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# **Framing the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

**A Case-Study Analysis of the Irish National  
“Opinion Leader” Press – July 2000 to July 2004**

**By**

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## ABSTRACT

This case study analyses how four Irish “opinion leader” newspapers – *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* – constructed the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the four-year period from July 2000 to July 2004. A primary objective of this case study is to overcome some of the more prominent theoretical inadequacies that have characterised existing research in this area to date. Principally, because existing research has been mostly limited to analysing the American media context and to a lesser extent, the British and other core European contexts, very few analyses have been undertaken on the framing of foreign conflicts by media outlets that operate within entirely different national environments, such as the Irish media environment.

Chapter 1 argues that already existing research has mostly been confined to “testing” propaganda, indexing, hegemonic and political control hypotheses regarding media roles in covering foreign conflicts. These hypotheses are based on assumptions that foreign conflict coverage is mostly influenced by extrinsic structural factors and that, therefore, the media’s role is largely restricted to that of acting as conduits for government propaganda and elite perspectives. Consequently, research guided by these hypotheses neglects to investigate fully the influences exerted by the surrounding politico-cultural and media contexts on the various roles adopted by the media when reporting on different types of foreign conflicts.

William A. Gamson and his colleagues’ model of social constructivist media analysis was chosen as the most appropriate model for fulfilling the objectives of this research. This model analyses media coverage trends as outcomes of contested news construction processes that are potentially influenced by a range of different extrinsic environmental factors and intrinsic media, or news factors.

This case study consisted of four different, yet interrelated, stages of research. The first stage consisted of a literature-based contextual analysis of the historical and political environments characterising the arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as the arenas of Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations. The second research stage involved a longitudinal and descriptive analysis of a representative sampling of coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the period from July 2000 to July 2004. The third stage consisted of qualitative frame analysis of news discourses. The fourth and final stage of research involved the undertaking of a series of exploratory, qualitative interviews with key media, political/diplomatic and NGO actors.

Chapter 3 briefly outlines how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been historically manifested as a highly unequal, contested and multi-dimensional conflict. Chapter 4 analyses the potential contextual influences exerted by Irish political culture and foreign policy-making traditions on the roles adopted by Irish media. It concludes that Ireland’s “small state” and post-colonial status, its consequent lack of “hard power”, or “vital” foreign policy interests in the Middle

East, as well as its official dependency on UN and EU foreign policy perspectives, are likely to have exerted significant contextual influences on the ways in which the sampled newspapers covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Chapter 5 explores the ways in which the changed political environment surrounding Israeli-Palestinian relations during the period of July 2000 to July 2004 had significant constructivist implications for how international media, including the Irish media, covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This case study's descriptive analysis of randomly sampled coverage by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the period of July 2000 to July 2004 generated a number of significant findings. Firstly, it was concluded that the regular patterns of attention that the sampled newspapers devoted to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were reflective of the dynamics and politics of that conflict itself, as well as its ongoing international resonance. However, this coverage was frequently of a semi- or non-prominent nature, while the sampled newspapers accorded only miniscule amounts of front-page, analytical and editorial attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It was concluded that Ireland's "small state" status and its lack of appreciable national or foreign policy interests in Israel and the Palestinian territories influenced these latter trends.

However, in addition to the *formative influences* exerted by the national politico-cultural context, media contextual factors and intrinsic news factors also had discernible *constructivist implications* for news outcomes. For instance, the finding that the majority of news items were sourced from foreign-based journalists and news agencies was related to the operation of news factors, such as editorial judgements and criteria, as well as reporting norms and values. Most significantly, the intense competition characterising the Irish media market overall, as well as the lack of historical grounding of Irish media within a "tradition" of foreign news analysis, exerted substantial influence on these news-sourcing patterns by constraining the sampled newspapers' commitment to foreign news coverage.

In relation to the findings generated by this case study's topical analysis, it was also concluded that the operation of news factors, *in relation to* the wider politico-cultural context, influenced the ways in which the sampled newspapers topicalised the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Thus, while news values tilted editorial decisions *towards* covering "conflict"/"political violence" topics, these values also served to reduce newspaper coverage of "peace" and other topics. Additionally, politico-cultural factors, such as the relative isolationist and dependent nature of Irish foreign policy worldviews, supplied an important context within which the sampled newspapers neglected to appreciably cover the international diplomatic-security context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Moreover, the low levels of coverage devoted to domestic Israeli and Palestinian topics reflected Ireland's lack of any "vital" interests in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its relatively weak politico-cultural and personal ties with Israel and the Palestinians.

Finally, in relation to source access and representation trends, it was found that the sampled newspapers tended to be more or less contested sites (albeit unequal sites), variously featuring the assertions of competing Israeli and Palestinian political/"official" sources, rather than exclusively transmitting so-called

consensual, hegemonic and elitist constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This emerged as a key finding of this research, as it challenges one of the primary theoretical assumptions of the propaganda, indexing, hegemonic and political control hypotheses – namely, that politically-powerful and economically-resourceful conflict protagonists consistently have greater levels of media access than politically weaker protagonists, simply by virtue of the power disparities that pertain between them. Instead, this thesis argues that, within highly contested foreign conflict arenas, the protagonist sources' degree of access to international media attention is best viewed as a constructed and achieved outcome, which changes in line with developments in the wider political and media environments and changes in the operation of news factors.

Thus, this case-study's descriptive content analysis concluded that, overall, the sampled newspapers' sourcing trends, as well as their patterns of issue-attention and issue-topicalisation, are best analysed *not* as the pre-determined outcomes of structural power relations and resources, but as the *socially constructed* outcomes of *interactions* between relevant politico-cultural contexts, the wider media environment and a range of news factors (such as journalistic conventions, values and norms).

This case study's qualitative frame analysis of newspaper discourses also adopted this social constructivist focus. The key finding of this analysis was that divergent rates of access and representation were achieved by partisan Israeli *law and order/terrorism* frames and partisan *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames across the sampled newspapers. *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames were virtually excluded from the sampled newspapers. *The Irish Times* and the *Sunday Independent* tended to be more favourable towards including *law and order/terrorism* frames, while the *Sunday Tribune* and the *Irish Independent* featured *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames more frequently than *law and order/terrorism* frames. In contrast, *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames were entirely absent from the *Sunday Independent* sample. Another significant trend that emerged from this frame analysis was that non-partisan frames; namely, *reconciliation/dual rights* frames, *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames and *regional stability/international security* frames - were relatively under-represented within each sampled newspaper.

Taken together, therefore, these frame analytic findings confirm this thesis' theoretical critique of propaganda, indexing, hegemonic and political control perspectives. These latter perspectives hypothesise that external political and structural factors, such as state propaganda, elite hegemony and/or political information controls, determine foreign news coverage in ways that reduce the media's role to that of monolithically framing foreign coverage within the confines of hegemonic and elitist ideologies. In contrast, this case study's primary theoretical argument is that a social constructivist and multi-variable perspective is inherently more appropriate for undertaking analyses of media foreign coverage roles. Principally, rather than assuming, a priori, that extrinsic factors wholly determine news, this perspective enables the researcher to explore the varying media influences exerted over time by different extrinsic politico-cultural and media contexts and intrinsic news factors.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFP	Agence France Presse
AFRI	Action from Ireland – an Irish voluntary human rights organisation
<i>Al Aqsa</i> Martyrs’ Brigades	A militant group affiliated with <i>Fatah</i> . It was founded in 2000 and was responsible for many of the Palestinian militant attacks against Israel, including “suicide” attacks within Israel during and after 2002.
AP	Associated Press
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
B’Tselem	The Israeli Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories
CAAT	Campaign Against Arms Trade
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CNN	Cable News Network - one of the leading 24-hour television news networks in the United States and internationally.
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
DoP’s	Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, signed by Israel and the Palestinians on 13 September 1993
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EPC	European Political Cooperation

EU	European Union
<i>Fatah</i>	The largest political group within the PLO. <i>Fatah</i> is the reverse acronym in Arabic for Palestinian National Liberation Movement
FMEP	Foundation for Middle East Peace
GOI	Government of Israel
GUMG	Glasgow University Media Group
<i>HAMAS</i>	<i>Harakat al-Muqawima al-Islamiyya</i> , meaning “Zeal.” <p>Hammas was established in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1987. It is an Islamic resistance movement, affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood. <i>Hammas</i> consists of a network of mosques, schools and clinics. It also runs educational, cultural, health and religious projects. Its military wing consists of two groups - the Palestinian Holy Fighters - <i>Al-Majahadoun Al-Falestinioun</i> - and the <i>Izz al-Din al-Qassam squads</i>.</p>
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDF	Israeli Defence Forces
<i>Intifada</i>	“Shaking off”, “awakening”, or “uprising” in Arabic
IPSC	Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign
Islamic Jihad	<i>Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami al-Filastini</i> - a relatively small, Islamic-oriented militant organisation, founded in the 1970s and supported by Syria and Iran. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad has been responsible for

several attacks against Israeli “targets” in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as well as “suicide” attacks within Israel proper.

ITV	Independent Television – the British commercial television network established to compete with the BBC.
JMCC	Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre
JNRS	Joint National Readership Survey
MERIP	The Middle East Research and Information Project
MIFTAH	The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy
Mossad	The Israeli External Security Service
<i>Nakba</i>	“Catastrophe” in Arabic – the <i>nakba</i> refers to the devastation and dispossession of the Palestinian people during the Arab-Israeli War from 1947 to 1949
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NIF	National and Islamic Forces in Defence of the <i>intifada</i> - the committee charged with responsibility for coordinating and planning the <i>al Aqsa intifada</i> .
NNI	National Newspapers of Ireland
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

PCP	Palestinian Communist Party
PCPSR	Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP-GC	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command
PHRMG	Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group
PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
PNC	Palestine National Council - the PNC is charged with responsibility for deciding the leadership and policies of the PLO.
PRC	Popular Resistance Committees - a Gaza-based Palestinian militant group that was established in late 2000. It is thought that the PRC is manned by ex-Fatah members, as well as militants from Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades.
RTE	Radio Telefis Eireann
<i>Shahid</i>	Palestinian "martyr"
<i>Shebab</i>	Young Palestinian stone-thrower
<i>Shin Bet</i>	The Israeli Internal Security Agency
<i>Tanzim</i>	An armed, militant group affiliated with <i>Fatah</i> - the <i>Tanzim</i> have been involved in organising protests against the occupation and carrying out guerrilla and "suicide" attacks since October 2000.
UN	United Nations



UNCHR	United Nations Commission for Human Rights
UNESCO	United Nations Economic Social and Cultural Organisation
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNGAR	United Nations General Assembly Resolution
UNIFIL	United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Lebanon
UNLU	United National Leadership of the Uprising – UNLU was established after the outbreak of the first <i>intifada</i> by the four main political groups inside Palestine – <i>Fatah</i> , PFLP, DFLP and PCP. It was responsible for coordinating resistance activities, primarily through the issuing of communiqués, in consultation with the PLO leadership after January 1988
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency - UNRWA was established in 1949 with the responsibility for ensuring the welfare and basic rights of Palestinian refugees.
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCO	United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNTSO	United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation
UPI	United Press International

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## INTRODUCTION

During the past number of years the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has entered a new phase of its history. The “death of Oslo”, symbolised by the “collapse” of the Camp David Summit in July 2000 and the subsequent origins of the second Palestinian *intifada* in late September 2000, saw the development of a new era of Israeli-Palestinian relations that also potentially influenced and changed international media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This case study explores how it was that four Irish “opinion leader” newspapers covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the four-year time period of July 2000 to July 2004. A primary objective of this case study is to explore the research possibilities of analysing international media coverage of foreign political conflicts as socially constructed phenomena that are related to the wider politico-cultural and media contexts within which they emerge.

This case study consisted of four separate stages of research inquiry. The first two stages consisted of historical and contextual analyses of the politico-cultural and media environments characterising the arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Irish national political scene. Secondly, an over time descriptive analysis of a representative sampling of newspaper coverage was undertaken. This analysis was then supplemented by a more in-depth, qualitative analysis of newspaper “frames.” Finally, a series of exploratory interviews were undertaken with key media, political/diplomatic and NGO actors in order to explore the

research questions emerging from these stages of historical, contextual and newspaper data analyses.

It is hoped that this multi-staged analysis will contribute to existing research undertaken within this area. This research, to date, has disproportionately focused on the foreign coverage roles adopted by media in the United States and to a lesser extent, Britain and other core European states. Moreover, while some scholarly attention has been devoted to analysing the roles adopted by media within conflicted societies themselves, these analyses have not been extended to analyses of media within other liberal democratic political systems.

One of the main objectives of this case study is to demonstrate the wider research value of analysing the roles adopted by national news media in constructing foreign news, particularly *in relation to* the wider context supplied by the national political domain and public sphere. Therefore, the first section of this introduction argues that national newspapers perform distinctive roles in constructing foreign issues and events within the public sphere. Furthermore, the decision to base this case study on an analysis of the roles performed by two national “opinion leader” daily newspapers - *The Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent* – and two Sunday “opinion leader” newspapers – the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* – is concluded to amount to a worthwhile and valid research endeavour.

The second section of this introduction discusses the reasons for specifically focusing on Irish newspapers’ coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is

argued that because the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is regarded as possessing high international and historical significance, it has strong resonances for many foreign publics, including European and American publics. An additionally interesting dimension of the conflict in terms of its construction within foreign media relates to its highly contested nature and unequal military conduct.

The final section of this introduction summarises the chapter structure and layout of this thesis.

## **1. The Role of National Media as International Communicative Actors and Sites for the Public Construction of Foreign News**

This case study analyses how four Irish “opinion-leader” newspapers – *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* – constructed the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. Underlying this case study is the assumption that national-based media exert important influences on political and public constructions of foreign issues and events. While media research on the “effects” and “influences” of foreign news coverage has, to date, been characterised by competing theoretical arguments and somewhat contradictory findings (Gilboa, 2005: 2-4, 7-9; Robinson, 2000), there is, nonetheless, considerable agreement amongst media scholars generally, that media coverage of foreign issues constitutes a significant research agenda (Bloch and Lehman-Wilzig, 2002: 153; Livingston, 1997: 314-5; McLaughlin, 2002: 188-96; Robinson, 2002a; Robinson, 2002b: 179-80).

Arguably, the globalisation of world politics and state relations has translated into an increased role for the media in international communications (Chul Yoon and Gwangho, 2002: 89; Gilboa, 1998; Gilboa, 2000; Gilboa, 2002a: 208; Mowlana, 1984a: 33; Shinar, 2002: 288, 292; Tehranian, 1984: 47, 58). The media have also been attributed with transformative roles in the escalation, mediation, or management of conflicts (Bruck, 1993: 84; Donohue and Hoobler, 2002: 67-8; Gilboa, 2002a: 193-5, 204-7; Shinar, 2002: 286; Spencer, 2003: 75-7).

Although within certain conflict situations politico-structural factors restrict media autonomy (Arno, 1984b: 232-3) and the media become conduits for conflict protagonists (Mowlana, 1984b), in other situations the media are also capable of assuming one or more “third party” roles, including “interested bystander,” “advocate”, “mediator”, “truth-seeker”, or “watchdog” roles (Douglas, 1992). In this respect, one of the most significant roles performed by national print media, in conjunction with national broadcast media, is that of constructing political and public opinion regarding foreign conflicts (Minear, Scott and Weiss, 1996: 45-6, 69-80; Thompson and Price, 2002: 7). In fact, foreign news coverage constitutes the primary source of information that the public relies upon to frame their understanding of foreign issues (Carragee, 1996: 35; Lloyd, 2004: 10; Minear, Scott and Weiss, 1996: 82; Mowlana, 1997: 39-40; Taylor, 2003: 63, 65, 78; Van Ginneken, 1998: 15). The majority of people do not have direct knowledge, or personal experience of foreign issues and events (Malek, 1997a: 226; Philo, 1999b: 282-4; Seib, 2002: 48), thereby increasing the likelihood that publics will “adopt elite cues in the news to structure their thinking about world events” (Bennett, 1994: 16; see also: Roach, 1993a: 6; Wolfsfeld, 2004: 43).

Although models of media influence, such as the agenda-setting model, have been criticised for their simplistic and generalised “stimulus-effect” conclusions, it is reasonable to assume that media frames do have some significant implications for priming public attitudes, or judgements and re-activating perceptions (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997: 59; Iyengar and Kinder, 1987; Iyengar and Simon, 1993; McCombs and Ghanem, 2001: 77-8; McCombs, Shaw and Weaver, 1997; McQuail, 1990: 33; Scheufele, 2000; Shah, Domke and Wachman, 2001; Wanta, 1997). By selectively amplifying the public visibility of certain perspectives, the media impact upon public understandings (Schudson, 1995: 19; Schudson, 2003: 29-31; Shoemaker and Reese, 1996: 49).

Moreover, because media frames render certain interpretations more salient than others, they restrict the range of interpretive devices and evaluations that readers can deploy in their socio-cognitive processing of “distant” events (Entman, 1993: 53; Entman, 2004: 5, 26). The thematic emphases and omissions, as well as the informational quality of news content, also influence how readers perceive the causes and solutions of foreign conflicts (Miller and Philo, 1999: 29; Philo, 1999a: xvi). For instance, it has been found that overly negative images of the world impact adversely on readers’ perceptions of foreign situations (Beaudoin and Thorson, 2002: 46, 59). It has also been found that “biased” or “one-sided” media pictures of foreign conflicts tend to relegate the perspectives of powerless protagonists to the status of “missing themes” (Philo et al., 2003; Vincent, 2000: 331).

National-based print media have historically been the primary public forums for the construction of national identity and “imagined community” upon which the

modern system of nation states was founded (Anderson, 1983: 36-46; Brookes, 1999: 247-50, 256). In contemporary times, national media remain significant sites for the construction of “larger societal realities” (Dahlgren, 1992: 10-1), including political worldviews and national identities (Benson, 2004a: 276; Hallin, 1994: 10, 34; Hutcheson et al., 2004: 47; Karim, 2004b: 92-3; Law, 2001: 300-3; Lloyd, 2004: 27-9). Mass media collectively constitute the “master forum” of the wider public sphere (Ferree et al., 2002: 10) and national media outlets are primary mediators of public dialogue and deliberation (Dahlgren and Sparks, 1991a: 1, 8-9, 16, 19; Garnham, 1986: 49; Schudson, 1982: 98; Simon and Xenos, 2000; Zelizer, 1993: 189-90).

Therefore, if as has been argued by a number of media analysts, the media accord differential levels of access, visibility and recognition to competing societal interests and perspectives within the public sphere, this has significant constructivist implications (Bennett et al., 2004: 437-40; Curran, 1991: 29-30). Furthermore, the ways in which national media perform these roles influences political issue-agendas and policies, in addition to public opinion trends (Bosk and Hillgartner, 1988: 58-9, 61-2, 65, 70-1; Dearing and Rogers, 1996: 22; Downs, 1972; Ferree et al., 2002: 14-5; Hafez, 2000c: 14, 19; McCombs and Shaw, 1972; Mermin, 1999: 3-4; Spencer, 2001: 58; Weaver, McCombs and Shaw, 2004: 257-8, 264-8, 275-7).

Within this case study the national “opinion-leader” newspapers selected for analysis are regarded as significant arenas of the Irish “mediated public sphere” (Dahlgren, 1995: 9; Robertson, 2004: 475). In this sense, therefore, these newspapers are regarded as performing relatively distinctive constructivist roles



within the Irish national public sphere, despite the increasing prominence and growth of television and other global communication networks (Volkmer, 1999: 4-5; Volkmer, 2002: 238-9). Newspaper reports and commentaries are also a socio-historical documentary record of the key discursive trends characterising Irish public culture (Nir and Roeh, 1992).

Furthermore, although television images are often held to have the most profound impact because of their “particularly significant power of construction” and their more “democratic” dissemination (Champagne, 1999: 49), the greater space devoted by newspapers to reflecting the views of its readerships, as well as articulating its own “sense of character” and “distinctive voice”, makes them an important area of research inquiry in their own right (Fuller, 1996: 92-4, 122-3, 227-9). Moreover, newspapers are relatively free of overt and direct forms of state control (Abel, 1984: 69-70) and are less constrained by broadcasting norms of balance and impartiality and the technological and other medium-specific constraints characteristic of television coverage. Hence, national newspaper discourses potentially offer wider, more diverse and politically influential coverage of foreign issues (Abel, 1984: 63-8; Lederman, 1992: 214, 223, 235; Peer and Chestnut, 1995: 83-4, 90-2). It is hoped, therefore, that the newspapers selected for this case study – *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* - constitute a rich database of constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the Irish public sphere during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

## **2. The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict as an Historically Prominent, Unequal and Highly Contested Conflict – Implications for International Media Coverage**

This case study focuses on selected Irish national newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because this conflict is regarded as possessing an historical and political-diplomatic significance on an international scale. During the latter half of the twentieth century and throughout the twenty-first century, the United States and several European countries have regarded the Middle East as a strategically significant region, within which they have vital foreign policy interests (Curtis, 1998: 11). Control of the region's oil supplies, political control of the Gulf and Arab states, as well as guaranteeing the military superiority and security of the state of Israel, are three key Anglo-American foreign policy objectives (Curtis, 1998: 9-14, 117-8, 132-3).

Furthermore, given the contested nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as its historical longevity and intractability, we can expect that this conflict would be firmly etched on "western" media's international attention maps. Particularly, because Europe and the United States have always had a history of direct involvement in the Middle East, as well as interests in the outcomes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this conflict is an issue that is familiar to American and European publics. Additionally, Ireland has always displayed an important, though limited historical interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The geographic proximity of Israel and the Palestinian territories to Europe, the international strategic significance of the Middle East and the relatively high technological and economic development of Israel, mean that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict might be expected to receive relatively greater levels of “western” media attention than more “distant” conflicts (Stein and Lafer, 2003: vii; see also: Hanson, 1995: 389). It might also be reasonably expected that conflict coverage is generally the norm rather than the exception of media reporting of the Middle East (Burton and Keenleyside, 1991).

With specific reference to the topic explored in this thesis, it is significant that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a highly contested and unequal conflict, pitting the militarily powerful state of Israel against the Palestinian people. Particularly, the conflict manifests itself in highly “ambiguous” ways, as one “where neither side is an absolute victim”, but where Palestinian civilians are, nonetheless more easily cast as “underdogs” (Liebes and Ribak, 1994: 109, 114). Moreover, the conflict might also be classified as an “information war” whereby information is strategically deployed for political agenda-setting successes (Taylor, 2002a: 314-5, 317). While the conflict is substantially more than a “media event”, or a series of publicity-driven “terrorist” spectacles designed as “communication” (Nacos, 2002: 11, 38, 45, 73, 87-8; Schmid and De Graaf, 1982: 14), it is nonetheless recognised that *both* Israeli and Palestinian protagonists utilise the media as ideological “battlegrounds” to transmit their versions to international publics (Thomas, 2006: 11-2; Thussu and Freedman, 2003a: 4; Webster, 2003: 57, 65). Finally, because international information flows regarding the conflict often tend to be dominated by accounts provided by “western” correspondents based within Israel, the

international media arena constitutes a distinctively significant arena for the conflict's contestations (El-Nawawy, 2002: x, 97).

