Position towards Economic/Military Aid to Israel in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	7 (3.2%)	2 (6.25%)
N/A	213 (96.8%)	30 (93.75%)
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

Table D2 shows that with respect to the policy asserting that East Jerusalem should be given to the Palestinians, both newspapers and government documents favoured this position, however, newspapers showed higher supportive rates than the government documents 10.5% and 3.1% respectively.

Table D2

Position towards East Jerusalem for the Palestinians in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	23 (10.5%)	1 (3.1%)
Unclear	5 (2.3%)	2 (6.25%)
N/A	192 (87.3%)	29 (90.6%)
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

Table D3 shows that overall, both newspapers and government documents favoured providing economic aid to the Palestinian Authority, showing nearly similar rates of support for this issue (3.6%; 3.1% respectively).

Table D3

Position towards Economic Aid to the Palestinian Authority in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	1 (0.5%)	
Favourable	8 (3.6%)	1 (3.1%)
Unclear		
N/A	211 (96%)	31 (96.8%)
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

Table D4 shows that both the newspapers and Presidential documents tended to accept Palestinian independent state, however, the newspapers showed a greater support for it than government documents (9.5% vs. 3.1% respectively).

Table D4

Position towards an Independent Palestinian State in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	21 (9.5%)	1 (3.1%)
N/A	199 (90.5%)	31 (96.8%)
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

The results presented in Table D5 reflect the complexity of the issue of the Palestinian refugees' right of return to Israel. As such, the newspapers showed an assortment of opinions with a higher rate in the unfavourable category (6.4%), while in government documents there was no reference to this policy issue.

Table D5

Position towards Palestinians Right of Return to Israel in Newspapers and President Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	14 (6.4%)	
Favourable	2 (0.9%)	
Unclear	7 (3.2%)	
N/A	197 (89.5%)	32 (100%)
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

Table D6 shows that with respect to the policy granting the Palestinians with a right of return to the Palestinian State, only the newspapers showed some sort of opinion (3.2% favourable; 4.5 unclear), while there was no reference to this policy issue in government documents.

Table D6

Position towards Palestinians Right of Return to the Palestinian State in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	7 (3.2%)	
Unclear	10 (4.5%)	
N/A	203 (92.3%)	32 (100%)
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

Table D7 showed that with respect to the policy of Israel's exerting unilateral separation from the Palestinian territories, only the newspapers showed some sort of opinion (0.5% favourable; 1.4% unclear), while there was no reference to this policy issue in government documents.

Table D7

Position towards a Unilateral Separation in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable		
Favourable	1 (0.5%)	
Unclear	3 (1.4%)	
N/A	216 (98.2%)	32 (100%)
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

Table D8 shows that with respect to the policy of deploying international forces to keep the order in the territories, only the newspapers showed some sort of opinion with a rate of 5.5% in the favourable category. However, government documents indicated no real attitude regarding this policy issue.

Table D8

Position towards Deploying International Forces in the Territories in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Newspapers	President Docs
Unfavourable	6 (2.7%)	
Favourable	12 (5.5%)	1 (3.1%)
Unclear	2 (0.9%)	
N/A	200 (90.9%)	31 (96.8%)
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

Press Portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Table D9

Newspapers and Presidential Documents: Dominant Frame by Frequency and Percentage

Frame	Newspapers	President Docs
Conflict	155 (70.4%)	24 (75%)
Conflict Resolution/Reconciliation	37 (16.8%)	5 (15.6%)
Powerlessness	7 (3.2%)	1 (3.1%)
Economic	7 (3.2%)	2 (6.25%)
Human Impact	3 (1.4%)	
Morality	11 (5%)	
Total	220 (100%)	32 (100%)

Table D10

Images of Israelis and Palestinians in Newspapers and Presidential Documents: A Comparison by Percentage

