Roadmap to Nowhere

Local News Coverage of Israel/Palestine

A Report by the Grand Rapids Institute for Information Democracy
www.griid.org
Methodology

GRIID conducted a 90-day study of local TV and newspaper coverage of Israeli/Palestine. From August 11 through November 3, 2003 GRIID monitored the Grand Rapids Press, the 5:30, 6 & 11pm newscasts of channel’s 8 & 13, and channel 17’s 10pm newscast. This did not include Saturday and Sunday broadcasts since news programming varies due to sporting events and other programming changes. The Grand Rapids Press survey does include Saturdays and Sundays. The 11pm WZZM 13 broadcast was often not included as it was regularly pre-empted by Monday Night Football. The 10pm Fox 17 News broadcast was not included for Oct. 7, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22 and 23 as these were pre-empted by baseball.

Contact Us

GRIID is an affiliate of the the Community Media Center. GRIID conducts media research, media trainings and teaches media literacy.

You can access our resources and past reports at www.griid.org

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Summary of Finding

- TV coverage of Israel/Palestine consisted of a total of 18 stories from the three local networks. TV coverage of Israel/palestine was exclusively violence based. Every story was introduced by noting either a suicide bombing or a “targeted killing”.

- Newspaper coverage of Israel/Palestine was primarily violence based, although coverage of political events was more in-depth than the TV coverage.

- Israeli deaths due to violence were more likely to be reported than Palestinian deaths.

- The construction of the Israeli security fence, one of the most important developments in Israel/Palestine during the study period, received very little coverage compared to other stories.

- Neither the local TV stations nor the Grand Rapids Press ran a story on the humanitarian plight of the Palestinian people, despite the fact that a UN Report detailing the horrible conditions in the occupied territories was released during the study period.

- The United States is generally presented as an “Honest Broker” in these news stories.

- The GR Press relied almost exclusively on Associated Press and News Wire Services.
The local TV news coverage of Israel/Palestine during our 3-month study period was quite limited, especially compared to the amount of coverage in the Grand Rapids Press. There were a total of 18 local TV news stories with the average story being 30 seconds. With so few stories and such little time given to this complex issue, it is safe to say that most viewers who relied on local TV news for this issue would be ill-informed.

The major theme, both in narrative and in video footage is violence. Violence is what is happening in Israel and Palestine, particularly violence that is committed by Palestinian “militants.” Whenever Palestinians commit violence it is referred to as acts of terrorism (10 references). If Israelis commit violence it is framed as a response to, or attacks against, Palestinian terrorism.

The majority of the video footage that accompanies the news reader’s comments is that of bombed buildings and ambulances in Israel. The only video footage of the West Bank or Gaza is that of a car of a HAMAS leader who was attacked by the Israeli military. We don’t see Palestinian victims, just Palestinian mobs. The only victims we see are an Israeli girl and her mother who are being visited by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in a hospital. As we point out on page 7, human rights organizations clearly demonstrate that more Palestinians were killed during this 3-month study period than Israelis. As you can see from the chart below, the opposite was reported. Not once did WOOD TV 8 or WZZM 13 report on the death of a Palestinian civilian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network</th>
<th>Total Number of Stories</th>
<th>Israeli Victims: civilian</th>
<th>Israeli Victims: soldiers</th>
<th>Palestinian Victims: civilians</th>
<th>Palestinian Victims: “militants”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fox WXMI</td>
<td>17 - 9</td>
<td>34, 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC WOOD TV 8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27, 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC WZZM 13</td>
<td>13 - 4</td>
<td>33, 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Worthy and unworthy Victims

Fox 17
- Israeli Victims: civilian – 34, soldiers - 3
- Palestinian Victims: civilians – 7, “militants” – 5

WOOD TV 8
- Israeli Victims: civilian – 27, soldiers - 0
- Palestinian Victims: civilians – 0, “militants” – 4

WZZM 13
- Israeli Victims: civilian – 33, soldiers - 0
- Palestinian Victims: civilians – 0, “militants” – 0
Very little context was provided in any of these TV news stories. Not once are viewers provided with the role of the US government – economically, diplomatically or militarily. On only 2 occasions are the terms US Peace Plan or Middle East Road Map used. On three occasions we are told that Israeli helicopters fired on suspected terrorists or members of HAMAS. Providing viewers with the fact that Israel gets its helicopters from the US, would be contextual information. However, the only attempt to provide contextual information were the following statements - “Nearly 6 hours after that attack in Baghdad a suicide bombing in Jerusalem” (Fox 17), or “Sadly enough terrorists did not limit themselves to Iraq today, they struck in Israel as well.” (WOOD TV 8) Both of these statements were at the beginning of news stories and both attempt to link a bombing of a United Nations facility in Baghdad, Iraq and the Palestinian suicide bombings in Israel. Not only is there no documented relationship between these two bombings, but the Fox 17 station actually used video footage of the bombed UN building in Baghdad while the news reader is talking about the Israel/Palestine conflict. (FOX 17, 8/19/03)

One other example of an attempt to link Palestinian violence to that of international terrorism was on Fox 17. “The US government is also going after 5 groups in Europe that helps HAMAS raise cash. Senior officials say the action is similar to steps taken against Al Qaeda.” Whether or not it is intentional, an outcome of framing news stories this way could lead viewers to conclude that HAMAS and Al Qaeda are linked. This is all the more evident since this story began with the following statement “President Bush is taking another step to drain the so-called swamp of terrorism.” With the current “War on Terrorism, “ it is extremely important for news agencies to avoid generalizing or oversimplifying of these complex international issues.

Since there are so few stories it is difficult to provide much content analysis or to draw any conclusions on how viewers might be impacted by such coverage. However, based upon other research that looks at national news sources (http://www.fair.org/international/middle-east.html, http://www.abunimah.org/, and http://www.pmwatch.org/pmw/index.asp) and the impact of non-news representations of the Middle East and particularly Arabs (Jack Sheehan’s seminal work Reel Bad Arabs and our own study of films in 2002 http://www.griid.org/pdfs/race_in_films.pdf), it is reasonable to conclude that our study of local TV news coverage on Israel/Palestine can contribute to a biased understanding of this conflict.

The narrative for all 18 stories is included in the appendix
Israel/Palestine in the Grand Rapids Press

As opposed to the minimal coverage of Israel/Palestine in the local TV media, the Grand Rapids Press (referred to as the “Press” for the rest of this report), ran stories on the topic almost daily. While the TV media ran only 18 stories combined on Israel/Palestine, the Press provided 74 articles during the 90-day study period. Roughly half of these stories were short, newswire pieces that appeared on page 2 in the Nation/World Briefs section, while the other half were more substantial articles almost exclusively from the Associated Press (AP). While the volume of coverage on Israel/Palestine in the Press was certainly greater than the TV coverage, the general themes and framing of stories was not. As in the TV coverage, the newspaper coverage suffered from a narrowness of focus and lack of contextual information. Violence based stories dominated both the TV and print media with the “bombing of the day” being the most certain way for the subject of Israel/Palestine to make the news. Other than violence based stories, articles on Israel/Palestine in the Press tended to focus on the political back and forth between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority. The preponderance of voices presented from both the Israeli and Palestinian perspectives came from “official” sources. Of the 61 sources directly quoted in the articles, 49 come from various government sources.