The historical prominence of the conflict and its strong resonance within international discourses surrounding European-Middle East relations means that analyses of how it is constructed by international media outlets (such as national Irish newspapers), are interesting and valuable research endeavours. Specifically, it is hoped that this case-study analysis of how Irish national newspapers covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the four-year period of July 2000 to July 2004 will advance already existing research devoted to theorising the factors and contexts that influence media framing of unequally contested foreign conflicts generally.

### **3. Chapter Layout and Structure**

As already outlined, this thesis is based on a case-study analysis of a representative sample of four Irish newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004. This analysis develops a social constructivist perspective to explain the relationship between Irish newspaper coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the wider politico-cultural and media environments impacting on that coverage.

Chapter 1 reviews some of the more prominent theoretical models that have been applied to previous analyses of media coverage of foreign conflicts. The aim of this review is to relate the social constructivist theoretical framework adopted

within this thesis to already existing research. It is argued that this research has, to date, been almost exclusively undertaken within the United States context and to a lesser extent, within some British and European contexts. This research has also been mostly confined to the objective of confirming propaganda, indexing, or hegemonic hypotheses. Therefore, it is these empirical and analytic weaknesses that limit the application of these theoretical models to the Irish media context.

Chapter 1 then reviews Gadi Wolfsfeld's work (Wolfsfeld, 1990 (orig. 1984); Wolfsfeld, 1993; Wolfsfeld, 1997a; Wolfsfeld, 1997b; Wolfsfeld, 1997c; Wolfsfeld, 2001a; Wolfsfeld, 2001b; Wolfsfeld, 2003a; Wolfsfeld, 2003b; Wolfsfeld, 2004; Wolfsfeld, Avraham and Aburaiya, 2000; Wolfsfeld, Khouri and Peri, 2002). It is argued that Wolfsfeld's work, in contrast to propaganda and indexing studies, demonstrates greater theoretical value because it historically situates media conflict coverage within its surrounding political and media contexts. However, the political control/contest hypotheses generated by his work have not been tested outside of the highly specified contexts within which they have been generated; namely, "conflict" countries, such as Israel and countries politically-involved in conflicts, such as the United States. Therefore, this model requires modifications if it is to be applied to media within the Irish context.

In chapter 1, the review of the social constructivist perspective applied by the news frame research undertaken by Gamson and his colleagues and Wolfsfeld highlights the advantages of adopting a similar perspective within this research (Gamson, 1988b; Gamson, 1992b; Gamson, 2000; Gamson, 2001; Gamson, 2004; Gamson et al., 1992; Gamson and Lasch, 1983; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989;

Gamson and Stuart, 1992; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993; Wolfsfeld, 1997a; Wolfsfeld, 2001a; Wolfsfeld, 2004).

Chapter 2 concludes that Gamson's frame research methodology is invaluable for analyses of newspaper coverage. Particularly, the *signature matrix* model characterising this research facilitates social constructivist and contextual analysis of news frames. Also, Gamson's concept of news "frame" as the "central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning" to news stories is a highly useful heuristic device for textual analysis (Gamson and Modigliani, 1987: 143).

Chapter 2 outlines the methodological framework and criteria guiding each of the four separate yet interrelated stages of analysis undertaken by this case study. The first stage consisted of a discursive and contextual analysis of the media impacts exerted by the historical background and politico-cultural environment characterising the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations. Chapter 3, chapter 4 and chapter 5 present the findings of this stage of analysis. Chapter 3 briefly summarises the key political developments and events defining the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, especially those events that are highly contested within contemporary Israeli and Palestinian discourses. Chapter 4 outlines some of the defining features of historic Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations. Chapter 5 analyses the politico-cultural context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. Firstly, it focuses on the political and media impacts of the "collapse" of the Camp David Summit in July 2000. Secondly, it focuses on the developments associated with the

*Al Aqsa intifada*, which began in late-September 2000 and continued up until the end of this case study's period of analysis.

The second stage of analysis consisted of a longitudinal and descriptive analysis of a representative sampling of coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and *Sunday Tribune* during the period from July 2000 to July 2004. Its findings are presented in chapter 6. The third stage of analysis consisted of a series of qualitative and inductive analyses of emergent frames within selected samples of news discourses. Its findings are presented in chapter 7. The fourth stage of analysis consisted of interview-based research undertaken with key media, political/diplomatic and NGO actors. Its findings are incorporated within relevant sections of chapter 4, chapter 5 and chapter 6.

Chapter 8 synthesises the conclusions and findings that emerged from each of these stages of analysis. Particularly, it focuses on generating conclusions regarding the extent and ways in which the wider politico-cultural and media environments surrounding these sampled Irish newspapers influenced their coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

# CHAPTER 1

## **THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN COVERING “FOREIGN” CONFLICTS - A REVIEW OF EXISTING RESEARCH**

### **1. Introduction**

This chapter aims to review some of the most prominent theoretical perspectives that have addressed the roles of the media in covering foreign conflicts. Particular attention is paid to assessing the theoretical implications of these perspectives for the research objectives of this thesis. These objectives are firstly, to undertake a combined descriptive and qualitative analysis of sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the period of July 2000 to July 2004 and secondly, to explain key features characterising this coverage in terms of the surrounding politico-cultural and media contexts within which it emerges.

This chapter begins by outlining that previous research has largely been dominated by the propaganda and indexing models. Key examples of work undertaken within these models are critically assessed. A crucial shortcoming of these models is that they have been mostly confined to analyses of foreign news coverage trends characterising media in the United States and to a lesser extent, Britain and core European states. Gadi Wolfsfeld’s work, which explicitly addresses the question of the media’s role in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is then



reviewed (Wolfsfeld, 1990 (orig. 1984); Wolfsfeld, 1993; Wolfsfeld, 1997a; Wolfsfeld, 1997b; Wolfsfeld, 1997c; Wolfsfeld, 2001a; Wolfsfeld, 2001b; Wolfsfeld, 2003a; Wolfsfeld, 2003b; Wolfsfeld, 2004; Wolfsfeld, Avraham and Aburaiya, 2000; Wolfsfeld, Khouri and Peri, 2002). This is followed by a review of William A. Gamson and his colleagues' work on frame analysis, undertaken in conjunction with a discussion of Wolfsfeld's hypotheses regarding media frames. It is concluded that Gamson and his colleagues' social constructivist and discourse-analytic perspective is the most appropriate perspective for this case study (Gamson, 1988b; Gamson, 1992b; Gamson, 2000; Gamson, 2001; Gamson, 2004; Gamson et al., 1992; Gamson and Lasch, 1983; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Gamson and Stuart, 1992; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993).

The following section begins this review of existing research by outlining and critiquing key examples of the work of media propaganda theorists.

## **2. Reporting Foreign Wars and Conflicts – The Propaganda Model**

The propaganda model has been used by several studies to explain the roles of the media in covering foreign conflicts. Essentially, the model is based on two major theoretical arguments. The first argument is that military and political controls on media organisations, including movement restrictions (such as those embodied by the “embeds” or “pool” system for regulating journalists' access) and information controls (such as censorship legislation and/or public relations, propaganda or disinformation campaigns), have strong “effects” for media conflict

coverage (Boyd-Barrett, 2004: 28-31; Curtis, 1984; Jasperson and El-Kikhia, 2003: 129; Lowstedt and Madhoun, 2003; McLaughlin, 2002: 73-102; Miller, 1993a; Miller, 1993b; Miller, 1994; Miller, 2004b; Reese, 2004: 260-1; Ridley, 2003; Schechter, 2004; Thrall, 2000: 5-6, 115-7, 127-8, 152-3, 216-7; Tumber, 2004).

Secondly, the model predicts that due to a variety of constraints, particularly media dependence on political sources, the media generally function in accordance with the propaganda needs of the state. This media role is especially evident during periods of war, conflict escalation and state mobilisation against internal insurgencies (Boyd-Barrett, 2004: 29, 38-40; Carruthers, 2000: 9; Herman, 1986: 175-6; Jasperson and El-Kikhia, 2003: 118-9; Knightley, 1991b: 366-7; Reese, 2004: 247-51, 256-8; Thussu and Freedman, 2003a: 5, 7-8).

However, to date, propaganda analyses have been largely confined to analyses of the United States context and to a lesser extent, analyses of British and other core European media contexts. Propaganda analyses have also tended to disproportionately focus on episodes of media communication that explicitly reflect the aforementioned state and political controls, rather than more continuous, “routine” coverage over time. This research bias also seriously restricts the propaganda model’s applicability to more diverse and representative media contexts, such as those occupied by different European media (Robertson, 2004: 477-8). It is these issues, as well as other related issues, that are addressed in the following outline of Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman’s work.

### **(i) The Work of Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman**

Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman's studies of the role of American media in reporting conflict situations in the Middle East and Central America are located within an explicitly stated propaganda framework (Chomsky, 1987; Chomsky, 1988; Chomsky, 1991; Herman, 1990; Herman, 2000; Herman and Chomsky, 1988). This framework is influenced by a political economy perspective that analyses the role of the media through a combination of structuralist, elitist and dominant ideology explanations (Jacobson, Fang and Raffel, 2002: 20-1; Klaehn, 2002: 149).

A Marxist interpretation of ideology is adopted within the model to explain how the "internalized preconceptions" of journalists function in conjunction with structural, political and economic constraints to reproduce media propaganda (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 8, xii). The media are also theorised as Orwellian "thought control" apparatuses that "collaborate" with governments to indoctrinate and control mass opinion in the interests of elite ideological domination (Chomsky, 1992b: 1-6, 48-9; Herman, 1992: 2-3, 5). Therefore, it is argued that media representations regularly reproduce elite perspectives and are also replete with euphemisms, distortions and doublespeak (Herman, 1992: 5-7).

Chomsky and Herman's structuralist perspective explicitly rejects media analyses that "focus on journalists and media organizations rather than on the system at large", because "they tend to exaggerate the potential media professionals

have for dissent and ‘space’ and to neglect... their role as part of the national power structure” (Herman, 1990: 77). Structured media-state and media-corporate relations function to ascribe ongoing “special and unequal access” to elite/establishment sources and to exclude less powerful sources, guaranteeing that media outcomes reproduce propaganda perspectives (Herman, 1986: 194; Herman, 1990: 82; Herman, 1992: 1; Herman and Chomsky, 1988: xi-xii, 31).

Chomsky and Herman also argue that the extent to which the media are “open” or “closed” to propaganda perspectives is frequently a function of the level of elite consensus or dissensus (Herman, 2000). Moreover, while “tactical” or secondary objections to elite policies may be reported by the media, such as during the United States’ invasion of Vietnam, this reporting is relatively intermittent and its critical potential is mitigated by the functional requirement that the media “control thought” in ways that “protect the interests of the powerful” (Chomsky, 1988: 149; Chomsky, 1992b: 64-7).

The key theoretical assumption upon which Chomsky and Herman’s model is based is the assumption that propaganda perspectives dominate media coverage by virtue of the operation of a set of gate-keeping filters or constraints (Klaehn, 2003: 378; Lang and Lang, 2004a: 94). These constraints include: the elitist and capitalist underpinnings of media corporations, the media’s reliance on advertising revenue and on government, business, or experts as information sources, the operation of “flak” as a means of disciplining the media and “‘anti-communism’ as a national religion and control mechanism” (Chomsky, 1992b: 67-8; Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 2).

Chomsky and Herman apply this “filtering” model to analyses of foreign news coverage trends displayed by mainstream media in the United States (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 298; Lang and Lang, 2004a: 94). Comparative analyses of Third World elections revealed that the media decision to cover these elections as *either* “a step toward democracy”, *or* as a “farce and a sham” depended far less on empirical facts than on the degree of elite sponsorship of those elections. In this way, therefore, media coverage functioned to reinforce rather than challenge dominant elite perspectives in the United States (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 141). Furthermore, media depictions of “client” states as “moderates” constituted a series of “apologetics” that reflected government biases rather than factual reality (Herman, 1992: 38-40). In fact, human rights abuses in “client” states were excluded or marginalized and victims of “client” state violence were depicted as “unworthy”, while victims of “enemy” states featured “prominently and dramatically” within news accounts (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 35).

Chomsky and Herman’s model also regards ideologies of political violence as highly significant constructs deployed by media propaganda. Thus, while the “terrorist” label tends to be exclusively applied to “enemy” and “retail” violence (paramilitary violence and civil resistance), “wholesale terrorism” perpetrated by “western” states, or an “approved source” is rarely termed “terrorist.” Although the latter forms of violence arguably have more devastating and wide-ranging effects, they are mostly “exempt from censure in Western newspeak” (Chomsky, 1988: 131; Chomsky, 1991: 11-2; Chomsky, 1992b: 4-6, 50-2; Herman, 1992: 42-5; see also: Karim, 2002: 102-4; Miller, 1994: 4-7). Hence, they conclude that state-orchestrated violence by “official enemies” of the United States, such as the Cambodian Pol Pot

administration, or the Molosevic-led Serbian administration, is constructed and labelled as “genocidal”, while state violence committed by states which the United States is “implicated in”, such as Indonesia or Turkey, is given “scant attention” by the media and is rarely labelled “genocidal” (Herman and Chomsky, 2004: 103-6).

However, the propaganda model as applied by Chomsky and Herman, outlined above, is a rather simplistic and crude research model which “does leave out a lot” (Lang and Lang, 2004a: 100). For instance, a critical failing of the model is that it would seem to experience considerable problems explaining the representation of divergent views both within political and media domains (Brown, 2003: 90, 94; Lang and Lang, 2004a: 97-8). Related to this failing is the fact that the model neglects to empirically analyse and theoretically explain the “intervening processes” through which media outcomes are produced (Klaehn, 2002: 152).

The model has also been critiqued for its highly limited application to pre-selected instances of foreign news coverage and the somewhat polemical “overstatement” of its hypotheses (Jacobson, Fang and Raffel, 2002: 22-3, 33). It is argued that such selective analyses eschew the more “accurately conceptualised” view of news as a “negotiated product” or “social construction that neither the government nor any one party fully controls” (Lang and Lang, 2004b: 109).

It has been similarly argued that Chomsky and Herman’s model advances a “totalizing and finalizing view” that structural factors “function without much if any need for further specification or qualification” (Corner, 2003: 369; Lang and Lang, 2004a: 95-6). Thus, the model assumes that structural factors and elitist influences

function deterministically, rather than reflexively. Furthermore, no substantial attempt is made to systematically analyse or predict the ways in which media outcomes vary across structures and within different contexts of structure-agency interactions (Jacobson, Fang and Raffel, 2002: 33-5; Schlesinger, 1992: 306-8). Although Chomsky does draw distinctions between the “mainstream indoctrination system” (consisting of large media conglomerates) and marginal “independent media” and between “elite” and “populist” newspapers, the political and ideological implications of these distinctions are unexplored by the model (Chomsky, 1987: 135; Chomsky, 1992a: 380). Thus, it is assumed that the media function in homogenous, undifferentiated and static ways (Schlesinger, Tumber and Murdock, 1991: 398-9; Schudson, 1991: 146).

Furthermore, the concept of “propaganda” on which this model is based has been appropriated from political communication research and, therefore, appears to be reliably applicable *only* to news discourses that demonstrate the operation of “some form of managing the news” (Knightley, 2000: 478; see also: Jowett and O’Donnell, 1992: 4). This means that the model’s relevance is mostly confined to government-controlled, regulated and censored media, as opposed to the more moderately regulated media of liberal democratic societies (Dissanayake, 1984: 181). Furthermore, within liberal democratic societies “direct” forms of “propaganda” communication are mostly confined to “crisis” political situations, such as when those societies are at war (Ellul, 1973: 53; Taylor, 2002b: 439).

Finally, because much of Chomsky and Herman’s work is “historically bound” to the Cold War period and to American media coverage of this war’s

limited range of foreign policy scenarios (Chekol-Reta, 2002: 239). it is not generally applicable to analyses of media that operate outside of this American foreign policy context (Schlesinger, 1992: 311-3). In fact, divergent historical traditions and politico-cultural contexts frequently enable a range of different international media to adopt diverse, often incomparable roles (Corner, 2003: 367-8; Hafez, 2000a; Hafez, 2000c: 4-5; Hibbard and Keenleyside, 1995; Nohrstedt et al., 2000: 400-1).

Moreover, it has been argued that a different political environment characterises international affairs during the post-Cold War era, which has increased, rather than diminished media autonomy and issue diversity (Davis, 1995: 327). In particular, the greater ideological ambiguity and political dissensus characterising international affairs in more contemporary periods contrasts greatly with the bi-polar clarity of ideological divisions within the Cold War foreign policy context (Entman, 2004: 18-21, 147-52).

However, as is outlined in the following section, even more contemporary applications of the propaganda model have also failed to adequately theorise these potentially diverse media roles. Instead, most propaganda studies largely focus on analysing the media context supplied by the United States.



## **(ii) “Propaganda” Studies of Foreign News Coverage**

More recent studies of the United States’ media coverage of “foreign” conflicts also strongly emphasise the propaganda functions of the media (Artz, 2004: 89; Jeffords and Rabinovitz, 1994; Kellner, 1992; Malek and Leidig, 1991: 15). It is argued that during wartime the media “can simply become a means of transmission for the administration, rather than a critical filter” (Kull, Ramsay and Lewis, 2003-4: 593). A further important theme within this literature is that of media complicity in the construction of politically biased falsehoods, omissions and distortions (Detmer, 1997; Mahajan, 2002; Miller, 2004a).

Analyses of American media coverage of the first Persian Gulf War (1991), for instance, focus on how media content reflected the administration’s propaganda “line”, especially by rationalising and justifying the military aggression committed by the United States (Allen et al., 1994; Artz and Pollock, 1997; Knightley, 1991a: 5; Ottosen, 1995; Rojo, 1995: 56). Likewise, analyses of media coverage of the United States-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 concluded that this coverage sanitised the war by emphasising its “great successes” and the visual, technological and patriotic dimensions of the war, as well as demonising Saddam Hussein (Hashem, 2004: 158-9; Keeble, 2004: 44, 52-5; Kellner, 2004a: 144-8; Kellner, 2004b: 71-4). An analysis of CNN coverage of NATO’s bombing of the former Yugoslavia from March to June 1999 also concluded that the “news agenda” legitimated the positions adopted by NATO and the United States and marginalized the human suffering resulting from NATO bombings (Thussu, 2000: 350-9).

Furthermore, a comparative study of CNN and Al-Jazeera coverage of the United States-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2003 concluded that while CNN coverage replicated the United States' official "governance" and "military" frames of the invasion, the Al-Jazeera network, free of such governmental controls and constraints, framed the invasion within the oppositional "humanitarian" frame, focusing on the civilian suffering and losses caused by the United States' "vengeance" (Jasperson and El-Kikhia, 2003: 127).

Dominant ideological and hegemonic analyses of media coverage of foreign conflicts also rely on the theoretical assumptions of the propaganda model. Hence, several analyses have focused on how mediated stereotypes of Arab or Muslim people and constructions of the "threat", or "otherness of Islam" perform propaganda functions (Esposito, 1992: 173; Ghareeb, 1977; Hamdan and Haji, 1989; Hashem, 1997; Haslan, 1998; Hippler and Lueg, 1995; Karim, 2000; Karim, 2002; Karim, 2004a; Lind and Danowski, 1998; Milton-Edwards, 2001: 40-1; Naficy, 1997; Poole, 2000: 157-8, 176; Ruthven, 2001; Shaheen, 1985; Shaheen, 2000; Tehranian, 1999: 115, 124; Tehranian, 2000; Wiegand, 2000: 236-9).

"Ethnocentric" or "orientalist" images of Islam and Arab societies within "western" media have also been explained as propaganda worldviews that reinforce neo-colonial power relations and serve elite politico-economic interests (Hamada, 2001; Said, 1981: 25-6, 41-5, 101, 109, 134-6; Van Ginneken, 1998: 1, 8-10, 15, 21). In addition, other analyses of media coverage of conflicts in developing countries and in regions such as the Balkans highlight the propaganda functions of media strategies that exaggerate the "ethnicized" or "tribalized" dimensions of

conflicts, while minimising or negating the role of “western” powers in those conflicts (Allan and Seaton, 1999; Carruthers, 2004: 168-9; Hammond, 2004: 185).

However, a crucial failing of the latter analyses is that their assumptions regarding the processes by which the media reinforce prevailing power structures and societal “common sense” have rarely been subjected to any rigorous critical scrutiny (Stabile, 1995: 404). Thus, these analyses fail to appreciate that media processes of issue-construction and reconstruction are also reflective of the shifting states of ideological consensus and opposition that often characterise wider public discursive contests (Corner, 1991; Hong-Won, 1998: 80; Karim, 1993). Furthermore, dominant ideological and hegemonic perspectives tend to overly rely on an ill-defined “critique within limits” explanation of media diversities, which fails to adequately explain the nature and extent of these “limits” (McCullagh, 2002: 52-3, 55).

In conclusion, the above outlined research problems highlight the more general failure of the propaganda model to appreciate the range of ways in which different media systems operate, at least in some measure “in their own right” (Altheide, 1984: 483-4), rather than being wholly determined by extrinsic factors. These critiques of the propaganda model are developed further in the following section, which focuses on the Glasgow University Media Group’s analysis of British television coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Berry and Philo, 2004).

**(iii) *Bad News from Israel* – Ideological Bias in British Television Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

The Glasgow University Media Group's analysis of British television coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict focused on how BBC1 and ITV offered highly selective coverage of this issue from late September 2000 to April 2002. It was concluded that over thirty percent of sampled news coverage focused on the "comings and going of the key figures" and on the "lack of progress in negotiations for a peaceful resolution of the crisis." Almost one third of coverage focused on immediate day-to-day "conflict" events, while fourteen percent focused on protagonists' tactics and strategies (Berry and Philo, 2004: 101, 104, 107). Moreover, "conflict" events were typically reported within a "narrow reporting" framework which neglected to explain the relationship between so-called "cycles of violence" and wider political developments and historical background (Berry and Philo, 2004: 112-3).

The GUMG found that disproportionately more television coverage presented the Israeli perspective that the conflict is caused by Palestinian "terrorism" (see also: Fisk, cited in: Rothschild, 1998; Lerner, 2002; Salt, 2000). Hence, Palestinian violence was mostly depicted as rooted in hatred and animosity (Berry and Philo, 2004: 108-12, 157, 186-8), rather than a legitimate and popular resistance against the Israeli military occupation (Berry and Philo, 2004: 113-7, 129, 130-6, 144, 155-6, 160, 165; see also: Parry, 2003; Pilger, 2000; Segal, 2002). Palestinian rationales for the use of political violence as part of a "national liberation" struggle were rarely articulated (Berry and Philo, 2004: 144, 148, 155-6).