Image	Israelis		Palestinians	
	Newspapers	Pres. Docs	Newspapers	Pres. Docs
Heroes	0.9 (n=2)		0.5 (n=1)	
Villains	19.1 (n=42)	15.6 (n=5)	25 (n=55)	25 (n=8)
Victims	6.8 (n=15)	12.5 (n=4)	8.2 (n=18)	12.5 (n=4)
Flexible/Conciliatory	2.3 (n=5)			
Inflexible Decision Makers	3.6 (n=8)	3.1 (n=1)	5.9 (n=13)	
Western-Like	1.4 (n=3)			
Anti-Western			1.4 (n=3)	
Democratic/Liberal				
Determined Decision Makers	0.9 (n=2)			
Antidemocratic/Fundamentalist/ Radical				
American Allies	9.1 (n=20)	6.25(n=2)		3.1 (n=1)
Obstacle to American Interests	0.9 (n=2)		2.3 (n=5)	
Moral				
Immoral		3.1 (n=1)		
Peace Lovers	2.3 (n=5)			3.1 (n=1)
Warrior/Militant/aggressors	14.5 (n=32)		20 (n=44)	9.3 (n=3)
Irrational	0.5 (n=1)		0.9 (n=2)	
Two conflicting Images	12.7 (n=28)	6.25 (n=2)	7.7 (n=17)	
N/A	25 (n=55)	56.25 (n=18)	28.2 (n=62)	47 (n=15)
Total	100 (n=220)	100 (n=32)	100 (n=220)	100 (n=32)

Table D11

Image Direction of Israelis and Palestinians in Editorials: A comparison by Frequencies and Percentage

Direction	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	18 (29.5%)	2 (3.2%)
Negative	23 (37.7%)	49 (80.3%)
Two Conflicting Images	6 (9.8%)	1 (1.6%)
N/A	14 (22.9%)	9 (14.7%)
Total	61 (100%)	61 (100%)

Image Effect on Foreign Policy

Tables D12 through D16 present the connection between the images and the policy position. Each table shows the results for a specific Israeli-Palestinian policy statement. The researcher clustered all images according to their direction: Positive, negative or N/A for articles that showed no specific image for either group. The values (frequencies and percentages) indicate the rates of the dominant images as appeared in both newspapers (*The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*) during the three-month period prior to the President's utterance of each policy statement.

The results presented in Tables D12-D16 show that in most cases, there was no association between the images of the Israelis and/or the Palestinians and the subsequent U.S. stated foreign policy. Nevertheless, some cases showed some sort of association between the image of either group and the policy direction and therefore no clear-cut conclusions can be drawn from these results. The following section will explain in details the relationship between the images and each policy.

The deployment of international forces or observers in the West Bank and Gaza strip is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians, however contradicts the Israeli interests. When the President supports this idea, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a negative coverage of the Israelis in the newspapers. At the same time, an ongoing positive coverage of the Palestinians would be expected to be

followed by this Palestinian-compatible policy statement. As Table D12 reveals, the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative (47%), while there was no genuine dominant image for the Israelis (the distribution of the negative/positive image is nearly equal) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Israelis and Palestinians and the President's position toward deploying international forces in the territories.

Table D12

Images Preceding The President's Statement Supporting the Deployment of International Forces: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	19 (25%)	4 (5.1%)
Neutral	9 (11.6%)	3 (3.9%)
Negative	18 (23.3%)	36 (47%)
N/A	31 (40.3%)	34 (44%)
Total	77 (100%)	77 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: August 10, 2000 – January 7, 2001.

Providing economic and military aid to Israel is considered a policy that benefits the Israelis, while at the same time contradicts the Palestinian interests. When the President firmly supported this policy, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Israelis in the newspapers. As Table D13 reveals, the image of Israelis in the newspapers during the period under analysis was closer to neutral rather than a clear-cut positive or negative image (25% positive vs. 23.3% negative). As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Israelis and the President's decision to support Israel both financially and militarily.