Regardless of what voices are presented in the Press articles about Israel/Palestine, the component found to be lacking in all of them is any sort of historical context. Events and actions are reported but seldom are the motivations of the various actors explored. In fact, some of the most basic facts pertaining to Israel/Palestine are ignored.

An examination of the language used in the articles that comprised this study bears this out. The study looked at how often certain phrases and words were used in order to get an idea about what was being reported and how. The words/phrases searched for were “occupation/occupied territories”, “suicide bomb/bombing”, “road map peace plan/process”, “militant”, and “terror/terrorism”. “Suicide bomber”, “terrorism”, and “militant”, terms common in violence-based stories, appeared in roughly half of all the articles times. The term “road map/peace plan”, a signifier for stories about the political contest between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority, appeared quite often as well. The term occupation/occupied territories, a key term in expressing any historical context, was almost completely absent, appearing only once in 74 articles.

The terms “suicide bombing”, “terrorism”, and “militant” were used exclusively to describe Palestinians or actions taken by them. Actions taken by the Israeli forces that result in Palestinian loss of life or property are referred to with terms such as “targeted killings”, “regular demolitions”, “retaliation”, or simply “air strikes”. These terms are the terms that the Israeli government uses to refer to their own actions. The terms used in the articles to describe Palestinian violent actions are the terms the Israeli government prefers to use. The language that is used to describe violence in Israel/Palestine in the articles run in the Press reflects the official preferences of the Israeli government.
Worthy and Unworthy Victims

Reporting on Palestinian and Israeli Deaths in the Grand Rapids Press

The topic relating to Israel/Palestine most likely to get coverage in the Press was violence. Given that the violence in Israel/Palestine is part of the economic/political struggle between the Israeli state and the Palestinian people, violent acts in the region often are newsworthy. The problem is not that violence based stories are not newsworthy, but rather that they are reported without being put into part of a larger context.

The first example we will look at involves how the Press reported on deaths due to violence in Israel/Palestine. During the 90 day study period, there were 122 Palestinians killed by Israeli Defense Forces and 72 Israelis killed by Palestinians.

Deaths due to violence in Israel/Palestine

- **Israeli civilians killed by Palestinians:** 54
- **Israeli security forces personnel killed by Palestinians:** 18
- **Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces personnel:** 122

B’Tselem The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories www.btselem.org/index.asp

* The number of Palestinians killed is not divided into civilian and military categories like the Israeli figures are. This is due to the fact that the Palestinians do not have a military. While the media often differentiate between Palestinian “civilians” and “militants”, these differentiations are not easily verified or even defined.
A careful examination of the articles run by the GR Press reveals the reporting of 68 Israeli deaths and 57 Palestinian deaths. These figures were arrived at by simply reading each article and recording when a new Israeli or Palestinian fatality was reported. There is a large discrepancy between the two sets of figures. The GR Press articles report on 68 of 72 Israeli casualties and yet only report 57 of 122 Palestinian dead. So while the number of Israeli victims is reported fairly accurately, only about half of the Palestinians deaths are reported in the GR Press.

The figures for the GR Press had to be arrived at carefully because articles often repeat casualty numbers from article to article. Often stories would repeat casualty counts from a previous day's news to explain the current days events. An examination of the newspaper articles found that Israeli casualty figures were much more likely to be repeated in stories after the initial report. Of course, the average newspaper reader is not going to keep a running tab of which deaths occurred on which specific day. Rather, the average newspaper reader is likely to base their understanding of the situation on the cumulative repetition of casualty figures. By adding together all the casualty figures given in Press articles regardless of whether or not those same figures had already been reported in previous articles, we find that the total number of Palestinian deaths mentioned is 96 and the total number of Israeli deaths mentioned is 405. This means that while there were almost twice as many Palestinian as Israeli deaths during the study period, there were four times as many Israeli deaths mentioned in the various Press articles as compared to mentions of Palestinian deaths.

Aside from the number of deaths that were reported, it is important to look at the tone and amount of detail given in the reporting of fatalities. In general, the reporting of Palestinian deaths due to violence in the Press was fairly straightforward and cursory. This was particularly true in the "Nation/World" Briefs articles that were usually under 3 column inches long. A representative example of this is the Oct 19 piece Hamas Militants Killed;

"Gaza Strip – Israeli troops clashed with Hamas militants in Gaza on Saturday, killing two of them and a bystander in a shootout in a refugee camp where Israel has been
conducting raids for more than a week. Another Palestinian was killed in the West Bank town of Tulkarem when Israeli soldiers fired on a crowd of Palestinian youths who had thrown stones and a firebomb."

The same dry tone of reporting is found in longer articles reporting on Palestinian deaths as well. In these instances we find that the articles generally consist of the reporting the number of Palestinian causalities along with a series of qualifying statements from the Israeli military. The article *Israeli air strikes hit bystanders* is a good example of this. The article starts out by stating that 10 Palestinians were killed and 100 wounded when Israeli helicopters fired missiles at suspected militants. The only direct quote in the article is Israeli vice premier Ehud Olmert who "calls the large number of civilian deaths "distressing" but that military strikes will continue "especially in light of the murderous acts of terror groups"." The article then has three sentences recounting the Israeli military’s description of the event. The last sentence acknowledges the that "Palestinian witnesses said the time lapse was at least two minutes." (in contrast to the Israeli version of events).

Coverage of Israeli deaths is quite different from the above model. Israeli deaths are never explained by giving the explanation of the opposing side that caused their deaths. Rather, Israeli deaths are often personalized and reported with eye witness accounts. In the article *Suicide bomb in Israel kills 19*, it is reported that “broken plates, glass, chairs and human remains covered the floor of the one-story building. Outside, the body of the restaurant’s security guard lay broken and bloody on the steps". “Gideon Zilberstein, a 63-year-old accountant, was eating lunch with his wife, son and daughter-in-law when the bomber attacked. “Suddenly we heard a huge boom all around us. People were dead or dying next to our table” he said”. One has to ask if the reporting of these kinds of details, details never given in reports of Palestinian deaths during our study period, might incline the reader toward identifying with the Israeli position?

There is a marked difference in the reporting of Palestinian and Israeli victims of violence in the Press. Palestinian deaths tend to be underreported in numerical terms and given little graphic or personal description. Often stories of Palestinian deaths are accompanied with the Israeli militaries description of events rather than the Palestinian viewpoint. While Palestinian deaths due to Israeli Defence Force actions are usually framed within the context of Israelis retaliating or taking pre-emptive action against militants, reasons why Palestinians might resort to violence are never given. In the article *Teenage bombers followed similar lives and deaths*, the AP manages to write an entire article about two Palestinian teenage suicide bombers without giving any reason as to why these young men would be willing to commit such egregious crimes. The article does include graphic details about their victims along with figures on the number of total suicide bombings and the number of overall victims. What is missing is any mention of the context that drives Palestinian youth to such desperate
The Unreported Context: Palestine as Humanitarian Crisis