173, 177-8; see also: Segal, 2002; Siham, 2003). Moreover, Israeli fatalities and casualties were accorded greater prominence within media coverage and presented in more emotive and humanising ways, despite the fact that Palestinians suffered greater human losses (Berry and Philo, 2004: 144-5, 148, 155, 182-3; see also: Counsell, 2003).

The strongest critique of the GUMG model that can be advanced here is that it adopts a type of “grand design” theoretical framework that strongly resembles the framework adopted by the other propaganda studies reviewed above. For instance, the GUMG argue that the prominence accorded to Israeli perspectives within news content was an indicator of the “success” of their “very well organised media and public relations operation” and their imposition of restrictions on Palestinian access to media arenas (Berry and Philo, 2004: 134, 137, 157, 178). However, this finding is not empirically verified or reliably authenticated. Furthermore, this Israeli public relations-information control hypothesis fails to explain the occurrence of what the GUMG term “relatively neutral” categories of news coverage that “do not clearly endorse one side or the other in the conflict,” or coverage that does “show the effects of the war and the suffering it causes for both sides,” especially during instances of Israeli military raids on Palestinian areas (Berry and Philo, 2004: 139, 144, 189).

The GUMG’s framework, therefore, fails to appreciate the fact that international news agendas can never be wholly influenced by the propaganda campaigns of the politically powerful side of military conflicts. A related criticism is that the GUMG’s framework minimises and under-theorises the relatively

autonomous influences exerted by different national political contexts, media institutional norms and culturally specific news factors.

Lastly, the GUMG's study pays only scant attention to the potential influences exerted by actual political events and developments on media foreign conflict coverage. Particularly, with reference to this case study, it is assumed that because the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is characterised by cycles of political violence, event contingencies and shifting ideological contests, it is unlikely that elitist propaganda could maintain total hegemonic dominance over international media coverage for extensive time periods. It has also been argued that official Israeli propaganda, despite being promoted by the more politically powerful and economically resourceful Israeli state has been consistently unable to overthrow the "Israeli Goliath" storyline within media coverage, especially if political events produce heavily mediated images of Palestinian suffering (Nirenstein, 2001: 55).

In conclusion, this critique of the Glasgow University Media Group's research further highlights the theoretical inadequacies of over-reliance on propaganda perspectives. It follows, therefore, that a broader theoretical and methodological framework is required. The following section reviews some further examples of studies of media foreign conflict coverage. It begins with a discussion of studies of American media coverage of the Vietnam War, including Daniel Hallin's seminal study (1986a) and Gitlin's study (1980). This discussion concludes that while both of these studies have made important theoretical contributions to understanding the roles adopted by media during periods of conflict coverage, they do not have a wide empirical applicability or contextual generality.

The following section also outlines how Hallin's (1986a) study, in particular, became the precursor to later so-called "indexing" studies of media foreign coverage. It is concluded that, like the propaganda model the indexing model is characterised by limited theoretical sophistication and a lack of sufficient empirical applicability or generality. These weaknesses are, in turn, related to the fact that explorations of this model have been confined to the highly particularised media context supplied by the United States.

### **3. Reporting Foreign Conflicts from "Home" - The Indexing Hypothesis**

#### **(i) Studies of American Media Coverage of the Vietnam War**

Daniel Hallin's (1986a) study of American media coverage of the Vietnam War is regarded as a seminal study of media conflict reporting. Hallin argues that media opposition to the Vietnam War only began to emerge in the United States in 1967 and that, oppositional perspectives only achieved appreciable levels of media coverage after the Tet Offensive in 1968. During the earlier years of the war media coverage closely followed the "government line" and was constructed within the "sphere of consensus" (Hallin, 1986a: 52). This consensus was, in turn, based on the hegemonic worldview supplied by the Cold War perspective. Hallin found that the media had "very limited" autonomy from this worldview and this "made fundamental questioning of American policy" within media coverage "essentially unthinkable" (Hallin, 1986a: 110, 162; see also: Hallin, 1985:133).

Hallin argued that when the political consensus surrounding the Vietnam War collapsed after the Tet offensive in 1968 media coverage became “increasingly critical and diverse in the viewpoints it represents and increasingly difficult for officials to control” (Hallin, 1994: 55). The fact that the government failed to maintain its “consensus line” meant that anti-war perspectives acquired an increased “legitimacy” within political debates. In response to this shift, the media activated “objectivity”, “balance” and “impartiality” reporting norms, which framed the Vietnam War within the sphere of “legitimate controversy.” These norms, therefore, have a certain capacity to ensure that alternative or challenging perspectives are represented within news coverage (Althaus, 2003: 402-5; McChesney, 2002: 95, 98; Roeh, 1989). However, Hallin also argued that “objectivity” reporting norms frequently inhibit rather than enhance journalistic critiques of establishment perspectives (Hallin, 1992b: 16-21).

One of Hallin’s key findings was that media critiques of the United States’ involvement in Vietnam were highly limited because they mostly focused on technical and strategic “questions that do not touch directly on conflicts of interest or clashes over the ends and values of political life” (Hallin, 1985: 25-6, 129-30; see also: Hallin, 1992a: 12-3, 20; Hammond, 1998: 291-6). Furthermore, Hallin’s studies of the roles adopted by mainstream media in the United States during the post-Vietnam era also concluded that the media generally espoused dominant elite worldviews, or the “majority sentiment of the moment” (Hallin, 1986b: 135-6; Hallin, 1992b: 20-1).



Other media scholars have also argued that “legitimate controversy” perspectives generally do not amount to a substantive or radical critique of established political perspectives. Instead, they adopt a “tone of detached neutrality” which deliberately avoids independent journalistic viewpoints (Schudson, 2002: 40; see also: Hackett, 1997: 144). Significantly, Gitlin’s study of the United States’ media coverage of anti-Vietnam War protests concluded that while increasing elite divisions stimulated “alternative” media criticisms of the war, especially during “disruptive moments” or “critical times” (Gitlin, 1980: 5, 12), these criticisms did not extend to outright challenges of the hegemonic assumptions underpinning the central foreign policies of the United States (Gitlin, 1980: 207, 210). Another similar study of media coverage of the anti-Vietnam War movement also concluded that mainstream media in the United States tended to denigrate, trivialise and undermine the movement’s objectives because of the media’s institutional predisposition towards “establishment” perspectives (Small, 1994: 2-3, 12-5, 23-5, 33, 167-8).

It is important to recognise the significant theoretical contributions that the above outlined studies have made to research on media foreign conflict coverage. However, for the purpose of this research they are regarded as having limited empirical applicability and theoretical generality. This is primarily because of their dependence on the particular historical context of the invasion of Vietnam by the United States.

For instance, several more recent studies highlight that media coverage of foreign conflicts has been directly influenced by the greater levels of political

dissent and ideological divergences that emanated from the “loss of the Cold War ideological presumption” (Rojecki, 2002: 10, 19; see also: Entman, 2000; Entman, 2003: 416, 423; Entman, 2004: 4-5, 95-7, 120, 147-57; Hackett, 1997: 149; Hallin, 1992b: 17-8; Hallin, 1994: 62, 81, 172-4; Minear, Scott and Weiss, 1996: 74-80). Critical coverage of the United States’ foreign policy is more likely within this post-Cold War climate. For instance, during the Clinton Presidencies in the United States, especially in relation to media coverage of the military interventions in Somalia (1992/3), Haiti (1994) and Kosovo (1999), a less deferential relationship pertained between the United States government and many media. Consequently, some resultant media coverage was, in fact, directly adverse to governmental policy objectives and perspectives (Entman, 2004: 98-104, 152-3).

More generally, the bitterly contested nationalist, ethnic and religious conflicts characterising post-Cold War eras of international relations, “suggest an information environment dominated by unpredictability and instability rather than control and order”, so that “the combined impact of all of this has been to heighten the media’s tendency... to promote dissent and intellectual diversity, rather than dominant ideology or hegemony” (McNair, 2003: 549-51). It has also been argued that during more contemporary periods, media foreign coverage has become less elite oriented. Instead, the media tend to reflect already existing levels of ideological diversity and elitist dissensus as the norm rather than the exception of news coverage trends (Chul Yoon and Gwangho, 2002: 93-4; Livingston and Eachus, 1996: 424; Strobel, 1997: 9). Because there is greater public visibility accorded to alternative perspectives, such as humanitarian, political advocacy and human rights perspectives, the media’s attention to these perspectives vis-à-vis elite perspectives

has increased accordingly (Hallin, 1986b: 137-41; Livingston and Eachus, 1996: 425-6; Webster, 2003: 58-9, 66-7).

The following section discusses further examples of more recent studies that have applied the so-called indexing hypothesis. Two major critiques of these studies are then presented.

### **(ii) Studies of American Media “Indexed” Coverage of “Foreign” Conflicts**

Some of the more prominent contemporary appropriations of Hallin’s work that have been undertaken within the “indexing” research tradition adopt a more narrow interpretation of media-political relations. This is reflected by this tradition’s propagation of the basic hypothesis that, “media coverage of foreign events closely follows the interpretive frames offered by political elites” (Magder, 2003: 36). The most defining trend of this research tradition, therefore, has been to rely on “tests” of the indexing hypothesis within highly selective cases of media coverage of foreign policy issues within the United States (Tumber, 2002: 139-44). These analyses are also based on simplistic measures of the extent to which the “media line” reflects the “government line.” Accordingly, studies generally conclude that the news media play dependent and passive roles, promoting government perspectives over other alternative and critical perspectives (Alexseev and Bennett, 1995; Broadbent, 1993: 151, 173-4; Grosswiler, 1997: 196, 206; Hutcheson et al., 2004: 44-6; Lewis and Rose, 2002; Malek, 1997a: 231-5).

One of the primary criticisms of the indexing model, however, is that it pays insufficient empirical or theoretical attention to exploring the influences exerted by news factors and journalistic agency in potentially constructing relatively autonomous or oppositional perspectives (Althaus, 2003: 382-3, 402-5; Entman, 2004: 18-9, 50-6, 63-5, 94-6; Peer and Chestnut, 1995: 82, 89).

In an attempt to enhance the theoretical usefulness and empirical applicability of the indexing model, W. Lance Bennett argues that the influence of journalistic indexing practices on news outcomes needs to be analysed in terms of contextual factors, such as the levels of media dependence or autonomy and the extent and actual impacts of elite control (Alexseev and Bennett, 1995; Bennett, 1990; Bennett, 1994; Bennett, 1997).

Contextual and event contingencies often “strain the limits of the indexing norm” by reducing the levels of elite control over media coverage (Lawrence, 1996: 443-6; see also: Bennett and Lawrence, 1995: 23, 26, 33). For instance, some theorists argue that elite control over news agendas is mostly confined to “routine” events that occur within domains structured by elite “habitual access” to the media (Molotch and Lester, 1997 (orig. 1974): 200-2). Thus, scandal, accident-driven, or iconic news stories actually disrupt rather than reinforce elite control of the news agenda (Bennett and Lawrence, 1995: 22-4, 33-6; Molotch and Lester, 1997 (orig. 1974): 203-6; Lawrence, 1996: 446).

It has also been argued that while crucial advantages accrue to political actors in their “dance” with the media to control issue agendas and frames, there is

still a degree of indeterminacy characterising the outcomes of media issue constructions, which is reflective of the level of contest or consensus characterising the political domain itself. Therefore, as the political domain is often beyond the control of political actors, this factor influences the degree to which the media adopt adversarial, symbiotic, or cooperative stances towards political actors (Sparrow, 1999: 26-8, 54-72).

Bennett argues that journalists also have recourse to “oppositional” reporting norms and non-elite sourcing strategies (Bennett, 1994: 21; Bennett, 1997: 113). Furthermore, because of symbiotic forms of media-source relations and other autonomy enhancing situations, the media may assume more active roles, such as “reality-filtering” and “agenda-setting” roles (Bennett, 1988: 14-7, 108; Bennett, Gressett and Haltrom, 1987 (orig. 1985): 319-22).

However, Bennett’s model’s usefulness appears to be mostly confined to tracing the ways in which the press adopts issue slants that are favourable to government foreign policy perspectives. This research weakness is due to the indexing model’s overall reliance on a limited “understanding of the relationship between journalists and official sources [that]... equates media reliance on elite sources with non-influence” (Robinson, 2001: 528), which also reduces the model’s capacity to theorise more complex and diverse dimensions of media-political relations. For instance, the model largely fails to explain how a wider range of “situational factors” is often an “even more important determinant of press slant than indexing” (Zaller and Chiu, 1996: 398; see also: Minear, Scott and Weiss, 1996: 33).

A related criticism of the indexing model is that its reliance on theoretical assumptions regarding the efficacy of political control of the media and the pervasiveness of journalistic dependency on domestic political elites is problematic when applied to the arena of international issue coverage. Specifically, the increasing “transnationalisation” or “globalisation” of international conflict coverage, the blurring of nation-state boundaries, the increasing “reach of competing frames”, as well as the global proliferation of diversified media forums, means that state control of media information channels can no longer be presumed (Brown, 2003: 89, 97; Gowing, 2003: 135-6; Minear, Scott and Weiss, 1996: 90; Reese, 2004: 262-3; Tehranian, 2004: 239-40; Webster, 2003: 64-5). In fact, within foreign news reporting arenas, the range of available sources that journalists may be expected to access is considerably more extensive than is implied by the indexing model. This, in turn, increases “the difficulty of measuring elite ‘voices and viewpoints’ and thus of modelling the power flow between political elites and media, as indexing theory seeks to do” (Althaus et al., 1996: 416).

Furthermore, although Bennett’s indexing model possesses some degree of general applicability, it is, nonetheless, mostly dependent on the United States media context. As is also the case with the propaganda model (which has already been detailed in previous sections of this chapter), this research dependency generates a number of problems, foremost of which is the indexing model’s serious lack of applicability to the range of diverse media contexts characterising differently positioned nation-states (Althaus, 2003: 382; Downing, 1996: 113, 117; Vincent, 2000: 324). Significantly, it has been argued that studies of American mainstream news coverage are generally not applicable outside of their immediate context

because that coverage is based upon context-specific foreign policy traditions, political discourses and news biases (Bloch and Lehman-Wilzig, 2002: 164-5; Hackett and Zhao, 1994: 510, 533-4, 538; Lee, 1990a: 19-20; see also: Lee, 2002: 346; Wittebols, 1996: 347-8; Womack, 1990: 230, 239, 242).

In conclusion, this thesis argues that a more general, historically situated and contextual model of media analysis is required to adequately theorise the roles adopted by media in reporting foreign conflicts. While duly recognising the structural advantages enjoyed by official sources and political elites in their relations with media, analyses should also incorporate a view of mass communication neither as source-determined, nor as dependent on linear political communication flows. Instead, mass communication needs to be understood as involving “interactive” processes of “meaning construction” (Hansen, 1991: 447-8), or processes of “co-production” involving both political sources and newsmakers (Cook, 1998: 114-5; see also: Bennett and Livingston, 2003; Franklin, 2003: 58).

News coverage has frequently been regarded as the outcome of a “symbiotic relationship” between sources as “news promoters” and journalists as “news assemblers” (Johnson-Cartee, 2005: 187-218). Media-source relations have also been defined as “more of a two-way street” in terms of media and political framing influences and inputs, especially since journalists possess the capacity to perform a range of different roles (Bloch and Lehman-Wilzig, 2002: 155, 167; Brown and Vincent, 1995: 65-8, 75), as well as being the final arbiters of media frame inclusions and constructions (Terkildsen, Schnell and Ling, 1998: 47-9, 56-9). Moreover, because media-political relations are far more diverse and antagonistic

than is argued by indexing studies (Spencer, 2001: 73-5), these relations need to be theorised as part of wider analyses of media-source relations generally and in terms of the potential impacts exerted by different contingent factors and changing politico-cultural contexts.

It is hoped that each of the above theoretical acknowledgements of the “complex and contradictory” aspects of media roles, especially as they are influenced by context, dialogic and relational factors, adequately challenge hegemonic and indexing models, which to date have assumed a uni-dimensionality in media functioning within society (Barker-Plummer, 1996: 29-32). These acknowledgements are, in turn, clearly related to the objectives of this research. The first objective is to undertake a combined descriptive and qualitative analysis of key dimensions of sampled Irish newspapers’ coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004. The second objective is to explain the findings of these newspaper analyses by undertaking analyses of the wider politico-cultural and media contexts within which these sampled newspapers operate.

The following section reviews Gadi Wolfsfeld’s work which is of particular relevance to the research topic of this thesis as it explicitly addresses the question of the media’s role in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Wolfsfeld, 1990 (orig. 1984); Wolfsfeld, 1993; Wolfsfeld, 1997a; Wolfsfeld, 1997b; Wolfsfeld, 1997c; Wolfsfeld, 2001a; Wolfsfeld, 2001b; Wolfsfeld, 2003a; Wolfsfeld, 2003b; Wolfsfeld, 2004; Wolfsfeld, Avraham and Aburaiya, 2000; Wolfsfeld, Khouri and Peri, 2002).



Wolfsfeld's research is interpreted as widening key features of the indexing model, especially in terms of its advancement of a series of hypotheses regarding the impact of media influence and news frame variables on media roles. These hypotheses bear similarities to Hallin's hypotheses (Hallin, 1986a) and, therefore, also occur within a broader political communicative perspective than that typified by the indexing studies critiqued above.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4. The Media as Sites of "Political Control/Contest" – Assessing the Work of Gadi Wolfsfeld**

In this section it is argued that, in relation to the research objectives underpinning this thesis, Wolfsfeld's work has a number of advantages over propaganda and indexing perspectives. In contrast to these perspectives, Wolfsfeld's work incorporates a contextual and multi-variable analytic framework, which predicts that a range of different political environmental factors potentially influence news frame outcomes. This framework argues that, "the best way to understand the role of the news media in politics is to view the competition over the news media as part of a larger and more significant contest among political protagonists for political control" (Wolfsfeld, 2003b: 81).

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Wolfsfeld stated that the objective of his work was not explicitly related to overcoming the weaknesses of the indexing hypothesis, or extending its applications. Rather, his work was intended to build on political communicative studies more widely and generally. Nonetheless, his work does provide the theoretical constructs for overcoming the limitations of the indexing hypothesis, which "mostly looks at the issue from the perspective of the news media and my major point was that it made more sense to look at it from the political perspective" (Email correspondence received from Professor Wolfsfeld, 19 October 2004).

However, while the roles played by structural, cultural and political agency factors, on the one hand and news factors on the other hand, are treated as offering potentially important explanations of media coverage over time and its changes within different political situations, it is also assumed that the media tend to adopt politically reactive roles, ensuring that:

The range of debate expressed in the media is mostly shaped by the range of debate among the mainstream political elite... when there is widespread elite consensus about a political issue, one frame tends to dominate media discourse and few questions are raised about its validity. If the level of opposition grows, alternative frames emerge and this competition is reflected in changing media coverage... the independent variable is the level of elite consensus (Wolfsfeld, 2004: 28-9).

The level of “independence” or “dependence” that the media display is also theorised as inherently related to the different contexts surrounding political conflicts (Wolfsfeld, 1997c: 30). Three structural factors are held to be particularly significant; firstly, “the ability of the authorities to initiate and control events; secondly, authorities’ capacity to regulate the flow of information and finally, their ability to mobilize elite support” (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 95).

Wolfsfeld’s political control/contest hypotheses, therefore, tend to theorise media conflict coverage as a function of a combination of structural and political factors (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 166; Wolfsfeld, 1997c: 43-5; Wolfsfeld, 2004: 71-5, 171-2; Wolfsfeld, Khouri and Peri, 2002: 192). For instance, it is hypothesised that, in relation to covering “consensus” issues, the media tend to become “faithful servants” by advocating frames proffered by governments. In covering contested issues, however, the media act as “semi-honest brokers by offering challengers a significant amount of time and space.” Alternatively, the media may also become

“advocates of the underdog by amplifying the claims of challengers against authorities” (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 68-9).

Wolfsfeld’s political control/contest hypotheses also theorise media outcomes as politically achieved outcomes, rather than being a-priori assumed (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 3-5, 14-5). Political-media relations are, therefore, not merely regarded as monolithic or static relations, but as “transactional” relations that are based on changing forms of “competitive symbiosis” (Wolfsfeld, 1993: xvi; Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 13). Within this “symbiosis”, challenger protagonists are often poorly resourced groups and are, consequently, highly dependent on the media to achieve political advantages. Therefore, their status mostly accords with the maxim that “access to the media is most expensive for those who need it most” (Wolfsfeld, 1990 (orig. 1984): 265).

However, on the other hand, while authority frames tend to retain a higher news value within this symbiosis, symbolised by their routine access to media channels, they are sometimes compelled to compete with challenger and oppositional frames (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 5, 13-24). Political crises, or “ebbs and flows” in the levels of elite control of the political arena, often provide the “gaps” or “gateways” for challenger groups to secure greater media advantages (Wolfsfeld, 2003b: 88, 91). More particularly, “terrorist” groups gain media access by generating “waves” of political violence which change media reporting contexts (Wolfsfeld, 2001b: 231). Finally, cultural factors are also considered to be theoretically significant in influencing political protagonists’ access and

representation within media coverage (Wolfsfeld, 1993: xix; Wolfsfeld, 2004: 110-1).

However, despite this attention to the impact of contextual and cultural factors on news outcomes, especially vis-à-vis structural determinants, this appears to have occurred only at the theoretical level, as Wolfsfeld's empirical applications of political control/contest hypotheses clearly privilege analyses of structural factors. Therefore, like propaganda and indexing models, these hypotheses assume that the roles adopted by the media are primarily shaped by political elites and that the informative and ideological content of news outcomes is controlled by political communication strategies (Franklin, 1994; Norris et al., 1999: 3-7, 9-10, 13, 19; Robinson, 2004: 104-6). These assumptions, in turn, reduce the role of the media to that of supporters or challengers of elitist frames and neglect the impact of non-elite controlled factors on media outcomes.

In light of the above discussion, it is significant that other dimensions of Wolfsfeld's work do recognise that the media can become more autonomous or independent from authority perspectives within situations where news logics and routines evidently play *greater* roles in setting news agendas than political factors (Wolfsfeld, 1997b; Wolfsfeld, 1997c; Wolfsfeld, 2004; Wolfsfeld, Avraham and Aburaiya, 2000; Wolfsfeld, Khouri and Peri, 2002). In particular, Wolfsfeld argues that societal frames and journalistic professional cultures often strongly influence the ways in which "journalists attempt to find a narrative fit between incoming information and existing media frames" (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 32-4, 51-2. 158; Wolfsfeld, 2004: 25, 176-7, 179-80; Wolfsfeld, Avraham and Aburaiya, 2000: 128-

9). Also, media frames tend to conform to criteria of news worthiness, such as negativity, immediacy, drama, deviance, simplicity and ethnocentrism. in addition to other journalistic practices and values, irrespective of political influences (Wolfsfeld, 2004: 15, 42, 76, 176-7).