Table D13

*Images Preceding The President's Statement Supporting Economic/Military Aid to Israel:
A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage*

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	19 (25%)	4 (5.1%)
Neutral	9 (11.6%)	3 (3.9%)
Negative	18 (23.3%)	36 (47%)
N/A	31 (40.3%)	34 (44%)
Total	77 (100%)	77 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: August 10, 2000 – January 7, 2001.

Supporting economic aid to the Palestinian Authority is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians. When the President supported this initiative one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by a positive coverage of the Palestinians in the newspapers. Table D14 reveals that the dominant image of the Palestinians was, unexpectedly, negative (47%) during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to assume that no association existed between the image of the Palestinians and the President's position toward economic aid.

Table D14

*Images Preceding The President's Statement Supporting Economic aid to the Palestinians:
A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage*

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	19 (25%)	4 (5.1%)
Neutral	9 (11.6%)	3 (3.9%)
Negative	18 (23.3%)	36 (47%)
N/A	31 (40.3%)	34 (44%)
Total	77 (100%)	77 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: August 10, 2000 – January 7, 2001.

Supporting the notion that Israel will be allowed to retain some major settlements areas as part of the future peace agreement is considered a policy that benefits the Israelis, while at the same time contradicts the Palestinian interests. When the President firmly supported this policy, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by positive press coverage of the Israelis and negative coverage of the Palestinians. Table D15 shows that while the dominant image of the Palestinians was negative (47%), the image of Israelis was closer to neutral rather than a clear-cut positive or negative image (25% positive vs. 23.3% negative). As such, it is possible to assume that in this case, there was some sort of association between the image of the Israelis and the President's decision to regarding the Jewish settlement blocs.

Table D15

Images Preceding The President's Statement Supporting the Retaining of Settlement Blocs: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	19 (25%)	4 (5.1%)
Neutral	9 (11.6%)	3 (3.9%)
Negative	18 (23.3%)	36 (47%)
N/A	31 (40.3%)	34 (44%)
Total	77 (100%)	77 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: August 10, 2000 – January 7, 2001.

Opposing the notion of the whole Land of Israel that includes building Jewish settlements in areas within the West Bank and Gaza Strip is considered a policy that benefits the Palestinians and their interests, however contradicts the Israeli Interests. When the President firmly opposes this idea, one would assume that the preceding period of time was dominated by positive press coverage of the Palestinians and negative coverage of the Israelis. Nevertheless, Table D16 reveals that the dominant image of the Palestinians was unexpectedly negative (47%), while the image of the Israelis was closer to neutral during the three-month period prior to this specific policy statement. As such, it is possible to

assume that in this case, there was no association between the image of the Israelis and the Palestinians and the President's opposition to the concept of the Whole Land of Israel.

Table D16

Images Preceding The President's Statement Opposing the Notion of the Whole Land of Israel: A Comparison by Frequency and Percentage

Image	Israelis	Palestinians
Positive	19 (25%)	4 (5.1%)
Neutral	9 (11.6%)	3 (3.9%)
Negative	18 (23.3%)	36 (47%)
N/A	31 (40.3%)	34 (44%)
Total	77 (100%)	77 (100%)

Note. Data refer to the period: August 10, 2000 – January 7, 2001.

Appendix E

Congressional Documents Analysis—Results

Table E1

The Portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians in Congressional Documents by Frequency and Percentage

Direction	Israelis	Palestinians
Negative	1 (1.6%)	27 (43.5%)
Neutral	6 (9.6%)	8 (12.9%)
Positive	27 (43.5%)	1 (1.6%)
N/A	28 (45.1%)	26 (41.9%)
Total	62 (100%)	62 (100%)

Table E2

The Position of Congress toward U.S. Israeli-Palestinian Policy

Position	Value
Unfavourable	10 (16.1%)
Neutral	2 (3.2%)
Favourable	3 (4.8%)
N/A	47 (75.8%)
Total	62 (100%)

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