Any understanding of the situation in Israel/Palestine has to include an awareness of the desperate living conditions in the Occupied Territories. Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are living in squalid poverty as opposed to Israeli citizens living in Israel proper and the Israeli settlers in the West Bank. The situation in the Occupied Territories has declined significantly over the last three years when what is referred to as the “second Intifada” started. As a direct result of restrictions and policies enacted by the Israeli government, the Palestinian population in the occupied territories has experienced what can only be described as a humanitarian crisis. According to Amnesty International: “No Palestinian living in the Occupied Territories has escaped the impact of the severe movement restrictions imposed by the occupying Israeli military forces since the start of the Intifada three years ago. The impact on their right to work and to an adequate standard of living, education and healthcare has been devastating and widespread. Unemployment has soared to close to 50%, and loss of income from work has in turn caused a steep rise in poverty, the emergence of malnutrition and an increase in other illnesses. A World Bank report issued in May 2003 estimates that about 60% of the Palestinian population is living below the poverty line of US$2.1 per day and that real per capita food consumption has dropped by up to 30% in the past three years.” (http://web.amnesty.org/pages/isr-201103-action-eng)

In July of 2003, Jean Ziegler, a Swiss sociologist went to the occupied territories as a UN special envoy. Ziegler prepared a report for the UN based on his visit to the territories, as well as statistics accumulated over the past year by UN and US agencies. In his report Ziegler notes that; “The Occupied Palestinian Territories is on the verge of humanitarian catastrophe as a result of the extremely harsh military measures imposed by the occupying Israeli military forces since the outbreak of the second Intifada in September 2000.” Ziegler goes on to note “Severe malnutrition reported in Gaza is now equivalent to levels found in poor, sub-Saharan (African) countries, an absurd situation as Palestine was formerly a middle income society.” (http://www.antiwar.com/ips/lobe111303.html)

The Zeigler Report was not deemed newsworthy by the Associated Press. Nor did the Associated Press deem it newsworthy that the Israeli government, upset by the content of the Zeigler report, pressured the UN successfully to delay the publication of the report from November of 2003 to spring of 2004 (Gulf News Online Israel accused of starving West Bank New York |By Charles Laurence and Kim Willsher 10-10-2003). Israel, with support from the US, also has requested that the UN Human Rights commission discipline Zeigler for “overstepping his mandate” and that the report be rejected before being presented to the General Assembly.

The fact that the vast majority of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories live in extreme poverty without adequate access to education, healthcare or even food was never given its own story in the GR Press during our study period. Without having this crucial information, readers of the Grand Rapids press have no framework
within which to understand the motivations and actions of the Palestinian people.

**The Reporting of the “Wall”**

One of the most important developments in Israel/Palestine during the study period was the construction of the Israeli “security fence”. This story received very limited and incomplete coverage in the Press during the study period. Of the 74 articles comprising the study, only seven articles included any mention of the wall and often only in passing. Of the seven articles that mention the “security barrier” four actually refer to it in the headline, *U.N. to Israel: Tear down that wall*, *Sharon delays security fence vote*, *Israel’s wall excludes big settlements*, and *Holyland’s Christians reject ‘apartheid wall’*

Interestingly, the article *Holyland’s Christians reject ‘apartheid wall’*, a Cox News Service article, was the only article on Israel Palestine run by the Press that was not AP or Press Wire Service. This article was unique among those that mentioned the wall in that it at least acknowledged that the phrase “security fence” is the description officially sanctioned by the Israeli government and not by the Palestinians. From the seventh paragraph of the article: “Palestinian officials refer to the barrier as an “apartheid wall,” while Israel refers to it as a “security fence.” This was the only time the phrase “Apartheid wall” was used in the Press and it was the only time “security barrier” was put in quotation marks. The other Press articles routinely referred to the Israeli wall as a security fence, with no quotation marks or indication that “security fence” is the official description favored by the Israeli government.

The nature of the separation wall is never adequately described in the AP articles. A couple times the “fence” is described: “370 mile barrier of fences, trenches, razor wire and concrete walls” (*Sharon delays security fence vote*) and “Its fences, trenches, razor, wire and concrete walls could eventually run more than 400 miles” (*Israel’s wall excludes big settlements*). While these descriptions are accurate in describing the physical nature of the separation barrier, they do not convey the effect that these barriers have on the Palestinian people. The only article to address this topic at all, *Raid in West Bank leads to Islamic Jihad leader’s arrest*, states “In some parts, it (the wall) runs close to the invisible Green Line, the frontier between Israel and the West Bank before the 1967 Mid east War. However, in other areas, the barrier dips miles into the West Bank, isolating Palestinian villages and cutting residents off from their land.” This is later justified by
saying that the wall has to be extended into the West Bank to protect Israeli settlements. Nowhere is it ever noted that these settlements are illegal under international law as described in article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, of which Israel is a signatory. (http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/History/Human_Rights/geneva1.html)

The reality of the Separation wall is much different and more severe than what is cursorily described by the AP. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (http://domino.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/4e0b9b40c993ea2c85256de10058b1fb?OpenDocument) only 11% of the wall’s length run along the Green line. The rest of the wall’s path cuts deep into the West Bank, up to 22 km near the Israeli settlement of Ariel. Approximately 210,000 acres of land, 14.5% of the West Bank, will lie between the Green Line and the Wall. The wall does not run in straight lines but doubles back on itself to create 12 separate enclaves. More than 400,000 Palestinians will need to cross the barrier to get to their farms, jobs, and services. Given the very restrictive nature of Israeli security checkpoints, this will severely hamper 30% of the total Palestinian population’s ability to subsist. In none of the AP articles that appeared in the Press were the humanitarian consequences of the Israeli “barrier fence” discussed, nor were any maps of the wall shown.

The AP articles do not give any of the facts of the wall as put forward by the UN and various human rights groups. Instead they simply report repeatedly that “Palestinians call it a land grab” without giving the reader any substantive information about the wall with which to contextualize the Palestinian claim. Of the three articles that appeared in the Press specifically about the separation wall, none present the Palestinian perspective in any more detail than reiterating the “land grab” statement. The article *Israel’s Wall Excludes Big Settlements* focuses almost entirely on how the wall will affect Israeli settlers, with no mention of the effect on Palestinians. The article goes on to give a tacit recommendation for the construction of the wall by noting “The plan to erect a security barrier between Israel and the West Bank is enormously popular in Israel after three years of violence in which hundreds of Israelis have been killed by suicide bombers” and “No bombers have come from the Gaza Strip, which is fenced in.” Nowhere in the article does the author note that along with the unspecified “hundreds of Israelis” killed have been hundreds of Palestinians. Nor does the article mention that the wall is not between the West Bank and Israel but is actually a partition that is almost completely within the West Bank itself.
Israel, the U.S. and the United Nations

During the study period, the Sharon Government threatened to remove Yasser Arafat from power, a move that prompted the Palestinian Authority to ask the UN to pass a resolution condemning such a move by Israel. The resolution was approved by the general assembly and then vetoed by the United States.

The story of the proposed resolution and the US’s subsequent veto of it were covered in three articles that ran in the Press. The first article was a Press News Service piece in the Nation/World Briefs section titled *Palestinians seek U.N. help to nix Israel threat to Arafat* (9/13). Although relatively short, this article gives a reasonable summary of the contents of the proposed resolution.