However, these findings regarding the causal relationships that exist between critical news frames and the adoption by the media of consciously independent roles appear to be in somewhat contradiction to the political control/contest hypotheses' assumption that media autonomy is mostly dependent on contexts characterised by political vacuums, losses of political control, or political dissensus. Indeed, within Wolfsfeld's overall work the predictive value of hypotheses of media influence are rather narrowly construed, as they are presented as mostly confined to anomalous cases of news analysis.

In light of the objectives of this case study, a significant limitation of Wolfsfeld's work is that its hypotheses have been mostly tested within case studies analysing media that operate *within* societies involved in military conflicts. This means that Wolfsfeld's findings are not widely applicable outside of these contexts. For instance, one particular factor that requires attention is the "distance" factor, as it has crucial impacts on the differences that emerge between foreign and domestic contexts of media conflict coverage (Elliott, Murdock and Schlesinger, 1983: 9, 57-61).

Wolfsfeld's work is also limited by the fact that it fails to explore the impacts that non-elite controlled, trans-national and internet communications have

on different media's foreign coverage trends (Gowing, 2003: 233; Malek and Wiegand, 1997: 20-1), Secondly, it neglects to explore the potential influences exerted by ongoing processes of news "homogenisation" and "diversification" that occur within different national contexts (Clausen, 2004: 26; Hafez, 2000c: 9-14). Thirdly, the influences exerted by national governmental structures and political cultures, as well as culturally-specific worldviews and journalistic cultures. in "domesticating" media foreign coverage trends also requires attention (Arno, 1984a: 12-4; Carrier, 1997: 192-3; Chang and Kraus, 1990: 109-10; Clausen, 2004: 36, 41-2; Entman, 2004: 96, 105; Lee, 2002: 345-6; Magder, 2003: 33-5; O'Beeman, 1984: 147; Volkmer, 2002: 239).

To summarise, the above review of Wolfsfeld's political control/contest hypotheses, like the earlier review of propaganda, hegemonic and indexing hypotheses, highlights their failure to adequately explain the potential influences that different national, politico-cultural, economic and media factors have on foreign news coverage trends. It is concluded, therefore, that a more sociological theoretical framework is required to fully explain these influences (Benson, 2004a: 276, 279-80; Benson, 2004b: 313; Schudson, 2003: 8, 47).

The following section argues that the type of sociological theoretical framework most appropriate for the newspaper analyses undertaken by this case study is one that is rooted within the media frame research tradition. It begins by briefly outlining some of the different types of sociological studies of media and political frames that have been undertaken to date. An argument is then presented that Wolfsfeld's news frame analyses, which are conducted within a framework that

is originally derived from the frame analytic model adopted by Professor William A. Gamson and his colleagues, constitutes an important advancement in the development of sociological analyses of media frames.<sup>2</sup> It is then argued that Gamson and his colleagues' model constitutes a highly useful framework for the newspaper analyses presented in this thesis.

## **5. Towards a Social Constructivist Model of Media Analysis – Frame Research of Gadi Wolfsfeld and William A. Gamson and his Colleagues**

The media frame research tradition has produced a number of important sociological studies of the news construction process. Social movement research, in particular, has advanced sociological understandings of the origins and operation of politico-cultural and media frames (Benford and Snow, 2000; Carragee and Roefs, 2004; Carroll and Ratner, 1999; Johnston, 1995; Johnston and Oliver, 2000; Snow et al., 1986). The “framing” process is regarded by social movement research as an active “signifying” and “strategic” process of meaning construction (Pan and Kosicki, 2001: 48, 59; Snow and Benford, 1992: 135-6; see also: Benford and Snow, 2000: 614; Snow and Benford, 1988: 213-4; Snow and Benford, 2000: 55-6; Zald, 1996: 269). Furthermore, social movement frame research emphasises that

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<sup>2</sup> William A. Gamson and his colleagues' work can be loosely sub-divided into studies that variously adopt a social movement perspective (Gamson, 1988a; Gamson, 1992a; Gamson, 1995; Gamson, 1998; Gamson, Fireman and Rytina, 1982; Gamson and Meyer, 1996), an interactionist perspective (Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993) and a social constructivist theoretical perspective (Gamson, 1981; Gamson, 1985; Gamson, 1988b; Gamson, 1992b; Gamson, 2000; Gamson, 2001; Gamson, 2004; Gamson et al., 1992; Gamson and Lasch, 1983; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Gamson and Stuart, 1992). In accordance with the objectives of this case study, this chapter is primarily concerned with reviewing those features of Gamson's social constructivist perspective that are relevant for media discourse and frame analysis. Two of Gamson's studies are directly relevant because they analyse the social construction of the “Arab-Israeli conflict” within media, political and public discourses (Gamson, 1981; Gamson, 1992b).

frames also function socio-discursively as “master-frames” or cultural “repertoires” (Snow and Benford, 1992: 134, 140; see also: Pan and Kosicki, 2001: 43-4, 48-50, 59-60; Williams and Kubal, 1999: 231-7; Zald, 1996).

A similar sociological focus has also been usefully applied to micro-level analyses of how institutional factors, news-production practices and ideologies influence news framing processes (Altheide, 1974; Berkowitz and Terkeurst, 1999; Cook, 1989; Cook, 1998: 61-84; Dunwoody and Griffin, 1993; Eliasoph, 1997 (orig. 1988): 230, 233; Epstein, 1974; Fishman, 1980; Gallagher, 1982; Rock, 1981; Tuchman, 1978; Tuchman, 1997 (orig. 1973)). Related research has included studies of the “framing” influences exerted by media factors, such as news values (Bird and Dardenne, 1997 (orig. 1988); Darnton, 1975: 186-92; Galtung and Ruge, 1965; Galtung and Ruge, 1981; Van Ginneken, 1998: 65-83; Watkins, 2001: 83-4), “information biases” (Bennett, 1988), “repertoire of storytelling tools” (Johnson-Cartee, 2005: 116), “templates” (Kitzinger, 2000), “story-lines” (Lederman, 1992: 12-5; Triandafyllidou, 1995: 517-20) and “logics” (Altheide, 2004; Bennett, Gressett and Haltrom, 1987 (orig. 1985): 319, 321).

Media frame studies have also undertaken sociological analyses of the agenda-setting or reception stages of the news framing process (Iyengar, 1991; Iyengar and Simon, 1993; Kosicki, 1993; McCombs and Ghanem, 2001; McLeod and Detenber, 1999; Scheufele, 1999; Woong-Rhee, 1997: 26-7, 31).

Wolfsfeld argues that the concepts associated with media frame research are required to explain those news outcomes where authorities’ political control does



not *extend* to a level of media control that is predicted by political control/contest hypotheses. For this reason, Wolfsfeld's news frame analyses draw distinctions between the different types of "structural" and "cultural" factors that affect the levels of media access achieved by competing groups. Structural factors include such factors as organisational, institutional, political and economic resources. Cultural factors, on the other hand, include such factors as the media resonance and popular appeal of issues or issue-sponsors. Typically, while structural control over the news agenda is confined to media access channels, cultural influences on news agendas produce definitional and frame advantages *within* media coverage (Wolfsfeld, 1997c: 112-4).

Gamson and his colleagues also argue for the adoption of a social constructivist perspective that "maintains a useful tension or balance between structure and agency" and does not, therefore, reduce news frame outcomes to the role of structural or ideological domination (Gamson et al., 1992: 384).

Both Gamson and his colleagues and Wolfsfeld recognise the socio-cognitive functioning of frames. Frames are defined as the "central organizing principle that holds together and gives coherence and meaning to a diverse array of symbols" (Gamson et al., 1992: 384). Wolfsfeld adopts a similar definition of frames as organising themes that "govern the collection of information and the construction of news stories" (Wolfsfeld, 2004: 36), by permitting journalists to "interpret, process and store incoming data regarding issues and events" (Wolfsfeld, 1993: xiv).

However, Gamson and his colleagues define frames not merely as socio-cognitive phenomena, or stand-alone features of news texts. Instead, news frames are defined as outcomes of “value-added” processes that result from relations between different sets of news factors and politico-cultural contexts (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 5). Thus, news construction processes are inherently regarded as the outcomes of interactions between competing political or societal generated issue-frames and news frames, on the one hand and interactions between news frames and audiences’ interpretations, or cultural resonance, on the other hand (Gamson, 1988a: 225; Gamson, 1988b: 167; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 9; see also: Fuller, 1996: 10, 69, 92, 128-9).

Within Gamson and his colleagues’ model the resonance of news frames with wider politico-cultural frames provides significant “discursive opportunities” to competing societal sponsors of meaning and is thus, an important dimension of media frame choices and emphases (Ferree et al., 2002: 70). Frame resonance is gauged by frames’ use of “noticeable, understandable, memorable and emotionally-charged” words or images (Entman, 2003: 417, 422; Entman, 2004: 6). Frame resonance, therefore, directly influences the degree of media access and salience achieved by competing issue-frames (Entman, 2004: 14).

Wolfsfeld’s model relies on a similar social constructivist conceptualisation of frames (Wolfsfeld, 1993: xv). News frame outcomes are analysed by unravelling the influence of three sets of factors. The first set of factors are the “interpretive frames that are available and the events that take place in the field” (Wolfsfeld, 2004: 75). The second set of factors is “the professional norms that determined how

these events would be turned into news” (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 122-3). Thirdly, “how these events resonated with the political culture” of the media is also important (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 122-3). This is because media frames reflect pre-existing journalistic storylines, media institutional policies, “political considerations.” and/or editorial perceptions regarding readers’ preferences (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 32-4, 49-50, 155-6; Wolfsfeld, 2003b: 89, 94; Wolfsfeld, 2004: 37-8, 44, 65, 180).

Analyses of the differential influences exerted over time by news and politico-cultural factors are imperative for media research (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Gamson and Stuart, 1992). For instance, in accordance with changes in the wider political context, the media accord different levels of definitional advantages to competing societal-sponsored meanings (Gamson and Stuart, 1992: 55). So, while government and powerful political protagonists typically enjoy more favourable media access (Gamson, 1998: 63; Gamson and Lasch, 1983: 400; Gamson and Stuart, 1992: 56), political changes may result in greater media resonance being achieved by challenger frames (Gamson et al., 1992: 373, 388, 391).

Likewise, historical events or “cultural breaks” often precipitate the “surfacing of long dormant contradictions that reframe grievances and injustices and the possibilities for action” (Zald, 1996: 268). Certain degrees of media autonomy within the framing process are also assumed, as journalists frequently rely on their own narrative conventions, news frames and alternative “interpretive packages” (Gamson, 1981: 88; Gamson, 1988a: 223-4, 227; Gamson and Lasch, 1983: 408; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 3, 7-8). News frames, therefore, are “not merely an

indicator of broader cultural changes in the civil society, but influence them, spreading changes in language use and political consciousness” (Gamson, 1998: 60).

This strong theoretical appreciation of the relational and contextual dimensions of news frames is also evident in Gamson’s and Wolfsfeld’s dualist conceptualisation of the media’s role within the public sphere. Wolfsfeld argues that the media constitute “symbolic arenas for ideological struggle”, as well as relatively independent “public interpreters of events” (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 55). Gamson and his colleagues define the media’s role firstly, in terms of their constitution as a set of highly contested and underdetermined public sites in which an “uneven contest” is fought between competing societal sponsors of meaning on a “tilted playing field” (Gamson et al., 1992: 382; Gamson and Meyer, 1996: 276; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 3; Gamson and Stuart, 1992: 55). Secondly, by mediating public meaning contests the media also participate in the framing of those meanings (Ferree et al., 2002: 10, 12; Gamson, 2004: 306). In this sense, the media are concerned with furthering their own “autonomous interests” that vary from the “organizational interests of the field of actors that comprise it” (Gamson, 1998: 62, 76), especially since media are “part of a cultural system worthy of a dynamic analysis in its own right” (Gamson, 1988b: 165).

Moreover, Gamson argues that struggles over meaning are inevitable, as “on most political issues there are competing interpretations, ways of framing information and facts in alternative ways” (Gamson, 1992a: 67: see also: Cottle, 2003b: 6; Ferree et al., 2002: 12; Louw, 2001: 8-9; 23-4). This conceptualisation of

media as sites of contested meanings is a highly significant one as it situates the media firmly within the public sphere. Furthermore, it is also argued that the institutional and agency dimensions of media roles consistently relate to and are influenced by, a range of political, socio-cultural and media factors pertaining to the wider national context (Gamson, 2004: 305-7).

In conclusion, Gamson and his colleagues' social constructivist and frame-analytic perspective, subsequently deployed by Wolfsfeld, is regarded as the most appropriate for fulfilling the research objectives underpinning this thesis. These objectives are, firstly, to uncover and analyse the ways in which four Irish national newspapers present and frame the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004 and secondly, to explore the ways in which newspaper presentations and frames are related to the wider politico-cultural and media contexts within which they emerge.

As highlighted above, the most valuable theoretical emphases of Gamson's and Wolfsfeld's work are their emphases on the social constructivist and ideologically contested dimensions of news frame processes, the contextual and variable nature of news frame outcomes, as well as the inherently dualist functioning of media institutions. Moreover, it is these theoretical emphases that represent the most significant advances of Gamson and his colleagues' work over propaganda, indexing, hegemonic and political control perspectives critiqued in previous sections of this chapter.

## **6. Conclusions**

This chapter undertook a review of some of the more prominent theoretical models that have been applied to analyses of media coverage of foreign conflicts. The aim of this review was to relate the theoretical framework adopted within this thesis to already existing research. It began by outlining and critiquing key examples of the propaganda, hegemonic and indexing models of media analysis.

It was argued that propaganda and indexing models generally fail to adequately theorise the impact exerted by different relational, interactive and social-constructivist contexts on media roles and outcomes. In particular, the impact of different national politico-cultural and media contexts on news coverage of foreign conflicts is neglected by these models because of assumptions regarding the inherently propagandist functioning of the news media, the efficiency of political controls over news outcomes and the structural determination of media-political relations.

Secondly, the majority of propaganda and indexing analyses have, to date, been confined to analyses of media roles in the United States and to a lesser extent, Britain and some core European states. This context dependency means that the application of these models to the Irish media context is somewhat problematic. Hence, a more widely applicable model of media analysis is required to adequately explain the roles adopted by differently positioned media in reporting foreign conflicts, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The ways that Gadi Wolfsfeld's work circumvents some of the limitations of propaganda, indexing and hegemonic models was then addressed (Wolfsfeld, 1990 (orig. 1984); Wolfsfeld, 1993; Wolfsfeld, 1997a; Wolfsfeld, 1997b; Wolfsfeld, 1997c; Wolfsfeld, 2001a; Wolfsfeld, 2001b; Wolfsfeld, 2003a; Wolfsfeld, 2003b; Wolfsfeld, 2004; Wolfsfeld, Avraham and Aburaiya, 2000; Wolfsfeld, Khouri and Peri, 2002). It was concluded that Wolfsfeld's work demonstrates the theoretical value of historically situating and contextualizing media coverage in terms of the political and media environments surrounding conflicts. However, this model has only been applied within studies of the roles adopted by media that operate within highly specified contexts, namely within countries that are involved in military conflicts, such as Israel and the United States. Therefore, it was concluded that this model would require substantial modifications if it was applied to the Irish media context.

For the purposes of this case study, Wolfsfeld's adoption of the social constructivist perspective developed by Gamson and his colleagues' media frame research is the most promising theoretical dimension of his work (Gamson, 1988b; Gamson, 1992b; Gamson, 2000; Gamson, 2001; Gamson, 2004; Gamson et al., 1992; Gamson and Lasch, 1983; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Gamson and Stuart, 1992; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993). Specifically, it was concluded that Gamson and colleagues' and Wolfsfeld's social constructivist perspective is based on a sophisticated frame analytic model which greatly facilitates the form of multi-staged, contextual newspaper analysis undertaken by this case study (Gamson, 1988a: 220-1; Wolfsfeld, 1993: xxvi).

The next chapter outlines the four different, yet inter-related, stages of analysis undertaken by this case study. Each of these different analyses generated conclusions regarding the social constructivist influences exerted by various contextual factors on Irish newspaper coverage and frames of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. These conclusions are thematically analysed in chapters 3 to 7 and summarised in chapter 8, the concluding chapter of this thesis.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **1. Introduction**

The previous chapter concluded that, for the purposes of this case study, a combined social constructivist and frame analytic perspective constitutes the most theoretically appropriate perspective. This chapter outlines how this perspective also constitutes the most useful methodological framework guiding this case study's practical research.

Ideally, social constructivist forms of analysis incorporate and utilise different research methodologies in order to reliably theorise the full range of contextual and environmental factors influencing news constructions during any given period of time. This research requirement was foremost in the design of this case study's methodological framework. Therefore, this case study's stages of practical research were conducted within a multi-staged model of media analysis that integrates different, yet interrelated, research methodologies.

The first stage of the research process involved the researcher undertaking a series of contextual analyses of the historical background and more contemporary political environment surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as Irish-

Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations. Chapter 3, chapter 4 and chapter 5 discuss the findings of these analyses.

The second and third research stages combined descriptive and qualitative forms of data analyses. These analyses generated findings regarding the presentational and framing trends displayed within randomly sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. The findings of these analyses are presented in chapter 6 and chapter 7, respectively.

The fourth stage of research consisted of a series of semi-structured, qualitative interviews that were undertaken with a number of significant media, political/diplomatic and NGO actors (see: Appendix 6 and Appendix 7). The objective of these interviews was to access the perspectives of interview participants, so as to enhance the researcher's analyses of the impacts of different politico-cultural and media contexts on the sampled Irish newspapers' coverage trends. Thus, these perspectives are illustrated within the relevant analyses in chapter 4, chapter 5 and chapter 6.

Methodological issues relating to criteria governing media selection are discussed in section 6 of this chapter. Two daily newspapers – *The Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent* – and two Sunday newspapers – the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* – were selected for analysis because they are assumed to be representative of elite media discourses available within the Irish national public sphere.

The final section of this chapter describes the methodological criteria guiding the sampling choices and procedures underpinning this case study. The sampling time-interval of July 2000 to July 2004 is chosen because it corresponds to a historically distinctive and significant period of Israeli-Palestinian relations. In July 2000 the “collapse” of the seven-year Oslo “peace process” was signified by the breakdown of the Camp David Summit, which witnessed significant changes within the political-diplomatic domains of the conflict, including historically unprecedented escalations of violence by both Israeli and Palestinian protagonists.

A random stratified method of newspaper sampling was implemented, which efficiently and evenly generated representative samples of coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by the sampled Irish newspapers during the four-year period of July 2000 to July 2004.

The following section discusses the implementation of this case study’s stages of data analysis. It also outlines the research value of combining semi-quantitative and descriptive forms of newspaper content analysis with qualitative frame analysis. This is followed by a discussion of the modified version of Gamson and his colleagues’ model of frame analysis that was applied within this case study.

## **2. Integrating Newspaper Content and Frame Analysis – Conceptual and Methodological Issues**

As outlined in the previous section, this case study's modified adoption and implementation of Gamson and his colleagues' social constructivist model of news frame analysis signifies that qualitative forms of media analysis are integral dimensions of this case study. Therefore, although this research relies on a combination of descriptive and qualitative methods of analysis, "substantive and analytic problems" are privileged in the design and implementation of each stage of the research process (Janowitz, 1976: 17; see also: Berelson, 1952: 17; Cottle et al., 1998: 95-6). Integrating descriptive methods of data analysis within a qualitatively oriented case study enables the researcher to "approach research questions from different angles" that are more "rounded and multi-faceted" (Mason, 2002: 190).

Deductive or literal readings of the manifest structural and presentational features of news content were undertaken as the preliminary stage of this case study's content analysis (Clerc, 2000: 144). Deductive content analysis is primarily useful for analyzing "surface" features of foreign news coverage (Barranco and Shyles, 1988; Chang, 1998; McBride et al., 1980; Mishra, 1979; Peterson, 1981; Sreberny-Mohammadi et al., 1984). It provides a general picture of various dimensions of newspaper presentations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004 (Janis, 1949: 55; Janowitz, 1976: 15-8; Jensen, 1991: 4).

The content features included within this case study for deductive or descriptive analysis are those of item length, location, prominence and originating source, as well as format, narrative style and topical features (see: Appendix 3, 1- Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures: Appendix 3, 2 - List of Variables Employed in Coding Analysis, Variables 1 to 9). The sampled newspapers' patterns of inclusion and display of quoted and paraphrased source assertions were also analysed as part of this descriptive content analysis (see: Appendix 3, 1- Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures, Variable 10). The findings of this descriptive analysis are presented in chapter 6 and are integrated into the overall research in “circular” and mutually reinforcing ways (Arksey and Knight, 1999: 23; Holsti, 1969: 11; Pool, 1959: 192). In this sense, descriptive analysis supplies a “methodological rigor” to the overall case study (Cottle et al., 1998: 91) and acts as a “springboard” for its inter-related stages of qualitative analysis (Deacon et al., 1999: 9).

The findings of this case study's frame analysis are presented in chapter 7. These findings are significant because they tap into the “deep” interpretive elements of news presentations (Alsutari, 1995: 9, 11; Altheide, 1996; Berelson, 1952: 71; Cottle et al., 1998: 95-8; Gerhards, 1995: 236; Holsti, 1969: 16-8, 71; Kracauer, 1952: 633, 637; Krippendorf, 1980: 21, 27).

Frame analysis is increasingly recognised as one of the most useful media research methodologies (D'Haenens and de Lange, 2001: 851-6; Gamson, 2001: x; Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000: 94), despite the fact that the frame research tradition has also been criticised because of its conduct within an imprecise or

“fractured paradigm” (Entman, 1993: 51; Entman, 2004: 5; Gamson, 2001: ix-xi; Hertog and McLeod, 2001: 139-40; Maher, 2001: 84, 89-90). Specifically, it has been argued that, like discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 1991: 108), the “theoretical and pragmatic diversity” of frame research facilitates non-compartmentalized media analysis and “bridges” quantitative and qualitative methodological traditions (D’Angelo, 2002: 871-5; Reese, 2001: 8-9).

Within the media frame research tradition the political, ideological and constructivist implications of “frames” are primary areas of inquiry (Entman, 2003: 421-2). The cognitive, interpretive and information-structuring functions of news frames are also regarded as significant dimensions of research (Bennett and Edelman, 1985: 158; Berkowitz, 1997a: 363; De Vreese, Peter and Semetko, 2001: 108; Edelman, 1993: 231-2; Entman, 1991: 7; Entman, 1993: 52-5; Entman and Herbst, 2001: 203; Gandy, 2001: 365; Gitlin, 1980: 7, 49-52; Hanson, 1995: 383, 389; McLeod and Detenber, 1999: 3-4; Neuman, Just and Crigler, 1992: 60; Norris, 1997: 275-6; Pan and Kosicki, 1993: 55-9; Patterson, 1993: 56; Potter, 1996: 97-8; Reese, 2001: 10-1, 20; Ryan, 1991: 53-4; Tankard, 2001: 98-101; Tuchman, 1978). In fact, Goffman’s original definition emphasises that frames function as cognitive and classificatory devices that organise how individuals “locate, receive, identify and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences” (Goffman, 1974: 21).

Frame research has a very wide applicability, focusing on identifying different types of framing “devices”, “recurring themes” and other linguistic categories (Ashley and Olson, 1998; Ban and Bantimaroudis, 2001: 177; Baylor,

1996: 244; Blum-Kulka and Liebes, 1993: 33; Hackett and Zhao, 1994: 510; Roeh and Nir, 1993: 177; Ryan, 1991: 56; Watkins, 2001: 83, 86). Additionally, frame research has the capacity to uncover the ambiguities, diversities and conflicts that are present or absent from news narratives (Durham, 1998: 101; Durham, 2001: 129, 134-5), as well as the polysemic dimensions of news content and the “patterns of domination and subordination” that may restrict polysemy (Carragee, 2003: 288-9). Frame analysis is also indispensable for analyzing how “persuasive” and “evaluative” news indicates the operation of media institutional ideologies (Eilders, 2002: 26; Eilders and Luter, 2000: 416; Hackett and Zhao, 1996: 5, 9; Tankard, 2001: 96-7).

In conclusion, this section has argued that there are significant research values in integrating methods of descriptive and qualitative data analysis within this case study of Irish national newspaper coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. This case study’s methodological design has the added research advantage of being located firmly within the media frame research tradition.

The following section makes the case for centring this case study’s practical research within a modified version of a social constructivist model of frame analysis that was originally constructed by Gamson and his colleagues (Gamson, 1988b; Gamson, 1992b; Gamson, 2000; Gamson, 2001; Gamson, 2004; Gamson et al., 1992; Gamson and Lasch, 1983; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Gamson and Stuart, 1992; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993).

### 3. Defining and Identifying News Frames - Constructing A *Signature Matrix Model of Frame Analysis*

As already outlined, the newspaper frame research undertaken by this case study is based on a modified version of Gamson and his colleagues' frame analytic model, subsequently deployed by Wolfsfeld (1997a). This model assumes that news consists of socially constructed discourses surrounding recurring issues. These discourses are, to varying degrees, structured by different sets of *media interpretive packages*, which are textually analysed in order to uncover the extent to which readily identifiable *frames*, or *symbolic* and *reasoning devices* "package" news discourses (see: Appendix 3, 2 - List of Variables Employed in Coding Analysis, Variables 11 to 14).

Frames are defined as the "central organizing principle that holds together and gives coherence and meaning to a diverse array of symbols" (Gamson et al., 1992: 384). They constitute the "internal structure", or thematic "core" of media "interpretive packages." In this sense, a news frame "deals with the gestalt, or pattern-organizing aspect of meaning... suggesting what is at issue" (Gamson, 2000: 1; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 4; Gamson and Stuart, 1992: 59). Frames can also be defined as devices that specify "what is relevant and what is not," or as the "skeletal structure" of news content, so that "although we don't actually see it, we can infer its presence in the finished product from its visible manifestations" (Ferree et al., 2002: 13-4; Gamson, 2000: 1).



Therefore, the frame concept is purposely widely defined. This permits researchers to “construct frames at various levels of abstraction to illuminate different aspects of texts” and to identify the “coherence and infrastructure” within texts (Gamson, 2001: x). The relationships that are displayed between frames and frame components within news content are also an important focus of frame analysis (Gandy, 2001: 359-60; Maher, 2001: 86-8; Reese, 2001: 14-9). These components are categorised as either *symbolic* or *reasoning* devices (Gamson and Lasch, 1983: 397-8).

Symbolic devices operate to “suggest how to think about the issue” and “suggest integration and synthesis into wholes” (Gamson and Lasch, 1983: 398; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 3). Some of the most significant symbolic devices include metaphors, exemplars, catch phrases, depictions, visual images, or icons (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 3). Metaphors are routine, integral and unavoidable dimensions of human thought processes (Lule, 2004: 180, 187). By virtue of their strong “visual concreteness” and “cultural credibility”, metaphors possess strong ideological “privileging” and “naturalizing” capacities (Van Teeffelen, 1994: 384-5). They are not, therefore, “just a matter of language, but of thought and reason” (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 208). News icons tend to be unusual, or dramatic renditions of a phenomenon that imply different and often challenging narrative possibilities for frame construction (Bennett and Lawrence, 1995: 25-6). Iconic images “represent emotionally evocative, self-explanatory, universally understood pictures... fixing the meaning of historic events, long after much else is forgotten” (Liebes and First, 2003: 59).

Exploring the framing potential of visual features is regarded as an important aspect of news analysis (Gandy, 2001: 372). Arguably visual features often possess a higher literal or metaphoric status than textual features (Dimitrova, 2001: 50, cited in: Bissell, 2002: 315; Messaris and Abraham, 2001: 215-8; Zelizer, 2002: 55). Pictorial coverage often increases the salience of issues, thereby influencing and priming readers' perceptions and mobilising public responses (Artz, 2004: 80-2; Bissell, 2002: 326; Zelizer, 2002: 49, 53, 57). In particular, visual frames "symbolically support" accompanying textual frames, thereby constituting "markers of news emphases", or "simple thematic cues", which act as prompts or lead-ins for readers (Griffin, 2004: 384, 399).

Reasoning or argumentative devices are condensed positions and idea elements that "justify what should be done about it [i.e. the issue]" (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 3). Reasoning devices "emphasise, analyse and differentiate into parts... These devices are pieces of a potential argument that one might make in justifying or arguing for a particular position on an issue... The devices that provide justifications, or reasons for a general position are roots, consequences and appeals to principle" (Gamson and Lasch, 1983: 398-9).

To summarise, therefore, the research criteria for focusing on the pre-selected categories of frames and symbolic, or reasoning devices is that these categories are assumed to possess relatively greater framing potentials than alternative categories of lexical elements, thus usefully focusing analyses on the most valuable areas of textual inquiry. Additionally, the *signature matrix* model developed by Gamson and his colleagues schematises the somewhat subjective and

intuitive dimensions of textual analysis (Gandy, 2001: 360-1). This model also ensures that findings can be reliably tested, even within single coder research, by using a test-re-test method (Tankard, 2001: 98-102).

The first stage of frame analysis involved the construction of a *signature matrix*, or schema of frame indices. This schema is regarded as a “work in progress”, or a tentative series of working frames, intended to guide the data analyses, rather than a template that the researcher seeks to fit the data to<sup>3</sup> (see: Gamson, 1992b: 215-6, 243-57).

The *signature matrix* constructed at the outset of this case study is a modified version of the frame indices constructed by Gamson’s (1992b) study of American media coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict and Wolfsfeld’s (1997a) analysis of Israeli and American media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (see: Appendix 4). These indices are useful tools for indicating the range of thematic positions and symbolic or reasoning devices likely to characterise Irish newspaper coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They are also useful for measuring the frequency of appearance and co-occurrences of different frames within sampled news content and facilitating the generation of valid qualitative textual analyses of that content over time.

Wolfsfeld’s *law and order/terrorism* frame index and *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frame index are included within this case study’s *signature matrix* as two ideal types of partisan Israeli and Palestinian positions, respectively. *Law*

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<sup>3</sup> Email correspondence received from Professor Gamson, 20 September 2004.

*and order/terrorism* frames, which strongly featured in Israeli political discourses during the “post-Oslo era” of Israeli-Palestinian relations from 2000 onwards, are typical defensive state-sponsored frames, intended to rationalise and justify Israeli occupation and military rule (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.1; see also: Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 146; Wolfsfeld, 2004: 112, 223; Wolfsfeld, Avraham and Aburaiya, 2000: 116).

*Law and order/terrorism* frames rely on anti-“terrorist” and “national security” discourses that emphasise the theme of the “highly vulnerable” existence of “liberal democratic” states, whose values and freedoms are consistently threatened by “terrorism” (Schlesinger, 1981: 84). Such official “terrorism” discourses, therefore, tend to rely on a “definitional sleight of hand in which rationality and democratic institutions mutually imply one another”, as well as an “ideological closure” through which the “orderly” polity is diametrically opposed to the “chaotic” forces of “terrorism.” These discourses, therefore, exclude any criticism of state violence, or sympathetic treatment of the historical causes, or political motivation behind militant insurgencies (Schlesinger, 1981: 77). State violence is euphemistically constructed as an isolated aberration, or a necessary “retaliation” for “exceptional threats to the social order” (Elliott, Murdock and Schlesinger, 1983: 61, 86-7). Moreover, the “legitimacy” of state violence and the lack of moral equivalence between state and insurgent violence is emphasised (Elliott, Murdock and Schlesinger, 1983: 15-6; Miller, 1994: 7).

Within *law and order/terrorism* frames linguistic apologetics are often deployed to promote constructions of civilian deaths as “unintended victims” and

“regrettable consequences of war” (Nacos, 2002: 18-9). *Law and order/terrorism* frames, or “our war” frames may also excise, demonise, equalise and/or exaggerate the military threat of the “other” and de-contextualize the conflict’s causes and outcomes (Liebes, 1992a: 47-54; Liebes, 1997: 70-8). Within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, *law and order/terrorism* frames, or “our war” frames are expected to construct Palestinian violence as a “continuum of powerful Arab terrorism against tiny peace-loving Israel” (Clark and Collins, 1993: 195; see also: Blum-Kulka and Liebes, 1993: 38).

In addition to these somewhat defensive and state-derived *law and order/terrorism* frames, another distinctive set of “pro”-Israeli frames which construct Jewish rights in more positive and affirmative ways is included within this case study’s *signature matrix*. This frame index is labelled the *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frame index and it is assumed to be culturally available within Irish public domains (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.2).

*Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames are typical “challenger” frames adopted by weaker protagonists engaged in popular insurgencies against established state powers (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.3; see also: Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 141; Wolfsfeld, Avraham and Aburaiya, 2000: 116). These frames featured strongly within Palestinian discourses from the second half of 2000 onwards. These frames primarily argue the case for ending Israeli occupation by relying on Palestinian “injustice” and “liberation” claims. Therefore, these frames share important semantic features with “underdog” and “David-Goliath” frames, often inscribed within foreign news coverage of Israel and the Palestinian territories (Liebes, 1992a:

48-50; Liebes and First, 2003: 62-5). *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames also amplify the historical and contextual background to the conflict, as the “culmination of years of frustration under the occupation... [and] as the continuation of centuries of violent struggle between Arabs and Jews” (Liebes, 1992a: 53).

Three other frame indices identified by Gamson are also likely to be relevant for this case study here, albeit in modified ways (Gamson, 1992b). Gamson’s *dual liberation* frame index explicitly acknowledges the claims and rights of “both sides”, diverging sharply from the partisan advocacy of the rights of “our side” displayed by Israeli and Palestinian “injustice” frames (Gamson, 1992b: 253). However, in recognition of the differences in political context between this case study and that undertaken by Gamson, modifications are required to Gamson’s *dual liberation* frame index. Hence, this frame index is labelled within this study’s *signature matrix* as the *reconciliation/dual rights* frame index (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.4).

The most prevalent frame indices identified by Gamson’s analysis are the explicitly non-partisan *feuding neighbours* and *strategic interests* frame indices. The *feuding neighbours* frame index constructs the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a “plague on both your houses” and an irrational “blood feud”, which renders the moral claims of protagonists irrelevant (Gamson, 1992b: 54-6, 243-4). During this case study’s period of analysis, given the historically unprecedented rises in the intensity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the huge deteriorations in Israeli-Palestinian relations that resulted, such “feud” frames are likely to have been supplanted by “war” frames. The construction of this “war” in “tribal” terms, as

opposed to “neighbourly” terms, is also expected (Chomsky. 2003: xi). This frame index is, therefore, labelled within this case study’s *signature matrix* as the *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frame index (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.5). Its central argument is that all conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is “senseless” and “futile.” It also stresses the theme of the plight of innocents. Thus, *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames resemble Ettema’s “hope abridged” themes, in that they are “deeply hostile” towards the partisan perspectives of all protagonists and are based on oppositional critiques of the hypocrisy, fanaticism and naivety of war (Ettema, 1994: 11-4).

The *strategic interests* frame index, which was identified by Gamson within analyses of American foreign policy discourses, is unlikely to be as prominent within the Irish public sphere. Instead, given the surrounding political context and key dimensions of Ireland’s international position and foreign policy orientations, the frame index labelled *regional stability/international security* may be expected to be more empirically representative (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.6).

Each of the above-outlined frame indices constituted the “working frames” that guided this case study’s frame analysis. The findings of this frame analysis are presented in chapter 7. This frame analysis consisted of different stages and levels of textual readings. Firstly, this analysis involved identification and codification of the presence of frame(s) and symbolic or framing device(s). Secondly, inductive analyses were undertaken which aimed to uncover the “deep” operation of frame(s) and symbolic or framing device(s) (Gerhards, 1995: 236-7; Lee, 2002: 347-8; Lee et al., 2001: 352).

This form of newspaper frame analysis is also complemented by a further stage of qualitative research that involved semi-structured interviews with key media, political/diplomatic and NGO actors. The following section outlines how these interviews were conducted and integrated within the overall research.

#### **4. Interview Design, Guidelines and Procedures**

##### **(i) The Design and Implementation of the Interview Process**

The interviews undertaken by this case study were confined to a number of key informants who have considerable experience of, or familiarity with, issues relating to Irish media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The interviews were designed and implemented within a qualitative methodological framework (Jankowski and Wester, 1991: 59). Notwithstanding this interpretive orientation, criteria of consistency and theoretical validity were also central to the design and implementation of the interview process (Mason, 2002: xii, 5, 32, 37-41, 187-8). The validity of the interviews was ensured by guaranteeing that they were conducted credibly and authentically (Arksey and Knight, 1999: 52-4; McCracken, 1988: 49-50). It was also ensured that the interviews were “appropriate to the research questions, [and]... also thorough, careful, honest and accurate” (Mason, 2002: 188).

In total, twenty interviews were completed during the period of June to October 2004 and during June 2005 and January 2006 (see: Appendix 7). The



primary aims of these interviews were to access, uncover and interpret the “insider” knowledge, professional language and cultural categories, deployed by relevant actors who work within media, political/diplomatic or NGO domains (Arksey and Knight, 1999: 7, 14-5, 18; Blaikie, 2000: 115; Hertog and McLeod, 2001: 149-50, 154-5; McCracken, 1988: 7, 21-2). Furthermore, a representative number of individuals were invited to participate in the interview process in order to prevent the research data being biased by over-representing the perspective of any particular group of participants.

The first stage of interviews focused on interviewing a number of newspaper correspondents and columnists in Dublin and Israel. This stage was completed during June and July 2004. The second collection of interviews was also undertaken in Dublin and Israel and it involved the interviewing of a number of political and diplomatic actors. It was completed during July and August 2004. The third stage of interviews, undertaken from August to October 2004, involved the interviewing of an additional number of political, diplomatic and NGO actors in Dublin. The fourth stage of interviews was completed in June 2005 and it focused on accessing academic, editorial and additional NGO insights. In January 2006 one interview was undertaken in Jerusalem with Michael Jansen, a Middle East stringer correspondent for *The Irish Times*, whom it was not possible to meet during the researcher’s previous trip to Israel and the Palestinian territories in July 2004.

The interview participation rate achieved by this research was considered adequate for ensuring that a diverse range of perspectives would be accessed and that the anonymity of the seven participants who requested it would be protected

(see: Appendix 7). Each interview was conducted on a face-to-face basis and averaged between one and one-and-a-half-hours in length. The shortest interview was approximately one half-hour. The interviews also assumed a semi-structured format and different interview schedules were prepared for a number of categories of interview participants (see: Appendix 6):

1. Foreign and Middle East Correspondents
2. Newspaper Columnists and Opinion Writers
3. Editorial Staff
4. Irish Human Rights organisations and Israeli and Palestinian Support Groups
5. Political and Diplomatic Actors

However, these interview schedules were not rigidly adhered to in ways that would disrupt or interfere with the interview. Instead, the interview participant's attention was directed towards the issues and themes addressed by these questions in open-ended, flexible and contextually relevant ways (Mason, 2002: 7, 24, 63-4). The interviews' semi-structured format guaranteed the creation of a medium within which informants were facilitated in expressing their views on several dimensions of Irish media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, while also retaining a relatively standardised mode of inquiry throughout the interview (Arksey and Knight, 1999: 7, 96-8; McCracken, 1988: 22-5, 34-40).

The role of the interviewer within the interviews' "conversations" or "dialogues" was minimised and communication tended to be "one-sided", with the interviewer posing questions of the participant. While this role was effective as a means of gathering information and uncovering different perspectives and

meanings, its formality partially inhibited the “naturalistic” setting of the interview. However, this limitation did not appreciably disrupt the quality of the interview.

The interview design also adhered to guidelines regarding research ethics and interviewer-interview participant rapport. These guidelines positively affected the validity and credibility of the research’s findings (Arksey and Knight, 1999: 49-52, 102-3, 125; McCracken, 1988: 27, 69). Each participant was informed prior to the interview about the purpose of the interview and its relationship to the objectives of the research. Participants were guaranteed in writing prior to the interview that their participation in this research would remain entirely confidential, if requested. Participants were also given the opportunity to request that the interview not be recorded and were informed that they were under no compulsion or pressure to answer any question. Six interview participants requested that the interview not be recorded (see: Appendix 7). This necessitated the use of other methods of data transcription, which are outlined in the following section.

## **(ii) Recording Interview Data**

It was suggested to all interview participants that electronic recording was the preferred method. Electronic recording ensures that the interview data can be transcribed verbatim, thereby reducing the degree of re-interpretation involved. However, when given the choice of having the interview recorded or unrecorded, six participants requested that the interview be unrecorded. Therefore, during unrecorded interviews note taking was relied upon as the sole means of recording

participants' statements. In contrast, note taking was only used as a back-up record of the interview during electronically recorded interviews.

Every effort was made to accurately transcribe and recall the contents of interviews that were not electronically recorded. However, given the impossibility of recording every word verbatim, most attention was devoted to accurately recording participants' use of key words, phrases and statements (Arksey and Knight, 1999: 105). The writing-up of the interview record was also done as soon as possible after the interview's completion. Nonetheless, manual methods of recording interview data do pose some research limitations, particularly in relation to guaranteeing optimum levels of data accuracy and completeness (McCracken, 1988: 41-3).

### **(iii) Thematically Categorising and Analysing Interview Data**

In line with the research topic and social constructivist perspective of this thesis, the interview questions centred on exploring the extent and ways in which a range of news, media, politico-cultural and other contextual factors influenced Irish national newspaper coverage of the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

A relatively large textual corpus was generated from the interviews. The interview transcripts were recorded in separate word-processing files. Several readings and a process of familiarisation with the content of these files were then

undertaken. All the interview data was read and de-constructed into its most theoretically significant themes. This meant that the data was categorised under separate thematic headings and then re-constructed as different sets of research findings that are presented and discussed within different, relevant parts of this thesis. The following section outlines the methodological criteria underpinning the decision to base this case study on four pre-selected Irish newspapers.

## **5. Criteria Governing Newspaper Selection**

The first news sampling decision upon which this case study was based was the decision to focus on Irish media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. Firstly, this decision was taken because there is a dearth of research in this area. Secondly, it is assumed that Irish media presentations and frames of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are likely to be influenced by a range of news, media and politico-cultural contexts that might emerge as relatively unique. Within this framework, the primary theoretical assumption is that key features of Irish political history, structures and culture, as well as “national peculiarities in the media scene”, influence Irish newspaper cultures and reporting trends (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 8-9, 12, 47, 65; Kocher, 1987: 362-4, 366-8, 382).

In terms of the wider political context within which the Irish press operates, it is significant that Ireland’s political system is based on stable democratic institutions and liberal-democratic governance norms (Lee, 1989: 540). This, in

turn, has facilitated the development of a “vigorous and variegated free press and broadcasting services of high journalistic, as well as technical standards” (Collins, 1999: 79). Furthermore, each sampled newspaper’s editorial lines tend to converge along “liberal”, “mainstream” and centrist angles (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 210; Kiberd, 1997a).

Professor John Horgan,<sup>4</sup> Professor of Journalism at the School of Communications, Dublin City University, argued that Irish national newspapers diverged from other European-based newspapers because “with the exception of the *Irish Press*, we haven’t really had a party press of the kind that they had very much in Europe” (Interview with Author, 3 June 2005). This tendency of the Irish press not to adopt explicit party-partisan positions (Kelly and Truetzschler, 1997: 112, 115) is generally reflective of Anglo-American newspapers’ adoption of “more fluid” ideologies from the late nineteenth century onwards (Lloyd, 2004: 83).

A “journalistic tradition of political neutrality” also characterises the Irish media scene. This is largely because Irish political culture is more “consensual” than polarized, in accordance with the models of “moderate pluralism” and stable “majoritarian” democracy (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 240-3). Historically, this journalistic tradition is itself a product of the transference of the British “liberal” model of political and media institutions to Ireland during colonial rule. The characteristics of this model include the predominance of the commercial press within media markets, relatively greater journalistic professionalism, as well as the

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<sup>4</sup> Professor Horgan is a former journalist with the *Evening Press*, *Catholic Herald* and *The Irish Times*. He is a former editor of the *Education Times*. He has also been involved in Irish politics and is a former member of Dail Eireann (TD). He has written a number of historical biographies and other academic works.

integration of “fact-centered” reporting and the objectivity norm as key newspaper practices (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 75, 198-9, 202-7, 246).

However, the development of a “neutral” and fully-fledged commercial press occurred later in Ireland than in other North Atlantic countries. This feature was a consequence of Ireland’s colonial past, its relatively greater economic dependency and its lack of domestic investment capital (Foley, 2004: 375, 379; Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 209-10, 230). Specifically, Ireland’s historical experiences of colonial rule and its struggle for political independence, which resulted in primacy being accorded to nationalism as the official culture of the Irish state throughout much of the twentieth century, set the history of its media somewhat apart (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 230). In fact, the Irish press displayed relatively greater degrees of political engagement and agitation from the eighteenth century to the early twentieth century, as it was centrally involved in the political competition between Irish nationalist and unionist ideologies, as well as the popularisation of the Irish nationalist movement (Brady, 2005: 239-40; Foley, 2004: 374). Moreover, after the Irish state’s foundation in 1923, the Irish press played a crucial role in forging a national political consciousness upon which the legitimacy of this state depended (Foley, 2004: 376-8, 383-4).

However, notwithstanding these nuanced differences, during the latter half of the twentieth century, Irish media converged more towards the ideal-typical liberal model of media systems (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 251-3). Firstly, the partisan orientation of the Irish press has waned considerably (Foley, 2004: 383). Secondly, although retaining some elements of its “tradition of political

engagement” the modus operandi of the Irish press has adopted more of the attributes of the so-called “professional” Anglo-American model of journalism (Foley, 2004: 374-5, 379-83). However, although “standards” of journalism tended to be high across newspapers, there are relatively less resources devoted in Ireland to professionalising careers in journalism. Particularly, in comparison with the United States and European member states, there is a serious deficit in the provision of specialised journalism degree courses or advanced training by Irish universities (Brady, 2005: 240, 243, 250-2).