Three days later, the Press ran their second story on this topic titled *Israel calls Arafat easy target* (9/17). This article states that the resolution was debated extensively in the general assembly and that it was altered to “provide more evenhandedness in the resolution, to gain the support of Britain and Germany, and to assure that the United States would abstain rather than veto the resolution.” The rest of the article is given to describing Israeli UN Ambassador Dan Gillerman’s speech to the UN. Gillerman is quoted extensively, *more than any Palestinian source in any one article in the entire study period.* Gillerman’s quoted words are the following:

- “Mega Terror”
- “Had Israel wanted to kill Yasser Arafat, it could have done so 3,000 times”
- “terrorist entrepreneurs”
- “He (Arafat) is at the helm of those who have been supporting mega terror attacks, in the style of the bombing of the twin towers, to bring the region to catastrophe”
- “Global indiscriminate terrorism is made by Arafat and invented by Arafat”

These quotes are followed by a two word rebuttal by a Palestinian representative who is quoted by saying that Gillerman’s speech was “just trash”. The article does not point out that there is no factual basis to any link between Arafat, Al Qaeda, and the events of 9/11, as Gillerman tries to insinuate.

The next day the Press ran an AP article titled *Arafat stands firm as Arabs express anger at US veto* (9/17). The author of this article has framed the story in a very misleading way. While the obvious main actor in the story is the US, the story is framed in a way that puts the US in a passive role while the focus of the story is about “Arab anger” in response to the veto. This is quite clear in the sentence structure of the headline itself. Compare that to several other headlines that ran that day in other newspapers:

NY Times “U.S. Uses Its Veto to Block Anti-Israel Measure in U.N.”

Jerusalem Post “Israel: No more phony PA cease-fires. US vetoes pro-Arafat UN resolution”

USA Today “U.S. vetoes U.N.'s plan for Arafat”
None of these three publications could be considered to have a pro-Palestinian bias and yet all three recognized the US as the active agent in their headline.

While the previous AP articles on this topic described the language of the resolution, the article written after the UN veto does not. It merely quotes the official US statement that the resolution was “lopsided” without telling the reader what the actual resolution language was. The article ends with a quote from US Ambassador to the UN John Negroponte, “It was lopsided and... Didn’t take into account the elements we thought it ought to take into account, including a robust criticism of Palestinian terrorism.” Without being given the text of the resolution, the reader is led to take Negroponte’s statement at face value. Consider the following resolution text:

“Condemning the suicide bombings and their recent intensification, and recalling in that regard that in the framework of the road map, S/2003/529, annex. The Palestinian Authority has to take all necessary measures to end violence and terror.”

1. Reiterates its demand for the complete cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terrorism, provocation, incitement and destruction;

Giving the reader the resolution text would allow the reader to critically evaluate the validity of Negroponte’s statement.

Toward the end of the study period a new story surfaced concerning a UN resolution and Israel Palestine. This story was about Israel introducing a resolution to the UN, Israel circulates first resolution on crisis (11/4). This article does not cite or quote a single Arab or Palestinian voice. This is in marked contrast to the previous articles covering the Arab sponsored resolution which quoted Israeli sources more than Arab or Palestinian. The article describes the Israeli resolution as a response to the “hundred’s of resolutions Arab States sponsor, all of which condemn Israel’s actions against the Palestinians while making little, if any, mention of Palestinian attacks against Jews.” The article goes on to say that the United States “vetoed several (Arab sponsored resolutions) that were brought to the Security Council, arguing that they were unbalanced.” Again, the official U.S. position that the resolution was “unbalanced” and therefore deserved to be
vetoed is reported on without any examination of the validity of the US claim.

The admission that “the United States “vetoed several Arab sponsored resolution” was one of the few instances where the history of the US/Israel relationship was alluded to in the Press articles. The US is Israel’s strongest ally, providing an enormous amount of monetary, military, and political aid. Over one-third of total US aid to foreign countries goes to Israel (http://www.wrmea.com/). Israel is by far the greatest beneficiary of US military aid. The United States provides direct and indirect military aid to Israel totaling close to two billion dollars a year, more than it gives to all the countries of sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean put together (http://www.palestine-monitor.org/factsheet/US_Aid_to_Israel.htm). Several Press articles examined in this study mention Apache attack helicopters being used by Israel in carrying out “targeted assassinations”. None of these Articles bothered to note that these helicopters were paid for with US taxpayer dollars (http://www.worldpolicy.org/projects/arms/reports/israel050602.html). Nor do the Press articles mention the routine vetoing by the US of almost every resolution put forward at the United Nations that is critical of Israel, often being the only (aside from Israel) dissenting vote (http://www.action-for-un-renewal.org.uk/pages/isreal_un_resolutions.htm). These important contextual facts would help the reader to form a more accurate picture of the United States’ role in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

Conclusion

Coverage of Israel Palestine in the Grand Rapids Press, while of considerably more quantity than the TV coverage, was lacking in depth and variety. Almost all the articles were pulled from the Associated Press and therefore reflected the bias of that organization. The articles that the Press ran were limited in topics covered, focusing on violence and politics. Israeli casualties were given greater attention than Palestinian casualties. The historic relationship between Israel and the United States was never explored or explained. Pertinent stories like the construction of the “separation wall” or the humanitarian consequences of the occupation were underreported or not reported at all. Most surprisingly, and most shockingly, the Press articles ignored almost completely the existence of the occupation itself, using the word “occupation” once in 74 articles. Given these discrepancies, it is almost a given that anybody who relied exclusively on the Grand Rapids Press and the three local TV stations for news would have a very limited and distorted understanding of Israel/Palestine.
Images of Israel/Palestine

Political Cartoons in the GR Press

The GR Press ran five political cartoons about Israel/Palestine during the study period. These cartoons mirror the news stories that ran in the GR Press in that they focus primarily on violence and the “peace process” while giving no contextual information. The two cartoons on the next page express identical sentiments but attribute them to opposite sides. While the message is the same, the grammar is rather different; the Israeli soldier’s speech is presented in proper English while the character of Arafat, quite inexplicably, is given a faux Mexican accent.
ROAD MAP?
YOU DON'T NEED NO STINKIN' ROAD MAP...

ROAD MAP?
WE FIXED IT SO YOU DON'T NEED A ROAD MAP.
Photographic depiction of Israel/Palestine in the GR Press

During our study period the GR Press ran 41 photos pertaining to Israel/Palestine. The majority of these photos were depictions of Palestinians. Of the 41 photos, 31 were images of Palestinians, 7 of Israelis, and 4 of both Israelis and Palestinians. Almost half of the images are of political leaders, with Arafat alone accounting for 13 pictures. The other pictures generally depict scenes of violence and conflict. The images of Palestinians consist primarily of people protesting, holding guns, or surveying wreckage. The images of Israelis consist of a few pictures of soldiers, a bulldozer, and school children.

Specific individuals identified in Photos
Yasser Arafat: 13
Ahmed Qureia: 5
Ariel Sharon: 2
Mahmoud Abbas: 1
Mahmoud Zahar (Hamas) 1
Marwan Barghouti (Hamas) 1
Dan Gillerman (Israeli UN envoy) 1

The Front Page

This was one of only two photos pertaining to Israel/Palestine that ran on the front page. The other was a small photo of Arafat.