Irish media occupy a relatively unique position in relation to other English language media worldwide. Specifically, the Irish print media market is best characterised as a small, yet extremely competitive market (Horgan, 2001: 167). This economic context exerts “severe financial pressures” on Irish newspapers generally, especially since the “problems posed by a domestic near-monopoly are compounded by the openness of the local economy to a flood of imported products” (Kiberd, 1997a: 34, 40). These pressures have, in turn, reduced the number of domestic media players and increased newspaper reliance on advertising revenues (Rapple, 1997: 70). In recent years, media globalisation trends have impacted even more directly on the Irish media market, especially in relation to trends in media diversity, ownership, conglomeration and competition (Viewpoint expressed by Michael Foley, a lecturer in the Department of Journalism and Communications (Dublin Institute of Technology) and a former journalist with *The Irish Times*, Interview with Author, 15 June 2005; see also: Ferriter, 2004: 740-1; Holt, 2003; Horgan, 2001: 3, 159, 188).



Professor John Horgan argued that because Ireland shares “an information ecology with Britain... I can’t think of another country, with the possible exception of Luxemburg, where so much of the media that is consumed is editorially generated outside the borders of the state” (Interview with Author, 3 June 2005). Particularly, the penetration of British newspapers into the Irish market poses the biggest challenge for Irish-owned newspaper titles:

Economies of scale issues contribute to the problems in Ireland. The production cost is not determined by the size of circulation or size of audience, but the revenue from circulation and viewing figures clearly is. If a significant portion of the market is ‘lost’ to non-Irish newspapers and television stations, the resources to compete with newspapers and television services from larger neighbouring countries with greater resources will diminish and the Irish media may experience a spiral of decline. If such an event were to happen the losers would not only be the media in Ireland. Irish political life would also suffer (Feeney, 2003: 87).

Irish television networks are also highly dependent on internationally generated programme material (Lee, 1989: 666-7; Lee, 1997: 11-2), while all the major British television channels, as well as other international channels, are available to about seventy-five percent of Irish households (Corcoran, 2004: 93).

The national radio service, which was founded in the 1920s and the national television service, which was launched in December 1961, were modelled on the BBC (Savage, 1996: 4-5). Ireland’s radio and television stations are subject to “light touch” state regulation (Corcoran, 2004: 3, 216). Moreover, RTE has often displayed a “conservative legal instinct in the face of public controversy” and there have been some well-documented instances of state interference in the editorial decisions of RTE. However, these instances cannot be regarded as representative of

the relationship between the Irish state and RTE (Corcoran, 2004: 57-60, 65-71, 90-1). Instead:

Given that Government can set limits to RTE's income it is inevitable that there will sometimes be reluctance within some parts of RTE to allowing its output to offend politicians, though this reluctance has radically diminished over the last decade... But, more usually, the conservative disposition that some of its critics see in RTE can be traced to a sense of professional responsibility that induces caution, especially in the area of political communication (Corcoran, 2004: 91).

RTE has never been in a position to provide radio or television services that are comparable, in terms of resources and capacities, to those provided by the substantially better resourced BBC (Savage, 1996: 6, 209-10). In fact, since its foundation as Ireland's national public broadcaster, RTE's position within the Irish media market has moved from one where it operated within a monopoly-type environment to one where it faces intense competition from large international broadcasters, including British broadcasters and Canwest; the Canadian parent company for Ireland's corporate television station – TV3 (Corcoran, 2004: 18-9, 110-1, 206). For most of its history, RTE has also been beset by severe resource constraints and inadequate funding, reducing its outputs of indigenous programmes (Corcoran, 2004: 22, 30-1, 93, 100-8).

To summarise, thus far it is argued that the relatively unique position of Irish national print and broadcasting media within the international sphere of English language media and the historically significant roles performed by Irish “opinion leader” newspapers within national politics, ensure that an analysis of these newspapers' coverage of a foreign issue, such as the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, amounts to a valuable area of media research.

During the earliest stages of the research design adopted by this thesis, it was decided to focus on analysing printed media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Firstly, it is considerably more efficient and feasible to collate sizable samples of news coverage from newspaper sources than from television sources. Secondly, Irish newspaper readership levels tend to be relatively high (Kane, 2002). Thirdly, it must be assumed that Irish national newspapers play significant roles in shaping national foreign issue discourses, generally.

However, this thesis' focus on the role of Irish national newspapers in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004 is not an exclusive focus. Instead, it is recognised that media do not operate within a vacuum and must continually *relate to* other media, particularly television and internet-based media. This recognition, in turn, necessitates allusions to the influences that the Irish broadcast media and other contextually relevant foreign media might have on the roles adopted by the sampled Irish newspapers in covering foreign issues, including the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It was then decided to confine this case study to analyses of randomly selected samples derived from two national daily newspapers - *The Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent* – and two Sunday newspapers - the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune*. The decision to focus on these four particular newspapers was based firstly on the fact that they have played variously significant “opinion leader” roles in Irish public and political life. Secondly, the sampled newspapers are well positioned within the Irish media market. The assumption here is that these newspapers are read by other media and elites in Ireland and as such can be

considered “master framers who establish the broad contours of public understanding” (Bloch and Lehman-Wilzig, 2002: 160; see also: Lloyd, 2004: 63; Rojecki, 2002: 11). Both the daily and Sunday newspapers sampled in this case study are based within Dublin and have national circulations (see: Table 1. below).

The Euro Barometer 2002 Survey revealed that 47% of the Irish population read newspapers daily, which figure is higher than the EU average of 40%. Additionally, this survey also found that 69% of the Irish population read newspapers several times a week (European Commission, 2002a; cited in: O’Donnell, 2003). In comparison, the figure for daily television news viewing was 68%, while the figure for daily radio news listening was 63% (European Commission, 2002a; cited in: O’Donnell, 2003). Furthermore, the 2003 Joint National Readership Survey recorded “remarkable” increases in readership rates and estimated that more than 9 out of 10 adults now read newspapers in a typical week” (Joint National Readership Survey, 2003; cited in: *The Irish Times*, 10 March 2004).

It was decided to include both daily and Sunday national newspapers within this case study’s analysis. *The Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent* are expected to conform to the routines and conventions of daily news. On the other hand, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* are expected to be less constrained by the exigencies of the daily news cycle and, therefore, in a position to provide more detailed and analytic coverage (Griffin, 2004: 382). Moreover, the Sunday newspaper market in Ireland is “hotly contested” (Horgan, 2001: 162) and Sunday newspaper readership levels are relatively high.

**Table 1: Circulation and Readership Figures  
for Sampled Newspapers (2004 – 2005)**

	<b>Circulation Jan-June 2005</b>	<b>JNRS 2004/2005</b>
<i>Irish Independent</i>	164,202	580,000 (17.8%)
<i>The Irish Times</i>	117,543	335,000 (10.3%)
<i>Sunday Independent</i>	291,036	1,075,000 (33.4%)
<i>Sunday Tribune</i>	71,187	237,000 (7.4%)

Source - Readership figures: Joint National Readership Survey – Available from: <http://www.nni.ie/readfigs6.htm> (Accessed on 24 November 2005).

Source - Circulation Figures: Audit Bureau of Circulations – Available from: <http://www.nni.ie/circfigs6.htm> (Accessed on 24 November 2005).

The newspapers included in this case study have strong historical and political presences within the Irish domestic media market. *The Irish Times* was founded in 1859 to represent the unionist, Protestant and/or liberal perspectives within Irish politics (Foley, 2004: 382-3; Horgan, 2001: 1). The *Irish Independent* was founded in 1905, as the successor to the *Freeman's Journal*, founded in 1891 by Charles Stuart Parnell and controlled by the Nationalist Party, under the leadership of John Redmond during the 1890s. The paper supported the constitutional nationalist position of Cumman na nGael (later, the Fine Gael party) from the 1920s onwards.

In terms of class orientation, *The Irish Times* and the *Sunday Tribune* are more firmly located at the elite end of the populist-elite continuum, while the *Sunday Independent* and the *Irish Independent* are regarded as relatively more

populist (Horgan, 2001: 168). *The Irish Times* has been defined as the “most influential newspaper on the island” (Browne, 2005). It is distinguished from the other sampled newspapers because it is managed by a Trust and derives its authority and institutional status from the “Memorandum of Association of *The Irish Times* Trust” (see: [http://www.ireland.com/about/p\\_trust.htm](http://www.ireland.com/about/p_trust.htm) (Accessed on 4 July 2004)). *The Irish Times* has tended to regard itself as the national “newspaper of reference” (Brady, 2005: 63). Its ideological orientation has also been described as approximating “urban liberal cosmopolitanism”, as opposed to the more “conservative Catholic middle class” orientation of other Irish national press outlets, particularly the *Irish Independent* (Finnegan and McCarron, 2000: 150-1; Foley, 2004: 383).

The *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Independent* are regarded as being more market driven than *The Irish Times* (Professor John Horgan, Interview with Author, 3 June 2005). Both newspapers are owned by the Independent News Group conglomerate, which controls 70% of the domestic newspaper market. This control is often regarded as impacting negatively on Irish media diversity (Commission on the Newspaper Industry, 1996: 30). The Independent News Group also has media holdings in Australia, Britain, New Zealand, South Africa, Hong Kong and Malaysia. The *Sunday Tribune* has a substantially weaker market position than the *Sunday Independent*. In fact, the *Sunday Tribune* is cross-subsidized by Independent Newspapers who acquired a 29% stake in the paper to prevent its financial collapse (Rapple, 1997: 69-70).

Each sampled newspaper is linked to a portal site. Editions of the *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Independent* are available at the website <http://www.unison.ie> The *Sunday Tribune* also has a more limited and subscription-based website, <http://www.tribune.ie> *The Irish Times* is available on subscription from the larger <http://www.ireland.com> website. In fact, *The Irish Times*' website is one of the most widely and regularly used of Irish news and information websites (Horgan, 2001: 171; Trench and Quinn, 2003).

Generally speaking and despite other variations, international news tends to be marginally covered by each of the newspapers selected by this case study, especially in comparison with the amounts of coverage devoted by these newspapers to national and regional news. None of the sampled newspapers have employed a permanent Irish foreign correspondent in either Israel specifically, or in the Middle East, generally.

In fact, *The Irish Times* is the only Irish newspaper to have established any foreign bureaus beyond London and Brussels (Smyth, 2004: 85). During the 1980s and 1990s the expansion of *The Irish Times*' foreign bureau network to Berlin, Paris, Rome, Beijing, Moscow, Washington and Johannesburg, was part of the then more general strategy of expanding the newspaper's scope, size and circulation under the editorship of Conor Brady (Brady, 2005: 67-70, 103-4; O'Toole, 2005). This expansion of foreign news bureaus enabled the newspaper to view itself as undergoing a "process of shedding a provincial mentality inherited from colonial days" (O'Clery, 2005). It also gave *The Irish Times* the impression of having "a unique function among Irish news media as Ireland's window on the wider world"

(Brady, 2005: 68). However, this expansionary strategy was reversed in 2001-2002 as part of a cost-cutting operation in response to a severe financial crisis (Brady, 2005: 265; Smyth, 2004: 83-4).

The discourse and layout features of each of the sampled newspapers differ somewhat. The *Sunday Independent* devotes relatively little space and prominence to international news coverage, while the *Irish Independent*'s regular international news coverage tends to be relegated to either its inside or back "World News" pages. Neither newspaper has a foreign news desk per se. Rather, the policy of both newspapers is to contract well known individual writers, principally Robert Fisk, Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien and Eoghan Harris, to write opinion or commentary features on the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as using news copy from a range of British syndication news services, including the *London Times*, the *Independent*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Guardian* (Smyth, 2004: 83).

Although, the *Sunday Tribune* is distinguished from the *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Independent* because it tended to devote more space to covering foreign news, including the Middle East, during this case study's period of analysis – from July 2000 to July 2004 - it also does not have a permanent Irish correspondent resident in the region. Therefore, it relies heavily on copy derived from stringer correspondents and international agencies.

A higher news value is accorded to international issues within *The Irish Times*, signified by its allocation of two to three center pages to "World News" and its attempt to present a "balance" of news from different international regions. In



fact, Professor John Horgan argued that because *The Irish Times* is owned by a Trust and is not, therefore, required to pay shareholder dividends, this enables it to be somewhat freer of the market driven imperatives of the other sampled newspapers. Therefore, *The Irish Times* makes a substantially more “positive investment in foreign coverage” which would be regarded by the other sampled newspapers as “totally uneconomical” (Interview with Author, 3 June 2005).

During the period of this case study’s analysis, *The Irish Times* relied on copy from three Middle East stringer correspondents, two of whom are resident in Israel proper (i.e. David Horovitz who lives in Jerusalem and is editor of the *Jerusalem Report* and Peter Hirschberg who lives in Tel Aviv and is the editor of the English edition of *Haaretz*). The third stringer correspondent, Michael Jansen lives in Cyprus ordinarily and she has a reporting remit that extends throughout the Middle East. She regularly visits Israel and the Palestinian territories and is a former contributor to *Middle East International* and the *International Herald Tribune*. At the time of interview for this research she was a regular correspondent/columnist for the Bangalore-based *Deacon Herald*, the *Jordan Times* and *The Gulf Today*.

In addition to relying on the above-outlined stringer correspondents, *The Irish Times* also have access to the syndicated news services supplied by the *Financial Times*, the *Guardian*, the *Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times* (Smyth, 2004: 83). Occasionally, editorial decisions have been made to send Irish resident correspondents to Israel for specified periods. For example, decisions were made by *The Irish Times* to send Deaglan de Breadun to Israel for a number of 10-day visits during the period of this case study’s analysis and to send Nuala Haughey

to Israel and the Palestinian territories on a temporary basis from 2003 onwards. Furthermore, these news-sourcing trends appear to be related to the newspaper's more episodic strategy of "parachuting" reporters to cover specific events in "foreign trouble spots", including the Middle East, Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda and East Timor (Smyth, 2004: 83-4).

The variations in news gathering and reporting strategies between each of the sampled newspapers, combined with the above aforementioned variations in ownership structures, market orientations and readership profiles, ensure that this case study will generate an interesting cross-comparative analysis of Irish newspaper discourses on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Furthermore, as already illustrated in this section, *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* constitute significant sources of Irish national foreign news coverage. This, in turn, indicates that these newspapers make significant contributions to political and public opinion formation in relation to the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The following section outlines how this case study's combined descriptive analysis and frame analysis adopt a longitudinal focus. Firstly, the sampling interval upon which this case study is based - the time-period of July 2000 to July 2004 - is concluded to be adequately representative and sufficiently wide. Secondly, the sampling procedures adopted by this case study – randomly stratified sampling procedures - are also designed to ensure that its findings are representative and replicable.

## 6. Constructing a Sampling Interval - The Scope of Data Analysis

The even four-year period from July 2000 to July 2004 is selected as the period within which to locate this case-study analysis of Irish newspaper coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As will be discussed in chapter 5, this constitutes an empirically appropriate and theoretically interesting period of analysis for this case study, as significant political developments occurred within the arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during this time.

It is especially significant that in July 2000 the “collapse” of the Camp David Summit ended the seven year-old Oslo “peace process” and that in late September 2000 the second Palestinian *intifada* began and continued up until the end of this case study’s period of analysis. This period, therefore, constituted a new and different era of Israeli-Palestinian relations, which witnessed relatively higher and more intense escalations of political violence, as well as repeated failures to institute a ceasefire or diplomatic settlement.

Same day editions of *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* were sampled in randomly stratified ways. A two-week sample of each newspaper’s coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was constructed for each year of this four-year time interval from July 2000 to July 2004 (see: Appendix 2). This sampling procedure was applied in order to generate representative samples of news coverage (see: Deacon et al., 1999: 47).

Constructed week sampling of daily newspapers involves the random selection of newspaper editions for each day of the week, thereby avoiding over-representation of daily or seasonal variations (Cottle et al., 1998: 103-4). It follows that this method has a higher capacity to efficiently represent annual coverage trends, particularly when compared to consecutive day sampling methods. In fact, daily stratified forms of sampling which generated two constructed weeks of samples have been found to adequately represent and reliably generate inferences regarding annual news coverage trends (Riffe, Aust and Lacy, 1993: 139). Additionally, samples selected from each month of the year, amounting to a total of twelve newspaper editions, are concluded to be representative of annual news coverage of weekly newspapers (Lacy, Robinson and Riffe, 1995: 344). This sample size was found to be as reliable as constructed weeks based on eighteen, twenty-four or forty-eight days of annual newspaper coverage (Stempel, 1952: 333).

Forty-nine editions of each sampled newspaper were selected for inclusion within the total sample. The total sample size consisted of 256 newspaper items, sampled from a total of 196 newspaper editions. The newspaper sections included in the analysis were front page and “world”/“international” news pages, in addition to commentary, opinion and editorial pages. Each news article was included in the sample as an individual item and this item was, therefore, treated as the unit of analysis. The “Letters to the Editor” and “National News” sections were excluded from the sample.

This sampling procedure was chosen as an alternative to the selective and purposive forms of sampling relied upon by Gamson and other researchers. As is

emphasised by Gamson, longitudinal sampling may be more appropriate for analysing the ways that “media discourse on each issue is a continuing story that develops over time” (Gamson, 1992b: 25-6; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 10-2). Gamson and his colleagues’ method of confining frame analysis to pre-selected “critical moments” of news coverage that “stimulate commentary in various public forums” (Gamson, 1992b: 25), tends to over-represent controversial coverage and under-represent “slow” and routine coverage. This dual sampling bias, therefore, “means that some of the differences that one observes over time” are likely to be a “reflection of different types of critical discourse moments”, rather than media coverage trends per se (Gamson, 1992b: 259).

However, in contrast to purposive sampling, random sampling does suffer somewhat from the limitation that it may “miss” key media events and critical moments of reporting that do not fall within the sampled cohort of randomly selected newspaper editions (Adoni, Cohen and Nossek, 1993: 137). Notwithstanding this limitation and as already elaborated in the above discussion, longitudinal and randomly stratified sampling does have advantages over purposive sampling in terms of generating a newspaper sample size that is appropriate and adequate for this case study’s objectives.

## 7. Conclusions

This chapter discussed the main features of the research design and methodological framework guiding this case study's fieldwork and analyses. It was outlined that the first stage of this case study's research consisted of literature-based contextual analyses of key dimensions of the historical background and political context defining the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations. The findings of these analyses are presented in chapter 3, chapter 4 and chapter 5.

The second stage of analysis involved more direct empirical fieldwork, in the form of semi-quantitative and descriptive analysis of randomly sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune*, during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. The primary research objective of this descriptive analysis was to generate an overall picture of trends occurring in the manifest, structural and presentational features of the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This stage of analysis was, therefore, based upon as extensive and representative a cohort of newspaper samples as was feasible to analyse. Its findings are presented in chapter 6.

This chapter also discussed in detail the methodological criteria guiding this case study's third stage of analysis – the qualitative analysis of sampled newspaper frames. It was concluded that Gamson and his colleagues' social constructivist and

discourse-analytic model of frame research (Gamson, 1992b; Gamson and Lasch, 1983), subsequently deployed by Wolfsfeld (1997a), supplies the required conceptual framework and *signature matrix* of frame indices for this analysis (see: Appendix 4). Chapter 7 discusses the key findings of this case study's frame analysis.

Considerable attention was also devoted in this chapter to outlining key features of each sampled newspaper, as well as the wider national context within which those newspapers operate. The newspapers selected for this case study's analysis include *both* daily and Sunday national "opinion leaders", thereby generating an interesting cross-comparative set of research findings. Furthermore, the sampled newspapers are also concluded to adequately represent the range of media discourse surrounding the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the Irish public and political domains.

The fourth stage of analysis consisted of a series of qualitative interviews with key media, political/diplomatic and NGO personnel. These interviews were undertaken to uncover the range of perspectives that are relevant for understanding the impacts exerted by the wider politico-cultural and media contexts on Irish newspaper coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The data retrieved during these interviews is, therefore, integrated into the analyses presented in chapter 4, chapter 5 and chapter 6.

The following chapter focuses on the historical background to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Chapter 4 charts the historical background to Irish-Israeli and

Irish-Palestinian relations. Chapter 5 then provides a contextual analysis of the key developments and events that defined the arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during this case study's period of analysis - July 2000 to July 2004. Thus, chapter 3, chapter 4 and chapter 5 taken collectively, provide the historical and contextual background that is essential for appreciating the theoretical implications of the newspaper data analyses presented in chapter 6 and chapter 7.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT - HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **1. Introduction**

This chapter outlines some of the key developments and events that define the historical background to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, focusing in particular on the most contested and recent historical developments. This outline's starting point is the first Arab-Israeli War from 1947 to 1949, as some of the most contentious debates surrounding the historical causes of the conflict, including the origins of the Palestinian refugee crisis, refer directly to this war (Said, 2000e: 30). Other contentious issues arise from the Arab-Israeli War in June 1967, the resultant Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the annexation of Jerusalem. The Palestinian *intifada*, which began in December 1987 and continued until mid-1993 and the Madrid-Oslo "peace process" (October 1991 to July 2000), are then discussed because these historical developments had significant implications for more contemporary international political and media constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

As will be outlined in Chapter 5, the end of the Oslo "peace process", indicated by the collapse of the Camp David Summit in July 2000 and the emergence and continuation of Israeli and Palestinian violence from late September 2000 onwards, was a significant turning point in the conflict's history, as well as a

dramatic international media event. For these reasons, July 2000 is chosen as the starting point for the newspaper analysis undertaken by this case study. Similarly, the four-year time period from July 2000 to July 2004 is chosen for analysis because it constituted a significant and distinctive phase of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This chapter illustrates the ways in which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been manifested historically as a complex, multidimensional and relatively intractable or intense conflict. For instance, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has formed part of wider Arab-Israeli wars and belligerencies, while also simultaneously constituted as an inherently political struggle between Israel and the Palestinians for control over the land and resources of historic Palestine. The conflict has also been interpreted as part of a longer historic struggle between the Zionist National Movement embodied in the Israeli state and the Palestinian National Movement embodied in the PLO (Honig-Parnass, 1994: 24; Knox and Quirk, 2000: 86-91). More contemporaneously, the conflict has been viewed as a national struggle for independence on the part of the Palestinians and/or a religiously motivated conflict.

Moreover, as is detailed in this chapter, many of the contemporary ideological dimensions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are traceable to an historic evolution in Israeli-Palestinian political relations. In the late 1940s the political rights of Palestinian people were hardly recognised. During this period the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was largely constructed as merely a “core” of a wider Arab-Israeli confrontation (Shlaim, 1994a: 25). Thereafter, however, Israeli-Palestinian relations underwent several stages of political development to reach the

contemporary situation, where “the question of Palestinian national rights is viewed universally as the core issue in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the PLO is recognised as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people” (Butenschon, 1998: 25).

This chapter’s historical summary, beginning in the late 1940s, is necessarily selective. It does not aim to provide a definitive overview of each historical stage of the conflict, which is beyond the scope and remit of this thesis. Instead, this chapter adopts a thematic focus, which aims to facilitate an understanding of how competing historical narratives might feature within contemporary media contests between Israeli and Palestinian national “truths” (Boulding, 2000 (orig. 1959): 47-8). This chapter also serves as a useful introduction to the analysis presented in chapter 5 of the political context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004. The following section begins this chapter’s historical analysis by summarising the key features and consequences of the Arab-Israeli War of 1947-1949.

## **2. The Arab-Israeli War of 1947-1949 - Historical Contests between Narratives of “Israeli Independence” and Narratives of the Palestinian *Nakba*, or “Catastrophe”**

The Arab-Israeli War of 1947-1949 has been interpreted as having its origins in a wider national or inter-communal conflict between the Palestinian and Jewish communities of historic Palestine, which emerged during the period of British colonial rule: namely, post World-War I to 1947. In February 1947, having

“reached the conclusion that the only course open to us is to submit the problem to the judgment of the United Nations”, Britain declared its intention to relinquish control over Palestine (Bregman and El-Tahri, 1998: 21). On 29 November 1947 the UNGA voted by a two-third majority in favour of the partitioning of Palestine into an independent Arab and Jewish state and the establishment of a “Special International Regime for the city of Jerusalem” (UNGAR 181, cited in: Shehadeh, 1997: 175). The Arab League rejected the proposal because it allocated fifty percent of Palestine to the Jewish one-third of the population. The United States, France and Russia strongly supported the plan, whereas Britain abstained from voting.

The first dimension of the war, beginning in late 1947 and almost immediately erupting into a “full-scale civil war”, involved a struggle between the Palestinian and Jewish communities for land within Israel following the British withdrawal (Masalha, 2003: 26). However, on 14 May 1948 Ben Gurion’s declaration of the creation of the state of Israel precipitated the first war between Israel and the surrounding Arab states – Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt - resulting in a resounding Israeli victory.

From the Israeli perspective the war was fought for Jewish “independence” and “liberation”, but for Palestinians it was a “war of conquest” and symbolised the beginning of their *Nakba* or “catastrophe” (Chomsky, 2003: 47). The official end of the war was enacted by separate armistice agreements between Israel and each of the Arab states in 1949. These agreements provided for Jordan’s annexation of parts of the West Bank and the old quarter of Jerusalem City (Bregman and El-Tahri, 1998: 42-3; La Guardia, 2001: 119). Gaza fell for the most part under the

jurisdiction of Egypt. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the Arab states refused to recognise the existence or legitimacy of the Israeli state and an Arab League boycott was imposed, prohibiting all trade with the nascent state.

During the war Israeli forces decimated approximately 385 Palestinian villages and over half of the Palestinian population fled in fear, or were driven from their homes (Gee, 1998: 56; La Guardia, 2001: 186; Reinhart, 2002: 7). The causes and extent of the Palestinian refugee problem produced by this war are still highly contested. Some historians argue that Palestinian population displacements were the direct result of Zionist “transfer” plans, thereby amounting to an enormous forced population transfer, expulsion, or “ethnic cleansing” of the indigenous Palestinian population (Finkelstein, 1995: 61-4; La Guardia, 2001: 186; Masalha, 2003: 27-8, 75, 259; Reinhart, 2002: 7).

However, other historians argue that the displacement of Palestinian people from their homes resulted from the expediencies and contingencies of war, rather than pre-meditated political plans. Between 600,000 and 760,000 Palestinians became refugees because of the military hostilities from November 1947 to September 1949 (Morris, 1987: 3, 298). Following Israel’s refusal to permit the refugees’ return, as called for by UNSCR 194, which was issued on 11 December 1948, they mostly sought asylum in the surrounding Arab states (Reinhart, 2002: 7, 52).

Thereafter, Palestinians constructed their refugee crisis as the “original sin” of the Israeli state’s foundation (Bishara, 2002: 95; La Guardia, 2001: 189; Pappé,

1999: 58). UNSCR 194 was also interpreted as constituting an absolute right to return. Presently, Palestinian refugees and their descendents are estimated to number between 3.5 million and 4 million people (Bishara, 2002: 23; Masalha, 2003: 255). The majority of the remaining Palestinian refugees live in the surrounding Arab states, principally Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. A total of some 1.2 million Palestinians still live in one of the sixty refugee camps in the region (Bishara, 2002: 95). Arab states, other than Jordan, have to date refused to grant any citizenship or regularized status to Palestinians living within their borders.

The Palestinian community who remained within the borders of the Israeli state after the war originally numbered approximately 160,000. This community presently constitutes approximately twenty percent of the Israeli population. However, they occupy a “second-class citizen”, “double-periphery”, or “trapped minority” position within Israel, especially because they suffer discrimination in terms of access to education, housing, employment and social services (Al-Haj, 1993: 73; Bishara, 2002: 21-2, 52-7; Ghanem, 1998; Hirschberg, 2004; McDowall, 1998; Rabinowitz, 2001: 64-5, 68, 72-4, 78).

Palestinian historical narratives centrally revolve around a construction of Israel and the Palestinian territories as the Palestinian “homeland” (Said, 2000f). These narratives are themselves often based on a discourse of unjust dispossession and displacement (Sayigh, 1998: 4-5), which emphasise that before the 1947-1949 War ninety-three percent of mandatory Palestine was Palestinian owned land and that during the war’s aftermath Israel “expropriated” those lands (Gee, 1998: 82-3; La Guardia, 2001: 186).

Jewish immigration to Israel increased in the aftermath of the 1947-1949 War, to the extent that by 1967 Israel had absorbed 1.5 million additional Jewish immigrants to a population that numbered just 600,000 in 1948 (Gee, 1998: 62). By 1951 alone Jewish immigration to Israel led to a doubling of the 1949 Israeli population. Immigrants included almost one third of Romanian Jews and substantial proportions of the Bulgarian and Polish Jewish populations. In particular, Sephardim began immigrating to Israel in increasing numbers from 1949 onwards, including almost the entire Jewish populations of Libya, Yemen and Iraq, as well as displaced Jews from the remaining Arab states (Segev, 1993: 121-2, 185-6; Shipler, 2002: 220).

Within Palestinian historical narratives exclusive immigration rights for Jewish people is constructed as a major “injustice”, amounting to Palestinians paying the price for the atrocities committed against the Jews within Europe (Ezzi, 1999: 44). The Israeli state has also been criticised for its “ethnic exclusivity” (Bishara, 2002: 56-7, 163; Chomsky, 2003: 101-2, 106-7; Knox and Quirk, 2000: 91-2; Yiftachel, 1998). Moreover, in opposition to official Israeli constructions of Zionism as a “benign ideology whose principal aim is to provide a haven from suffering for Jews”, Palestinian historical narratives construct it as an “elitist philosophy that is by definition racially and theologically exclusivist and has proved in practice to be aggressively expansionist” (Christison, 2001: 31, 123).

The official Israeli historical interpretation of the Arab-Israeli War of 1947-1949 argues that Palestinian refugees are the responsibility of those countries that precipitated the war (Finkelstein, 1995: 81). Official Israeli discourses deny moral

and political responsibility for the refugee problem (Shlaim, 2002: 2). Instead, these discourses emphasise the refugee population's destabilising potentials for Israel's ethno-demographic composition and the "Jewish character" of the Israeli state. Moreover, Israel has "always emphasized their [Palestinian Refugees] resettlement and rehabilitation in the Arab states" as a solution to the crisis, rather than repatriation and/or compensation (Masalha, 2003: 120; Sayigh, 1998: 6).

After 1948 Jewish immigration was constructed by official Israeli discourses as an "ingathering of exiles" within the original biblical "homeland." These discourses are founded upon and embody the Zionist myth that the land of Palestine belongs exclusively to the Jewish people (Knox and Quirk, 2000: 88). They also rely on the theme of an "unproblematic historical linearity of 'forced exile' and subsequent 'return' nearly 2,000 years later" (Yiftachel, 1998: 2; see also: Pappe, 2004). Moreover, the Zionist myth is clearly premised on the "excluded presence" and "non-place" of the Palestinian people (Said, 2000b: 138), so that "whenever we try to narrate ourselves, we appear as dislocations in their [Israeli] discourse" (Said, 1999: 140).

The political party structure and political culture of the Israeli state are also evidently related to events associated with World War II and the 1947-1949 War. The two main political parties, the Likud and Labour, despite their ideological differences, have been historically committed to implementing the Zionist political project of Jewish expansion throughout historic Palestine (Isaac and Rizik, 2002: 6). Both parties reject plans to establish a fully independent Palestinian state or a bi-national state. Both parties also support retention of the West Bank settlements and



Jerusalem as the capital of Israel (Raz-Krakotzkin, 1998: 61-2, 65-6). The Labour party is associated with left-wing Zionism and mostly views the Palestinian territories in “strategic” and politically “pragmatic” terms (Butenschon, 1998: 33-4). It tends to be more amenable towards “partition” and “land for peace” compromises (Savir, 1998: 160-1; Shlaim, 1994b: 7-8, 18-9). The Likud, however, represents “right-wing revisionist Zionism” and is strongly associated with religiously motivated or “frontier” nationalism which views the biblical lands of Palestine mostly in “symbolic” terms (Butenschon, 1998: 33-4). The Likud, therefore, has been and remains the strongest political advocate of “territorial expansionism” and complete Jewish control of *Eretz* Israel (Savir, 1998: 160-1; Shlaim, 1994b: 7-8, 18-9). Because of these ideological positions, the “dove” label is mostly applied to the Labour party, while the “hawk” label is mostly reserved for the Likud (Levinsohn and Katz, 1993: 59-60).

The resonance of Zionist nationalism within Israel, Europe and the United States relied strongly on constructions of the worldwide threat of “genocide”, anti-Semitism and “dejudaicization” (Beilin, 1999: 218-20; Levinas, 1995: 196-7; Said, 2000a: 194). Moreover, because of European states’ collective failure to protect Jewish victims of the Nazi-orchestrated Holocaust, the Zionist cause, especially its goal of establishing a Jewish state in Palestine as the only means of securing the survival of the Jewish people, gained greater acceptance (Segev, 2001: 491). Within this context, therefore, the “most striking institutional legacy of the Shoah is Israel itself” (Lee, 2000: 143). It was also within this context that criticisms of the displacement of Palestinian refugees and the religious exclusivity of the Jewish state were rendered irrelevant, or eclipsed (Shlaim, 2000: 23-4).

Particularly, from the late 1970s, stronger public associations between Israeli identity and the Holocaust were forged (Lentin, 2000: 145-6). References to the Holocaust were frequently “instrumentalized” to justify Israeli occupation and increased Jewish immigration (Cohen et al., 2002: 31-6, 54-6, 132). Moreover, the ongoing “authority of collective memories” of the Holocaust within public cultures in Europe and the United States (Shandler, 1999; Zelizer, 1998), particularly the perception of Israel as a vulnerable and struggling democracy and as an “answer to Western anti-Semitism”, frequently renders criticisms and denunciations of Israel problematic (Van Teeffelen, 1994: 384).

However, as the following discussion outlines, Israel’s occupation of the Palestinian territories, in addition to other Arab territories, following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, did challenge such historic constructions of Israeli victimisation. Similarly, the numerous contraventions of international law perpetrated by the Israeli state during and after the 1967 War and the growing dominance of the military within the political domain, undermined official Israeli narratives that constructed the state as “liberal” and “democratic” (Reinhart, 2002: 198-202; Yiftachel, 2002: 3). Therefore, as the following discussion emphasises, the 1967 War and its aftermath had defining influences on Israeli-Palestinian relations and international constructions of the Palestinian question.

### **3. The June 1967 Arab-Israeli War – Israel’s Occupation of the Palestinian Territories - Competing Interpretations of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242**

The territories that Israel conquered during the June 1967 War would become the objects of subsequent wars and peace processes, especially the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, where 1.5 million Palestinians were then forced to live under an Israeli military administration. In the aftermath of the June 1967 War, the Arab states declared their official opposition to recognition, negotiations, or peace with Israel.

The initial interpretation of the June 1967 War in Europe and the United States was that it was a spectacular “David Vs Goliath” war caused by the Arab states’ belligerency and that the Israeli defeat of the collective Arab armies was an “act of daring” that was “unmatched in modern warfare” (Gelhorn, 1998: 291-6). However, following Israel’s illegal occupation of the captured Arab territories this interpretation receded somewhat. Instead, the international consensus regarding the 1967 War’s outcomes came to be expressed in the unanimously passed UNSCR 242 on 22 November 1967. This consensus was that a “just and lasting peace” should be based on the “withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict.” It also called for the “termination of all claims of states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries.” The Resolution “Affirms further

the necessity... for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem” (Cited in: <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/un/un242.htm> (Accessed on 15 May 2006)).

While Israel accepted UNSCR 242 in 1970, successive Israeli governments have contested the international consensus surrounding the resolution and have instead, adhered to the so-called “partial withdrawal” or “territorial revisionist” interpretation (Neff, 1995: 101-6). Israeli security discourses, which are reflective of the detrimental conditions within which “liberation” was achieved in 1948 (Knox and Quirk, 2000: 89), interpreted UNSCR 242 as providing “strategic justification” for Israeli settlement policies within the Palestinian territories (Bregman, 2003: 126-7). Furthermore, Zionist ideologies that emphasised the “divine right” of Jewish people to settle their biblical “homeland” and modernist ideologies that focused on the “progressive” benefits of Jewish settlements conferred a “double significance” on settlement expansions (Etkes, 2004; Shahak, 1995: 2).

UNSCR 242’s language was deliberately ambiguous in not calling for Israeli withdrawal from “all” of “the” Palestinian territories (Nye, 2000: 168). UNSCR 242 was also “explicitly rejectionist” because it said “nothing about the rights of the Palestinians, apart from a vague allusion to the problem of refugees” (Chomsky, 2001a: 12). Nonetheless, subsequent Security Council deliberations affirmed that UNSCR 242 did require complete Israeli withdrawal.

Within just a few months of the cessation of the June 1967 War Israel assumed the role of occupier within the captured Arab territories (Sternhell, 1998: 330). Over the next two decades, Israel established control over the economic

resources of the Palestinian territories, principally land and water resources. Some 655,000 Palestinians were compelled for economic or socio-political reasons to leave the Palestinian territories from 1967 to 1986 (Masalha, 2003: 178). An apparatus of political repression, embodied within the 1945 Mandatory Defence Emergency Regulations, was imposed. Thereafter, these regulations authorised the regular implementation of collective punishments, such as curfews, general closures and arbitrary arrests (Human Rights Watch, 1990: 5; JMCC, 1987: 3; Shehadeh, 1997: 95).

Moreover, since Israel's occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip after June 1967, international human rights organisations have consistently cited the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) and the Hague Regulations (1907) as applicable to Israel's role as the "occupying power." Israel's breaches of these international laws are especially contentious in relation to "collective punishment" policies and the illegal settlement of the Palestinian territories (Amnesty International, 2003c; Amnesty International, 2003d: 3-5; B'Tselem, 1997b: 19-20).

From 1977 to 1993 the total Israeli settler population in the West Bank rose from 4,400 (31 settlements) to 111,000 (120 settlements) (B'Tselem, 2002: 18). In 1980 Israel formally annexed East Jerusalem despite a UNSCR declaring this annexation "null and void" (Neff, 1995: 144-5). In 1993 the Jewish demographic majority within Jerusalem was declared an achieved outcome (Shehadeh, 2002: xiv). Further dramatic rises in Israeli settlement expansion of the Palestinian territories occurred from 1993 to 2001. During this latter period the settler

population within the Palestinian territories increased from 257,700 (including East Jerusalem), to 374,900 (including East Jerusalem) (B'Tselem, 2002: 17-8; see also: Amnesty International, 2003d: 2). Moreover, these settlement expansions established “facts on the ground” that were planned to impose Israeli control over 42% of the West Bank. The settlements have been denounced as a primary precipitating factor in Israeli-Palestinian hostilities, as reprehensible contraventions of international laws and violations of the “land for peace” principle (JMCC, 1997: Mitchell, 2001: 12). The human rights and ethnic segregationist implications of Israeli settlements have also been severely criticised (Amnesty International, 2003d: 1-2; B'Tselem, 2002; Shehadeh, 1997: 72, 91, 100; Urbina, 2002).

Another significant political implication of the Arab-Israeli 1967 War was that it resulted in the expulsion of approximately 320,000 Palestinians. This Palestinian refugee population was subsequently denied repatriation or resettlement rights within Israel (Masalha, 2003: 178). Furthermore, it was this Palestinian refugee population, in addition to the Palestinians who were exiled after the 1947-1949 War, which would form the groundswell of support for the Palestinian Resistance Movement, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).<sup>5</sup>

In the aftermath of the June 1967 War Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation was not strongly organised. Although, during the early to mid-1970s

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<sup>5</sup> The PLO was founded in 1964 as an umbrella-type nationalist organisation, thereafter constituting the institutional expression of Palestinian nationalism (Butenschon, 1998: 26; Knox and Quirk, 2000: 90). The PLO consists of several politically distinct factions whose relationships are often sharply divided, rather than constituting itself as a unified political protagonist. Its largest faction is Fatah, which was led by Yasser Arafat from 1968 to November 2004. The PLO charter as amended by the Palestinian National Council (PNC) in 1968 was the ideological blueprint of the organisation. It called for the “liberation” of the Palestinian “homeland” and the defeat of Zionism (See: Kadi, 1969: 140; Lukacs, 1992: 292, 294).

PLO-affiliated militant groups carried out a campaign of high profile international hijackings and attacks, this campaign did not achieve any of the PLO's objectives and was responsible for counter-productive media constructions of Palestinian militant and political groups as "terrorists" (Wolfsfeld, 2004: 106-7). On the other hand, however, the PLO did make some significant international diplomatic gains during the 1970s, especially the achievement of UNGA official recognition as the "representative of the Palestinian people."

The following section outlines how the mass Palestinian uprising, or *intifada*, that began in the Palestinian territories in December 1987, precipitated immense changes in international constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The *intifada* was the most widespread Palestinian revolt against the Israeli occupation and, therefore, a singularly important turning point in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The events and developments of the *intifada* mostly enacted negative depictions of Israel and positive depictions of the Palestinians (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 150). This, in turn, increased the international profile of the plight of the Palestinian people and led to increased international pressure on Israel to agree to a political settlement of the conflict.

#### **4. The International Media Impact of the Palestinian *Intifada* - December 1987 to September 1993**

The *intifada*, or uprising, translated literally as “shaking off,” was a highly significant political development for the Palestinian people (McDowall, 1990: viii). It began on 9 December 1987 in the Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, when Palestinian youths began stone-throwing protests against Israeli security forces. These protests were precipitated by an accident in which an Israeli vehicle killed Palestinian workers. Within days the uprising had spread throughout the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and Jerusalem (Gilbert, 1998: 525; Ovendale, 1992: 110; Schiff and Ya’ari, 1989: 31, 50, 77, 102-15). Thereafter, the *intifada* developed into a multi-level civil resistance campaign (Morris, 1992), characterised by almost daily mass street protests, all-out commercial strikes and the propagation of popular political demands (Gilbert, 1998: 558; JMCC, 1989; La Guardia, 2001: 133-4; Peretz, 1990: 66, 77). Moreover, these “energetic mass movement” resistances continued with varying degrees of frequency and intensity until the early 1990s (Gee, 1998: 114; Gilbert, 1998: 526, 558; JMCC, 1991a; Morris, 2001: 592).

Despite its rather sudden and unforeseen emergence, however, the *intifada* was not simply a “‘spontaneous’ expression of frustration with military occupation” (JMCC, 1987: 1; see also: Aronson, 1990: 315-22; Gilbert, 1998: 525; La Guardia, 2001: 133; Peretz, 1990: 83; Schiff and Ya’ari, 1989: 30-1, 58, 69-77). Instead, several socio-economic “crisis” factors culminated to produce and sustain conditions necessary for ongoing mass agitation from 1987 to 1993 (Morris, 2001: 565-7; Reuveny, 2000: 228-9; Schiff and Ya’ari, 1989: 29, 80-100). Two of the



primary causes of the *intifada* were the Israeli occupation and its associated human rights violations over two decades (Morris, 2001: 561; Peretz, 1990: 4) and the failure of the Camp David “peace process” to address Palestinian rights (Said, 1990: 5-6).

While international media coverage of the *intifada* became “stereotypical” (Shinar, 1987: 14-5), or “routinized” over time (Roeh and Nir, 1993: 177, 189), it nonetheless attracted significant levels of media attention (Cohen, 1993: 77). This increased international media coverage of the *intifada* “re-Palestinized” the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Morris, 2001: 603; Peretz, 1990: 190-2). This, in turn, meant that the “centre of gravity of Palestinian politics” was transferred from the wider Middle East context to the context of the Palestinian territories (La Guardia, 2001: 134; McDowall, 1990: x; Shlaim, 1994a: 25).

Secondly, the *intifada* challenged previously held “terrorist” and “refugee” depictions of Palestinians (Daniel, 1997: 67-9; Said, 1981: 20, 25-6). Instead, it constructed Palestinians as an “oppressed” people struggling for national “liberation” (Ezzi, 1999: 177, 205). This depiction emphasised that “the Palestinian struggle could not simply be crushed by force” and that the status quo of Israeli political domination and occupation was no longer tenable (Becker, 1998; Honig-Parnass, 1994: 21-2; Knox and Quirk, 2000: 94; Peretz, 1990: 44, 77-8). Therefore, this depiction also directly challenged official Israeli constructions of the *intifada* as merely disruptive “civil disorders” that required a strong military response (Morris, 2001: 586; Schiff and Ya’ari, 1989: 143-4).

The IDF's immediate resort to wholesale military and firearm force to quell Palestinian resistance meant that "within days Israel's international standing was at its lowest ebb since the siege of Beirut in 1982" (McDowall, 1990: 2).<sup>6</sup> The images of uncontrolled and relentless beatings of Palestinian civilians by the Israeli security forces also produced the first serious questioning within Israeli politics regarding the desirability or possibility of maintaining the occupation (Gilbert, 1998: 526; La Guardia, 2001: 134; Raz-Krakotzkin, 1998: 63; Reinhart, 2002: 9, 15; Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989: 150-7, 169). From January 1988 onwards, a "might, power and beatings" policy was implemented in the Palestinian territories. Stringent collective politico-economic repressions were also imposed (McDowall, 1990: 7; Shlaim, 1994b: 12). Thereafter, the indiscriminate subjection of the Palestinian population to inhumane and degrading treatment became widespread (B'Tselem, 1998). The primary so-called "collective punishments" routinely imposed by Israel included generalised border closures, movement restrictions and school closures (JMCC, 1991a; JMCC, 1992: 9). Mass arrests and incarcerations were also common (B'Tselem, 1992a; B'Tselem, 1992b; JMCC, 1992: 4-5).