Supporters of the Palestinian militant group Hamas shout anti-Israel slogans during a demonstration Thursday in the southern Gaza Strip town of Rafah following the killing of Senior Hamas leader Jamal Abu

A Palestinian youth of the Jenin Martyrs Brigade, a militia linked to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat’s Fatah movement, crawls under barbed wire during military exercises at a youth training camp in Bureij refugee camp, southern Gaza Strip.
A Palestinian emergency worker puts out a fire today underneath the floor of a collapsed house in Gaza City. Palestinians watch the wreckage of a U.S. embassy car lifted by a crane near the village of Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip Wednesday. An explosion destroyed the vehicle and killed at least three Americans.

Armed support: A Palestinian woman holding an AK-47 rifle shouts anti-Bush slogans in front of Yasser Arafat pictures at a rally Friday in Sidon, Lebanon.

Not much left: Palestinians today search the ruins of a house destroyed Sunday in an Israeli helicopter strike in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip. Israel said the house was being used by the militant group Hamas to store weapons.

Palestinian youths hurl stones at an Israeli army bulldozer in the West Bank city of Nablus in this file photo. Now remote-controlled bulldozers are used in the region to tear down structures.
Images of Israelis

Kids at risk: Jewish Ultra-Orthodox children look from the window of a bus passing by the site where a suicide attack Tuesday left 20 people dead.

An Israeli security guard walks next to a cement-block wall dividing the east Jerusalem side of Abu Dis from the West Bank as a bulldozer heads to a nearby construction site of a barrier Israel is building in the West Bank. Right, Palestinian residents demonstrate against the construction of a fence.

Israeli police investigate the site of a suicide bombing outside a supermarket in the central Israeli town of Rosh Haayin.

An Israeli forensics expert works at the scene of a suicide bombing Saturday in the northern Israeli city of Haifa.

Birthday celebration: Shimon Peres, left, leader of Israeli opposition; Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, center; and former U.S. President Clinton attend a gala in Tel Aviv, Israel marking Peres' 80th birthday Sunday. A parade of global figures, from Mikhail Gorbachev to U.S. actress Kathleen Turner, came to Israel to help mark the birthday of Peres, a Nobel laureate.
Log of GR Press articles August 11 to – Nov. 4

8/11 A10 AP na “Israel tries to avoid fights with guerrillas” 10 inches 1 map
8/12 A3 AP Steve Weizman “Suicide bombers end calm in Middle East” 7 inches 1 photo
8/13 A7 AP Mohammed Daraghmeh “Teenage bombers followed similar lives and deaths” 13 inches 1 photo
8/14 A2 AP na “Firefight leaves 1 dead” 2 inches
8/15 A2 AP na “Israel releases more Palestinian prisoners” 4 inches
8/16 A2 AP na “Israel hands over 4 towns” 3 inches
8/17 A2 AP na “Arafat reluctant to visit graves” 3 inches
8/18 A7 AP Steve Weizman “Mideast peace plan stumbles over town’s turnover” 11 inches 2 photos
8/20 A3 AP Ian James “Israel likely to strike back after bombing” 9 inches 1 photo + map
8/21 A3 AP Ibrahim Barzak “Islamic militants abandon truce, Israelis retaliate” 11 inches
8/21 A3 AP na “Bombing killed 5 Americans” 3 inches
8/22 A1 AP Ibrahim Barzak “Israel warns of more rebel deaths” 12 inches 1 photo
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8/25 A7 AP Ibrahim Barzak “Israel kills 4 militants” 18 inches 1 photo
8/25 A7 AP na “U.S. Military needed for stability” 4 inches
8/26 A2 AP na “Israel snatches gunman” 3 inches
8/27 A2 AP na “Store owner killed in raid” 3 inches
8/31 A3 AP Margaret Coker “Holyland’s Christians reject ‘apartheid wall’” 7 inches 2 photos
8/31 A15 AP Mohammed Daraghmeh “Be masters of disguise, militants told” 20 inches 2 photos
9/1 A12 AP Ian James “Israel warning: no deal with negotiators chosen by Arafat” 11 inches 1 photo
9/2 A4 AP Karin Laub “Israel threatens to send Arafat packing” 13 inches 1 photo
9/4 A9 AP na “Abbas asks parliament for support” 7 inches
9/7 A3 AP Dan Perry “Who will succeed Palestine’s Abbas?” 8 inches 1 photo
9/7 A3 AP na “EU freezes Hamas Assets” 4 inches
9/8 A3 AP Lara Sukhtian “Arafat’s pick for premier may not accept nomination” 12 inches 3 photos
9/9 A7 AP Ramit Plushnick-Masti “Arafat’s prime minister gets Israel’s Approval” 10 inches 1 photo
9/9 A7 AP na “Israel warns Iran on nukes” 4 inches
9/10 A3 AP Ibrahim Barzak “Hamas leader survives airstrike that killed his son” 9 inches 2 photos
9/11 A2 PWS na “Israel edges closer to booting Arafat” 6 inches 1 photo
9/12 A3 AP Mark Levy “World Blasts Israel for vowing to remove Arafat” 8 inches 1 photo
9/13 A2 PWS na “Palestinians seek UN help to nix Israel threat to Arafat” 8 inches 1 photo
9/14 A11 AP Dan Perry “New Palestinian prime minister still caught between Israel, Arafat” 20 inches 1 photo
9/15 A11 AP Mohammed Daraghmeh “One option: Kill Yasser Arafat” 12 inches 1 photo
9/15 A11 AP Ramit Plushnick-Masti “Israel’s wall excludes big settlements” 8 inches
9/16 A14 AP Peter James Spielmann “Israel calls Arafat easy target” 13 inches 2 photos
9/16 A14 AP na “Israel wants crackdown before truce” 8 inches
9/17 D6 AP Ranjan Roy “Arafat stands firm as Arabs express anger at US veto” 10 inches
9/17 D6 AP Steve Weizman “Sharon delays security fence vote” 8 inches 1 photo
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<td>8/12</td>
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<td>&quot;Israeli police&quot; Small photo of two Israeli police with guns searching rubble</td>
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<td>8/13</td>
<td>A7</td>
<td>&quot;In Mourning&quot; Medium size photo of crying Palestinian boy holding picture of older brother</td>
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<td>&quot;Israeli Prime minister Ariel Sharon&quot; Small headshot of Sharon</td>
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<td>&quot;Kids at Risk&quot; Medium large photo of four orthodox Jewish children looking through bus window</td>
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<td>8/22</td>
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<td>&quot;Supporters of the Palestinian Militant Group Hamas&quot; medium photo of angry young Palestinian males</td>
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<td>&quot;Aftermath&quot; Large photo of Palestinian men standing around site of rocket attack</td>
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<td>8/31</td>
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<td>&quot;An Israeli Security Guard&quot; Large photo of Israeli soldiers' gun in foreground with bulldozer and concrete wall in background</td>
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<td>8/31</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian Residents Demonstrates&quot; Medium size photo of Israeli soldiers' gun in foreground with protesting Palestinians in background</td>
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<td>&quot;Israeli soldiers detain members&quot; Large photo of four Israeli soldiers with three Palestinian men in custody</td>
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<td>&quot;A Palestinian youth&quot; Medium size photo of a Palestinian youth with AK-47 crawling under barb wire</td>
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<td>&quot;Yasser Arafat&quot; Small headshot of Arafat</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat&quot; Medium size headshot of Arafat</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas&quot; Small headshot of Abbas</td>
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<td>9/8</td>
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<td>&quot;Not Much Left&quot; Medium small picture of Palestinian men sifting through rubble</td>
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<td>9/8</td>
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<td>&quot;Yasser Arafat&quot; Small head shot of Arafat</td>
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<td>&quot;Ahmed Qureia&quot; Small head shot of Qureia</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat&quot; Large pic of Arafat and Ahmed Qureia</td>
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<td>9/10</td>
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<td>&quot;Mahmoud Zahar&quot; Small headshot of Zahar</td>
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<td>&quot;A Palestinian emergency worker&quot; Medium size photo of emergency workers and soldiers</td>
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<td>9/11</td>
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<td>&quot;Israeli Demolition&quot; Large photo of Palestinian apartment complex being demolished</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat&quot; Small photo of Arafat giving &quot;v&quot; sign</td>
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<td>9/13</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian Gunmen&quot; Medium size pic of Palestinian gunmen</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian Prime minister Ahmed Qureia&quot; medium size photo of Qureia</td>
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<td>9/15</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat&quot; small photo of Arafat with supporters</td>
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<td>A14</td>
<td>&quot;Under Protection&quot; Large pic of Arafat with guards</td>
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<td>9/16</td>
<td>A14</td>
<td>&quot;Dan Gillerman&quot; Small headshot of Dan Gillerman</td>
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<td>9/17</td>
<td>D6</td>
<td>&quot;Palestinians jump over a wall of cement&quot; Large pic of Palestinians jumping over wall which has a swastika inside a star of david drawn on it</td>
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<td>9/19</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>&quot;Exercising Authority&quot; medium pic of Arafat</td>
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<td>9/20</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>&quot;Armed Support&quot; Medium size pic of Palestinian woman holding AK-47 in front of picture of Arafat</td>
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<td>9/21</td>
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<td>&quot;Yasser Arafat&quot; Small headshot of Arafat</td>
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<td>&quot;Birthday Celebration&quot; medium size pic of Peres with Sharon and Clinton</td>
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<td>&quot;Marwan Barghouti&quot; Small pic of Barghouti</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat&quot; Medium size pic of Arafat with child</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat&quot; small pic of Arafat</td>
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<td>10/05</td>
<td>A16</td>
<td>&quot;An Israeli forensics expert works&quot; small pic of an Israeli forensics expert</td>
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<td>&quot;Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat&quot; medium pic of Arafat and Ahmed Qureia</td>
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<td>10/12</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>&quot;Power Struggle&quot; Large pic of Arafat sitting with Palestinians</td>
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<td>10/13</td>
<td>A8</td>
<td>&quot;In and Out?&quot; small pic of Ahmed Qureia</td>
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<td>10/16</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>&quot;Palestinians watch the wreckage&quot; medium pic of Palestinians standing near wrecked car</td>
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<td>10/27</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>&quot;Checkpoint disagreement&quot; medium pic of Palestinian and Israeli soldier</td>
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<td>10/31</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>&quot;Palestinian youth hurl stones&quot; large pic of an Israeli bulldozer and Palestinian children</td>
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Appendix to Local TV News Coverage of Israel/Palestine

WZZM 13 – August 12, 5:30 pm
"The Israeli/Palestinian peace process is again in jeopardy. Two terrorist bombings in Israel that put a halt to a planned prisoner release. Israel says it won’t continue with the US plan until there is a complete end to terror acts. Secretary of State Colin Powell insisted today’s acts with not derail efforts towards peace."
Length: 19 seconds
Video b-roll: site of bombing/rescue crews

Fox 17 – August 19, 10 pm
"Nearly 6 hours after that attack in Baghdad a suicide bombing in Jerusalem. At least 18 people died and more than 130 were injured, many of them were children. The bomber blew up a bus that carried Jewish worshippers returning from their prayers. This is a big setback to the Road Map for Middle East Peace. It's the deadliest attacks since militant groups agreed to a ceasefire in late June. The Palestinian Authority condemned the attack, however Israel has suspended all talks with Palestinian leaders. Both HAMAS and Islamic Jihad have claimed responsibility for that attack."
Length: 32 seconds
Video b-roll: site of bombing/rescue crews, victims being placed in ambulance

WOOD TV 8 – August 19, 11 pm
"Sadly enough terrorists did not limit themselves to Iraq today, they struck in Israel as well. In 3 years of violence there it is the 100th Palestinian suicide bombing attack against Israelis. This time the bomb was on a Jerusalem bus filled with Jewish worshippers. At least 18 people were killed, including 5 children. More than 100 were hurt. Two different Palestinian groups are trying to claim responsibility."
Length: 25 seconds
Video b-roll: site of bombing/rescue crews

WZZM 13 – August 19, 5:30 pm
"And in Jerusalem this afternoon a suicide bomber targeted a packed bus there. At least 20 are dead and 100 are hurt in this attack, many of them are children. Rescuers had to use blowtorches to rescue some of the survivors from the wreckage. Islamic Jihad has claimed responsibility at this hour, however there does not appear to be a link to the blast in Baghdad."
Length: 22 seconds
Video b-roll: site of bombing/rescue crews

Fox 17 – August 20, 10 pm
"A second investigation continues in Jerusalem tonight where a HAMAS suicide bomber killed 20 people, including children. Funerals have begun and hospitals have filled with more than 100 wounded. And the Israeli government plans to strike back soon. Right now tanks are lining up outside of Ramallah where Yassir Arafat's headquarters are located. By the way 5 of those killed were Americans."
Length: 21 seconds
Video b-roll: Jewish funeral and Israeli tanks patrolling
WOOD TV 8 – August 20, 5:30 pm
"An emergency cabinet meeting today in order to decide how to respond to yesterday’s suicide bombing in Jerusalem. Today Israel’s president visited wounded victims in the hospital. The Islamic group HAMAS has claimed responsibility for this attack from yesterday. Several Jihad loyalists also said they’re responsible. 20 people were killed on a packed bus, including 5 American citizens and 5 children among the dead. Another 15 were wounded."
Length: 25 seconds
Video b-roll: Israeli Prime Minister Sharon visits victim in hospital

WOOD TV 8 – August 21, 5:30 pm
"Well a militant group HAMAS has announced a ceasefire in the Middle East is over. It follows the death of a prominent HAMAS leader. An Israeli helicopter gunship targeted his vehicle in Gaza earlier today. Ishmael Abu Shanad and his two bodyguards were killed. The raid is part of a string of operations by the Israeli military launched after Tuesday’s suicide bombing that killed at least 20 people."
Length: 31 seconds
Video b-roll: Palestinians surrounding bombed out car

Fox 17 – August 22, 10 pm
"President Bush is taking another step to drain the so-called swamp of terrorism. The president is cutting off funding to HAMAS by freezing the assets of 6 of the Palestinian movement’s top leaders. Mr. Bush says attacks like Tuesday’s bus bombing in Jerusalem show what HAMAS is truly all about. The US government is also going after 5 groups in Europe that helps HAMAS raise cash. Senior officials say the action is similar to steps taken against Al Qaeda."
Length: 26 seconds
Video b-roll: bombing of UN building in Iraq
News source: NNK?

WOOD TV 8 – August 26, 5:30 pm
"An Israeli helicopter attacked Gaza City today killing at least 1 person and wounding 26 others. Witnesses say the helicopter fire 3 missiles at a car carrying a member of HAMAS. However, those on the scene say he managed to escape before the missile struck the car. The attack came minutes after an Israeli gunboat fired two shells toward northern Gaza City. Israeli officials say that every member of HAMAS is now a possible target after the group claimed responsibility for last week’s Jerusalem bus bombing that killed 20 people."
Length: 22 seconds
Video b-roll: bombed car in Gaza City, 1 wounded adult being carried away

Fox 17 – September 1, 10 pm
"The Israelis also using air power tonight targeting members of HAMAS in the streets of Gaza. Israeli helicopters fired a missile at a car in Gaza City today killing 2 militants injuring at least 25 other people. While critics say it is heavy handed, Israel says it is part of the international war on terror. This is the sixth air strike since that bus bomb went off in Jerusalem 2 weeks ago."
Length: 22 seconds
Video b-roll: bombed car in Gaza City, 1 wounded adult being carried away
News Source: Ramattan Studios

WZZM 13 – September 9, 5:30 pm
"Israel became a war zone today as terrorists struck twice. There was a blast in Jerusalem about an hour ago. Reports are that 6 people, plus the bomber are dead, 40 others wounded. Earlier in Tel Aviv 7 people died and dozens were injured when a suicide bomber hit a bus stop there. Israel anticipated an attack after a botched weekend raid to get the founder of the terrorist organization HAMAS. The army then moved in on the homes of suspected terrorists where a shoot out killed at least 3."

Length: 31 seconds
Video b-roll: bombed buildings/rescue crews in Jerusalem

WOOD TV 8 – September 9, 5:30 pm
"At least 7 people have been killed in an explosion near an Israeli army base. Officials say a blast in suburban Tel Aviv was caused by a suicide bomber. The explosion occurred both near a hospital and an army base. At least 30 people were injured in the attack. A spokesperson for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon says the attack is more proof that the Palestinian Authority is doing absolutely nothing whatsoever to reign in terrorists. Another bombing, this one at a cafe in Jerusalem, killed at least 2 people late this afternoon. There are multiple injuries as well. No one has claimed responsibility for either of those bombings."

Length: 35 seconds
Video b-roll: bombed buildings/rescue crews in Jerusalem

News Source: RTV

Fox 17 – September 9, 10 pm
"Two separate suicide bombings in Israel and at least 14 people tonight are dead. The first was at a bus stop near an Israeli army base outside Tel Aviv. Eight people were killed there, more than a dozen injured, most of them soldiers. After that bombing Israel said that the Palestinian Authority isn’t doing enough to reign in terrorists. Then just a few hours later another suicide bombing outside a cafe in Jerusalem. At least 6 dead there. The militant group HAMAS has claimed responsibility for both of tonight’s attacks. Israeli security has been on high alert for the last few days and has cut off travel from the West Bank and Gaza."

Length: 34 seconds
Video b-roll: bombed buildings/rescue crews in Jerusalem

News Source: RTV

Fox 17 – September 10, 10 pm
"The militant group is threatening more suicide bombings after an Israeli missile strike hit the home of a HAMAS leader today. Mamoud Zahar was hurt along with his wife and daughter. His son and bodyguard were both killed. Zahar is now in hiding. That attack was in response to yesterday’s bombings that killed 15 people. HAMAS has taken responsibility for both of them. Also today Israeli tanks fired at a police post in the Gaza strip. Nobody there was hurt."

Length: 26 seconds
Video b-roll: bombed buildings/rescue crews in Gaza then Jerusalem

News Source: RTV

Fox 17 – September 11, 10 pm
"Tonight Israel is calling Yasser Arafat an obstacle to peace that it is ready to move. That’s not what the Palestinians want to hear. Tonight thousands rushed to Arafat’s compound to protect him, fearing he’ll be expelled or even
killed. The US is also cracking down on the Palestinian leader saying he needs to consolidate those security forces and stop the suicide bombers. Arafat is vowing to protect his land in the face of oppression.

**Length: 24 seconds**

**Video b-roll:** crowds outside Arafat’s compound in West Bank

**Fox 17 – September 26, 10 pm**

"Tonight is the start of high holy days for Jews all around the world. Rosh Hashanah is a 2-day holiday to celebrate the start of the Jewish New Year. It kicks off a 10-day period of soul searching that ends with Yom Kippur, the day of Atonement. And the holiday season is off to a bloody start in the Middle East today a Palestinian attacked a Jewish settlement in the West Bank killing 2 Israelis and himself, one of the victims was a baby girl. The holiday celebrations are being overshadowed by heavy security and thousands of officers stationed at synagogues, parks and busy intersections. Some say there is no holiday feeling this year and many believe things will only get worse in the coming year."

**Length: 36 seconds**

**Video b-roll:** none

**Fox 17 – October 20, 10 pm**

"New air strikes in Gaza tonight as Israelis go after HAMAS inside Palestinian refugee camps. In all, four separate attacks. The helicopter gun ships targeting cars and stockpiles of weapons. Six Palestinians are dead, dozens more injured. The air strikes come one day after Palestinian militants fired homemade rockets into Israel and ambushed an Israeli patrol on the West Bank killing 3 soldiers. Tonight Islamic groups are vowing revenge."

**Length: 26 seconds**

**Video b-roll:** crowd/rescue crews in Gaza, victim being taken to ambulance

**WZZM 13 – November 3, 5:30 pm**

"Palestinian terrorists are asking young boys not yet men to strap on explosives and commit suicide. A person who turned 16 just days before carried out a suicide bombing in Israel over the weekend. He became the youngest person to take on the role. His father denounced the people who recruited him. No one else died in the mission as Israeli troops caught on and cornered him."

**Length: 23 seconds**

**Video b-roll:** Israeli military vehicles & tanks
Teenage bombers followed similar lives and deaths

- The mother of one vows revenge on the militants who sent him on a suicide mission.

By Mohammed Daraghmeh
The Associated Press

NABLUS, West Bank – Two Palestinian teenage suicide bombers who killed Israelis in separate attacks lived remarkably parallel lives, though their families say they don’t know each other.

Both were 17 years old, peddled wares on the sidewalk and lived a few blocks apart on the same street.

Both left behind equally grotesque bombing scenes less than an hour apart, killing themselves and one person each on Tuesday in an Israeli town and a West Bank Jewish settlement 11 miles apart.

While neighbors blessed one of the teens as a “martyr,” the mother of the second screamed for revenge against the Islamic militants who sent him to his death.

The bombings were the first since July 7. The summer has been relatively calm thanks to a cease-fire declared by the main Palestinian groups.

Since fighting erupted in September 2000, more than 350 Israelis have been killed in almost 100 suicide bomb attacks.

One of the bomber’s victims was Yehezkel Yekutieli, 42, who was buying food to make breakfast for his children. One of the dozen wounded in that attack was reported to be a pregnant woman.

The victim of the second attack was a year older than his assailant: Erez Hershkovitz, 18, had just finished army basic training.

One bomber, Khamis Gerwan, grew up in a house in an alley in the Askar refugee camp on the edge of the West Bank city of Nablus, and sold shoes on the street. He became a follower of the Al Aqsa Brigades, a violent wing of Yasser Arafat’s Fatah movement that claimed responsibility for the bombing.

On Wednesday, the Israeli army said it had demolished Gerwan’s home with explosives. Gerwan had been missing for a day before the attack. Then came the news: He rigged himself with a bomb and set it off in a small grocery store in a Tel Aviv suburb.

The teen’s mother wailed and neighbors began to gather to mourn, but also to ecelebrate him. Gerwan was honored – like other Palestinians who die in the this conflict – as a “martyr.”

In contrast, a few houses away, the other family mourned with anger.

Islam Qteishat, a young requit fo the Islamic Hamas group, detonated his explosives at the entrance to the West Bank Jewish settlement of Ariel, not far from his home. Hamas took responsibility for his bombing.

Qteishat’s mother, Yursa, 40, cried out for revenge, but not against Israel, which had killed two Hamas men and another Palestinian in a gunbattle here days earlier. Hamas said that attack was the reason it had carried out the suicide bombing.

Instead, the mother wanted retribution against God and the militants who took in her son and sent him on his grisly mission.

“I’ll kill whoever dispatched my son,” she screamed, beating her fists against a wall.

A decade ago, an older son was shot in the head while throwing stones at Israeli soldiers, leaving him with brain damage.

In the letter he left behind, Qteishat apologized to his parents and his brothers.

“Don’t be sad and forgive me” he wrote.

Suicide Bomb in Israel kills 19

Saturday’s bombing – one of the deadliest attacks in the past three years – raises questions about the future of Yasser Arafat

HAIFA, Israel – A Palestinian woman wrapped in explosives blew herself up Saturday inside a seaside restaurant popular with both Arabs and Jews, killing 19 bystanders, including four children. The bombing prompted new calls for Israel to act on threats to expel Yasser Arafat.
Hours later, Israeli helicopters fired missiles at an empty home near the beach in Gaza City and at the house belonging to an Islamic Jihad leader in the Boureij refugee camp in central Gaza, witnesses said. The military said it targeted two Hamas weapons caches, and there were no reports that anyone was hurt.

The lunchtime suicide attack, which wounded at least 55, ended nearly a month of relative calm. One of the deadliest in three years of violence, the bombing came on the Jewish Sabbath and a day before the start of Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar.

President Bush, who has opposed Arafat's expulsion, condemned "the despicable attack" and said Palestinian authorities, must take responsibility for stopping terrorism. Arafat supporters appealed for international intervention to guarantee his safety.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon called his advisers for an emergency meeting Saturday evening, and the helicopter attacks happened shortly after.

The blast at the Maxim restaurant went off shortly after 2 p.m., shattering windows and leaving the white walls cracked and charred black. Most of the ceiling had collapsed, with lights and wires dangling.

Broken plates, glass, chairs and human remains covered the floor of the one-story building. Outside, the body of the restaurant's security guard lay broken and bloody on the steps.

Police said the bomber and 19 bystanders were killed. A 1-year-old and two other children ages five and six, were among the dead, emergency officials said.

Also among the dead were four Arabs, and the wounded included several members of the local pro soccer team, Maccabi haifa, who meet at the restaurant every Saturday.

Gideon Zilberstein, a 63-year old accountant, was eating lunch with his wife, son and daughter-in-law, when the bomber attacked. "Suddenly we heard a huge boom all around us. People were dead or dying next to our table," he said.

Haifa, a Mediterranean port of about 270,000 with a reputation for tolerance, has been the target of repeated attacks by militant groups – perhaps because attackers are better able to blend in here with the Arab community of 47,000.

Despite a Sept. 11 Cabinet decision to "remove" Arafat at some point, Israel might shy from carrying out the threat because of strong U.S. opposition and concerns about an international backlash.

Instead, Israel could settle for a lesser step, such as increasing Arafat's isolation by installing more tanks and troops around his West Bank headquarters, where he has been confined for nearly two years.

The Islamic Jihad group said it organized the bombing, identifying the assailant as Hanadi Jaradat, a 27-year-old law school graduate from the West Bank town of Jenin. Her brother and a cousin, an Islamic Jihad member, were killed in an Israeli military raid in June.

Before daybreak today, Israeli forces entered Jenin and destroyed the bomber's house, Palestinians said. No casualties were reported.

If true, that would represent a new tactic. In the past, security guards stopped several bombers outside restaurants, cafes and shopping malls. Police Commissioner Shlomo Aharonishki said it was not clear whether shots were fired.

Saturday's bombing brought to 103 the number of suicide bombings in the past three years of Israeli-Palestinian fighting. At least 432 people have been killed in these attacks.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell called Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom on Saturday to discuss the situation. Earlier Shalom had reassured Powell that Israel would consult with Washington before acting against the Palestinian leader.

Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Honathon Peled said Israel expected Arafat to take swift action against the militants.

The Palestinian leader "will have to come up with something very, very different or serious this time to get off the hook," Peled said, adding that "the next 24 to 48 hours are crucial for the future of the....peace process."

Arafat condemned the suicide attack and said if endangered Palestinian interests. Incoming Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia called the Haifa mayor to express his condolences.

Sharon holds Arafat responsible for the suicide attacks, even those carried out by Islamic militant groups opposed to the Palestinian leader's rule.

The United States is looking to the new Palestinian prime minister to crack down on militants; the bombing came on the eve of the expected announcement of a new cabinet by Qureia, who was an architect of the 1993 Oslo peace agreements.

The attack was the first suicide bombing since twin attacks killed 15 people on Sept. 9, near an army base outside Tel Aviv and at a Jerusalem coffee shop.
Israeli air strikes hit bystanders

The Associated Press

NUSEIRAT REFUGEE CAMP, Gaza Strip - One of Israel's most intense air assaults in three years killed 10 Palestinians, including seven who died in a missile strike on a car driving in the busy main street of this crowded refugee camp.

Palestinian security officials said all those killed in Nusseirat were bystanders crowding around the car after it was targeted by a first missile. The Israeli military said it believes three of the dead were militants in the car. However, the vehicle did not take a direct missile hit, and witnesses said the wanted men escaped unharmed.

In all, Israel unleashed five air strikes on weapons labs and cars carrying militants Monday. About 100 people, the vast majority bystanders, were wounded, Palestinian hospital officials said. More than a dozen were in serious condition.

The air attacks revived the debate in Israel over the policy of targeted killings in crowded areas. Israel's vice premier, Ehud Olmert, told Israel Army Radio he considered the large number of civilian casualties "distressing" but that military strikes would continue, "especially in light of the murderous acts of terror groups."

Of the five air strikes, the one in Nusseirat was the deadliest.

The Israeli military said the incident began when a group of militants tried to sneak across a border fence from Gaza into Israel to carry out an attack.

Two of the militants were killed by Israeli soldiers, and the others, apparently three, fled in a car and drove to nearby Nusseirat, said Brig. Gen. Ruth Yaron, the Israeli army spokeswoman.

The military kept track of the car, and when it reached Nusseirat's main street, a helicopter fired at least two missiles. The military said the missiles hit the vehicle 15 seconds apart. Palestinian witnesses said the time lapse was at least two minutes.