Moreover, it was the uprising's largely unarmed character and its proportionately high female and youth participation rates that increased the moral justification of the Palestinian resistance and strengthened international sympathy

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<sup>6</sup> The Israeli invasion of Lebanon on 6 June 1982 resulted in strong critiques of Israel by the UN and EEC (later, EU), including UNSCR 509 (Shlaim, 2000: 396). The invasion also dramatically challenged constructions of Israel as a "benign" state whose attempts at seeking peace within the region were obstructed by "aggressive" Arab states (Ezzi, 1999: 148, 150; Wolfsfeld, 2004: 107; Zaharna, 1997: 40-3). In particular, the killing of between 400 and 800 Palestinian civilians by the Lebanese Christian Phalange militia in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps from 16 to 17 September 1982 provoked intense international criticism. On 8 February 1983 the Kahan Commission of Inquiry, established to investigate the killings in Sabra and Shatila, found that the then Defence Minister Ariel Sharon and other Israeli military officers were indirectly responsible for allowing the killings to occur.

with the Palestinian people (Human Rights Watch, 1990: 3; La Guardia, 2001: 134; McDowall, 1990: 3; Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989: 115-20). Throughout the *intifada* Palestinian fatalities were disproportionately higher than Israeli fatalities. From December 1987 to February 1992 over 1,300 Palestinians were killed and more than 117,000 were injured (B'Tselem, 1998: 3). Most Palestinian deaths and injuries were attributed to the use of IDF fire and physical assaults, which "more closely resemble what one would expect if they [the IDF] were facing enemy combatants" (Human Rights Watch, 1990: 2-3; see also: B'Tselem, 1998: 4; JMCC, 1992: 2).

One of the most significant outcomes of the *intifada* was that it increased the international recognition and legitimacy of the PLO as the embodiment of Palestinian national rights (Peretz, 1990: 113). However, these Palestinian political gains were shortlived (Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 209-10). The PLO's "symbolic" support for Saddam Hussein during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 seriously undermined its position (Gee, 1998: 115-7; Kepel, 2002: 324; Khalidi, 1991: 426-7; Makovksy, 1996: 15; Shehadeh, 1997: 131). Particularly, the PLO's diplomatic leverage within the Middle East negotiations process initiated by the United States in March 1991 was minimal (Elkahlout, 2001: 137; Selfa, 2000: 5). This process led to the holding of the Madrid "peace" conference in November 1991 (Bregman and El-Tahri, 1998: 214-5; Tonra, 2001: 188-9) and the subsequent establishment of regional and bi-lateral negotiations in Washington.

Within the Madrid-initiated negotiations process ten separate rounds of talks were held in Washington over twenty months, but they ended in collapse on 1 July 1993. Subsequently, the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin opened direct

negotiations with the PLO team participating in the secret Oslo talks, which resulted in the signing of the Declaration of Principles (DoPs), or Oslo Agreement in the White House on 13 September 1993. The symbolic and ritual dimensions of the signing ceremony attracted intense international media coverage (Dayan and Katz, 1992: 4-9).

The following two sections focus on the competing ideological constructions of “peace” that emerged during the period of September 1993 to July 2000, in response to the so-called Oslo “peace process.” Both discussions conclude that the national Palestinian and Israeli political domains became increasingly characterised by contests between “pro-Oslo” and “anti-Oslo” perspectives. During this period Palestinian and Israeli “anti-Oslo” perspectives, which constructed the conflict’s “core issues” within “extremist” and essentialist frames, gained considerable political prominence (Shinar, 2002: 284-5).

Furthermore, as is outlined in chapter 5, the effective cessation of the Oslo “peace process” during the abortive Camp David Summit in July 2000, which is the starting point of this case study’s analysis, precipitated the emergence of a political environment wherein “anti-Oslo” perspectives achieved even more increased precedence over “reconciliation” and “resolution” perspectives.

## **5. Palestinian Perspectives on the Oslo “Peace Process” (September 1993 to July 2000) – “The Road to Independent Statehood” Versus “Israeli Occupation by Other Means”**

The signing of the DoPs in September 1993 was initially supported by an overwhelming “popular consensus” within the Palestinian territories, primarily because the DoPs were perceived as providing the basis for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. However, this consensus was consistently challenged and eroded over the next seven years (Knox and Quirk, 2000: 97-8; Rabbani, 1996: 2-4). By 2000 the most prominent Palestinian perspective was that the Oslo-related agreements from 1993 to 1999 failed to address the conflict’s “core” issues. Principal among these issues were the rights of the Palestinian people to political and economic independence, the rights of Palestinian refugees, the cessation of the illegal Israeli military occupation and Israeli settlements (Shehadeh, 1997).

Like Yasser Arafat’s Declaration of Independence in November 1988, the DoPs represented further official PLO acceptance of the legitimacy of the Israeli state and the “two-state” or “partition” principle. This declaration amounted to an acceptance of an agreement that would leave Palestinians in control of just 22% of what is perceived as their original homeland (Reinhart, 2002: 24). This acceptance was, therefore, constructed by Palestinian discourses as a considerable concession on Palestinian nationalistic claims and UN resolutions (Finkelstein, 1998; Gee, 1998: 98, 118, 137; Reinhart, 2002: 14; Shlaim, 2002: 1). While Arafat argued that the Oslo Agreement constituted the starting point for Palestinian statehood and would halt Israeli expansion (Butenshon, 1998: 32). Hamas, the PFLP and DFLP

factions, as well as several mainstream PLO members and political representatives, opposed the entire Oslo “peace process” from its initialisation.

One of the principal “anti-Oslo” arguments was that none of the Oslo-related agreements guaranteed any mechanisms for *actualising* Palestinian self-determination and territorial sovereignty. Instead, the territorial provisions of the Interim Agreement, signed in September 1995, actually increased Israeli control over the vast majority of the Palestinian territories (72% of the West Bank, or “Area C”). It provided for partial Palestinian control in just 27% of the West Bank (“Area B”). Full Palestinian autonomy was only granted within the Gaza Strip and Jericho enclaves and within six of the seven Palestinian cities, amounting to only 1% of the West Bank (“Area A”) (Shehadeh, 1997: 31, 37). Even within the Gaza Strip itself, the three areas where Israeli settlers lived (amounting to 15% of the Gaza Strip), were designated as Israeli-controlled areas. Therefore, the continuation of Israeli rule within the Palestinian territories from September 1993 onwards made it increasingly “obvious that the two-state option had lost whatever prospects it had” (Chomsky, 1996: 166; see also: Said, 2000c: 430-2; Said, 2000d: 271; Smith, 1996: 333) and also repeatedly undermined Arafat’s construction of the “peace process” as amounting to Palestinian “sovereignty” (Sayigh, 2001: 55).

Palestinian “anti-Oslo” perspectives also pointed to the failure of Israel to implement the withdrawals, redeployments and territorial transfers stipulated by the Oslo-related agreements. By May 2000 Israel had only transferred 18% out of the total 90% of the territory that was demarcated as transferable to full PA control (Finkelstein, 1998; Isaac and Rizik, 2002: 2; Rabbani, 2001: 72-6, 86; Roy, 2001:

94). Furthermore, although the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak called for the early completion of final status talks during the May 1999 election, his government actually delayed the resumption of these talks until July 2000 and cancelled the implementation of the territorial transfers and military redeployments stipulated by the Wye Agreement and the Sharm El Sheikh Agreement (Agha and Malley, 2002; Kimmerling, 2003; Klein, 2002: 5).

Significantly, the Oslo “peace process” was charged with institutionalising the Israeli-United States “rejectionist” stance towards Palestinian rights, as well as increasing the geographical “bantustanization” of the Palestinian territories and securing the permanency of Palestinian “neo-colonial dependency” on Israel (Chomsky, 2001b: 13, 20; Chomsky, 2003: x, 189-90; see also: Bishara, 2002: 4-5, 121-9; Farsakh, 2000; Reuveny, 2000: 235; Roy, 1995; Roy, 2001). Israeli abuses such as “closures” and other movement restrictions also continued throughout the period of September 1993 to 2000 (B’Tselem, 1999: 1-2; Finkelstein, 1998; Rabbani, 1996: 3-4; Selfa, 2000: 6-7).

In particular, the dramatic rise in Israeli settlement activities from 1993 to 2000 was depicted by Palestinian discourses as a critically unresolved grievance (Aronson, 1998: 6; Bishara, 2002: 19-20, 65, 133-8, 140-3; La Guardia, 2003: 282; Rabbani, 2001: 76-7). For instance, during Barak’s tenure as Prime Minister settlements were expanded at greater rates than under the former Netanyahu-led administration, resulting in an increase of 22,000 settlers to the existing population (Agha and Malley, 2002). Moreover, during the first year and a half of the Sharon-

led National Unity Government, forty-four new settlements were constructed (Cited in: Landy, 2003: 5-6; see also: MIFTAH, 2004).

In conclusion, it appears that by 2000 Palestinian political perspectives increasingly gravitated towards “anti-Oslo” constructions of the “peace process” as “occupation by consent” (Aruri, 1995: 39), or as a “more sophisticated form of maintaining the occupation” (Reinhart, 2002: 10). Thereafter, the increasing popularity of “anti-Oslo” perspectives within Palestinian political and public domains restricted the negotiating options of Palestinian political representatives, who subsequently believed they were not in a position to accept the territorial and political “concessions” offered by the Israeli delegation during the Camp David Summit in July 2000 (Hammani and Tamari, 2001; La Guardia, 2001: 266).

The failure of the Camp David Summit to conclude a final status agreement between Israel and the Palestinians also had important implications for Israeli politics. The following section outlines that during the period of mid-1993 to mid-2000 Israeli political constructions of the “peace process” increasingly adopted “anti-Oslo” discourses. Furthermore, subsequent to July 2000 “anti-Oslo” discourses continued to achieve greater resonance and prominence within Israeli political domains.



## **6. Israeli Perspectives on the Oslo “Peace Process” (September 1993 to July 2000) – “The Era of Peace in the Middle East” Versus “the Return of Palestinian ‘Terrorism’”**

Within official Israeli perspectives the overriding objectives of the Oslo “peace process” were those of ending the Palestinian uprising, guaranteeing Israel’s security by achieving PLO recognition for Israel’s right to exist and eliminating the threat of Palestinian “terrorism” (Honig-Parnass, 1994: 24-6). These objectives were accorded centrality in Yasser Arafat’s letter of recognition, the DoPs and successive Oslo-related agreements (Beilin, 1999: 127, 201; Shlaim, 1994a: 24-5). Moreover, the Oslo-related agreements were constructed as “pragmatic” outcomes because they absolved Israel of responsibility for governing Palestinians within the Palestinian territories (Gee, 1998: 114; Savir, 1998: 67, 69-70; Shahak, 1995: 1; Shlaim, 1994a: 33-4, 38). A commonly held perspective was that the agreements codified and legalised Israeli control over the Palestinian territories, thereby strengthening rather than weakening the occupation (Chomsky, 2003: 227-8; Cramer, 2004: 246-7). It was also argued that because the agreements only required phased and conditional territorial “concessions”, they would, in effect, permit Israel’s continued settlement of the Palestinian territories in the short term (Smith, 1996: 324). The economic benefits that accrued from Israel’s “normalization” and the related increases that occurred in Israel’s inter-regional and international trade, were also cited as significant peace dividends (Beilin, 1999: 195, 213; Butenschon, 1998: 39; Keller, 1994: 39-40; Raz-Krakotzkin, 1998: 63).

At the time of the signing of the DoPs in September 1993 “pro-Oslo” perspectives, embodied in the so-called “land for peace” and “end-to-occupation” solutions, were believed to have characterised the political thinking of two-thirds of the Israeli electorate (Reinhart, 2002: 223-4, 231-2). These perspectives were also regarded as the particular hallmark of the so-called “peace camp” and were largely constructed within “secular” or “western-oriented” terminology (Raz-Krakotzkin, 1998: 59, 61-2, 64, 70). However, over time these “pro-Oslo” perspectives were increasingly contested within Israel’s political mainstream (Hermann, 1998: 647). Specifically, they were vehemently opposed by the “national” political camp, which included the Likud, ultra-nationalist and ultra-orthodox religious parties and settler groups. These groups constructed the “peace process” within “traditional religious language” as treasonous anti-Zionism and capitulation to the “demonic evil” of the Palestinian leadership (Raz-Krakotzkin, 1998: 59, 61-2, 70-1).

Principally, the “peace process” came to be viewed as inevitably failing the “test of violence” (Beilin, 1999: 135-6). From 1994 to 1998 some of the worst Palestinian “suicide” attacks occurred in Israel. These attacks appeared to render the Oslo-related “reconciliation” and “end-of-conflict” discourses politically irrelevant and increased the resonance of “anti-Oslo” themes. Thereafter, the theme of “Palestinian terrorism” constituted the most serious challenge to “pro-Oslo” Israeli discourses.

Increases in the occurrence of “suicide” attacks have been interpreted as performing strategic “spoiler” roles during key moments of progress in Israeli-PA relations and/or “retaliatory” roles in response to Israeli killings, human rights

abuses and other “provocations” (Bloom, 2004: 62-3). “Suicide” attacks tend to be inspired by a combination of Islamic and nationalist ideologies. These ideologies define the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as “an almost cosmic contest in which an aggressive and evil superpower is pitted against a small but noble people” (Oliver and Steinberg, 1993: 4). “Suicide” attacks also powerfully display shifts in support for “Islamist alternatives” vis-à-vis PLO nationalism (Kepel, 2002: 332-3). Additionally, “suicide” attacks are often justified as either forms of religious “martyrdom” and “revolutionary Jihad” (Oliver and Steinberg, 1993: 9, 16, 23-4), or legitimate “resistance” to illegal military occupation (Agha and Malley, 2002; Falk, 2000: 1-2). Palestinian political apologetics also frame “suicide” bombers as symbols of an “oppressed and weak people, unable to fight Israel on an equal military scale” (see: Human Rights Watch, 2002b).

Israel’s failure to prevent the killing of over thirty Muslim worshippers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in February 1994 and its imposition of curfews on Palestinians living in Hebron subsequent to the attack is largely seen as providing the pretext for the Hamas-orchestrated “suicide” bombings in April, October and November 1994. Israel “responded” to these bombings by imposing “complete closures” on the Palestinian territories. Similarly, Israel suspended its scheduled negotiations with the PA, postponed the hoped-for release of 5,500 political prisoners and imposed further closures, following the Hamas bombings in January 1995. “Complete closures” were re-imposed and Israel-PA negotiations were again suspended during the summer of 1995, following another Hamas “suicide” attack.

During February and March 1996 Hamas and Islamic Jihad perpetrated some of the worst “suicide” attacks in Israel’s history, purportedly in response to the killing of the Hamas leader Yahye Ayyash in January 1996. These attacks resulted in a total of fifty-six Israeli deaths and over 150 casualties. Five prominent “suicide” attacks occurred during 1997, killing twenty-nine people and wounding more than 200. Hamas escalated its attacks on Israel during 1998. In November 1998 Hamas exploded a bomb in Jerusalem, killing twenty-four people. However, during 1999 and up until October 2000, Hamas and Islamic Jihad ceased all “suicide” attacks within Israel (Human Rights Watch, 2002b: Section III, 20).

The above-outlined Palestinian “suicide” attacks resulted in a significant loss of momentum for the Israeli peace camp (Shinar, 2002: 288-9). Furthermore, the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin in November 1995 provocatively displayed the detrimental consequences of the growing tension between “pro-Oslo” and “anti-Oslo” perspectives within Israel (Lentin, 2000: 148-9; Raz-Krakotzkin, 1998: 69, 71).

Popular Palestinian protests, such as those that occurred throughout the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem from 24 to 27 September 1996 during the so-called “tunnel *intifada*”, also increased the resonance of Israeli “anti-Oslo” frames. During the “tunnel *intifada*” more than seventy people were killed and 1,500 wounded as a direct result of IDF force (Human Rights Watch, 1997). To quell the resistance, Israel imposed complete closures and threatened war on the Palestinian territories. In February 1997 Israel’s decision to build on East Jerusalem’s Homa Mountain also resulted in strong Palestinian opposition. Throughout 1999 the IDF

violently suppressed several Hamas- and Fatah-led demonstrations. Also in May 2000 the confrontations that developed between the Israeli security forces and Palestinian protestors during the Nakba Day commemorations resulted in over 300 Palestinian casualties. These confrontations were reminiscent of the “tunnel *intifada*” of September 1996, as well as precursors to the highly charged Palestinian protests that occurred in late September 2000.

In conclusion, this section and the preceding section have outlined that from September 1993 to July 2000 Israeli-Palestinian political relations steadily deteriorated. It was also concluded that within Israeli and Palestinian political domains this deterioration was increasingly constructed in terms of “anti-Oslo” discourses. Chapter 5 will outline how these deteriorations in Israeli-Palestinian political relations also had profound implications for more contemporary international constructions of the conflict.

## **7. Conclusions**

This chapter’s thematically selective account of the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict focused on some of the political developments that have defined that history. These developments included the Arab-Israeli Wars of 1947-1949 and June 1967, Israeli settlement expansions within the Palestinian territories, the Palestinian *intifada* from December 1987 to mid-1993, as well as developments characterising the Oslo “peace process” from September 1993 to July 2000.

In particular, it was concluded that the first Palestinian *intifada* (December 1987 to mid-1993) and the Oslo “peace process” (September 1993 to July 2000) changed historical constructions of the conflict in a number of crucially significant ways. Firstly, international media attention towards Israel and the Palestinian territories increased as a result of the Palestinian *intifada*. Secondly and also as a consequence of the *intifada*, depictions of the Palestinian “victim” and Israeli “aggressor” emerged as the most likely depictions characterising international media coverage during this historical period.

The era of the Oslo “peace process” was also discussed as a highly significant phase of the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It was concluded that while the Oslo “peace process” was initially supported by a broad political and public consensus within Israel and the Palestinian territories, this consensus was gradually and consistently eroded from 1994 onwards. Moreover, considering the centrality of the Oslo “peace process” within international political-diplomatic discourses and media constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, its dramatic demise, as a result of the abortive Camp David Summit in July 2000, signalled the emergence of a range of shifts in Israeli-Palestinian relations and international perceptions of the conflict and its protagonists. Chapter 5 assesses the impacts of these shifts on the roles displayed by four sampled Irish newspapers in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the four-year period of July 2000 to July 2004.

The theme of the relationship between foreign policy contexts and national media’s coverage of foreign conflicts is addressed in the following chapter. This chapter is devoted to uncovering the major influences defining the history of Irish-

Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations from the 1940s onwards. Thus, it adopts a contextual focus that seeks to analyse the potentially significant social constructivist influences exerted by Irish political history and foreign policy traditions on sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **IRISH-ISRAELI AND IRISH-PALESTINIAN RELATIONS – HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **1. Introduction**

This chapter analyses some of the ways in which Irish political culture and foreign policy-making traditions, particularly as they are embodied within the history of Irish-Jewish/Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations, exert potentially significant contextual influences on the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004. This analysis is, therefore, based on the assumption that the Irish national political situation supplies a potentially significant context within which Irish-based media cover foreign issues (Collins, 1999: 90-1).

The two primary methodologies relied upon to undertake this analysis were historical literature-based research and interview-based research.<sup>7</sup> As this analysis is focused mostly on the question of the potential impacts of this historical and political context on the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004, its focus is necessarily selective.

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<sup>7</sup>As already outlined in chapter 2, a total of twenty interviews were undertaken with a number of key media, political/diplomatic and NGO actors from June to October 2004 and in June 2005 and January 2006. All interview participants gave permission to quote their statements within this thesis. However, seven interview participants requested anonymity. Hence, they are identified only in terms of their position of employment. Furthermore, as also detailed in chapter 2, fourteen interviews were recorded electronically and transcribed verbatim and six interviews were manually recorded (See: Chapter 2, Interview Design, Guidelines and Procedures; see also: Appendix 6 and Appendix 7).



For the purposes of this case study, the Irish national context is understood to be historically formed in accordance with Irish national identity and culture. “National identity” is a somewhat “abstract” and “multidimensional” concept that refers to the collective construction of shared public cultures, political structures, language and historical narratives (Smith, 1991: vii, 14). National identities are social, cultural and linguistic constructions that achieve varying levels of symbolic success within national public domains over time (Day and Thompson, 2004: 89-97). Moreover, modern national identities have tended to be characterised by nationalistic concepts, symbols and artefacts (Calhoun, 1997: 4-8, 11, 48-9, 56, 123-5). Likewise, the concept of “culture” abstractly refers to an unending “complex of human values and practices” (Gitlin, 2004: 309-10) and can, therefore, be defined as the “broad context in which individual and collective identities are linked, producing shared meanings that influence the framing of political action” (Aggestram, 2004: 82).

The impact of “national identity” and “culture” on media performance, although undoubted, is not susceptible to easy categorisation and analysis. For this reason, this chapter’s focus is confined to analysing how key features of Irish political culture and foreign policy traditions impact on Irish media’s foreign news trends. These features are analysed as politico-discursive outcomes that are historically constituted firstly, *in relation to* realist constraints that emanate from states’ “geographic, economic and ideological situations in the world” and secondly, *in relation to* domestic cultural frameworks, or the “general philosophy and moral belief of its people” (Williams, 1979: 137; see also: Tonra and Ward, 2002a: 10-1).

Firstly, an introductory discussion is presented on the key historical features of Irish political culture and foreign policy-making traditions. Secondly, the major developments characterising the history of Ireland's relations with the Jewish people and Israel are outlined. Finally, a separate analysis of Ireland's historical relationship to the Palestinian question is provided.

## **2. Exploring the Impact of Irish Foreign Policy Traditions and Political Culture on Irish Media's Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

This section briefly outlines some characteristics of Irish political culture and the key historical developments that shaped Irish foreign policy-making traditions, insofar as these characteristics and developments supply a relevant context that potentially influences Irish national newspapers' coverage of foreign conflicts, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It is argued that Irish foreign policy is best understood in terms of two major historical influences. Firstly, Irish foreign policy structures and culture generally reflect the constraints and predicaments confronting post-colonial states and so-called "small states", especially since Irish foreign policies have evolved within a tradition of relative international isolationism and military non-alignment (Keatinge, 1978: 1-3; Tonra and Ward, 2002a: 3-4). Secondly, Ireland's role in international affairs has been directly influenced by its overriding commitment to the UN system and its political alignment with Europe and the United States on the international stage.

Historically, Ireland's international role has been similar to that adopted by other "small states" (Keown, 2000: 29; see also: Fanning, 2000: 309-11; Hederman-O'Brien, 2002: 163-4; Kennedy and Morrison-Skelly, 2000a: 14). Within the European context, because of historical, economic and geo-demographic characteristics, Ireland has been labelled a "peripheral island on the edge of the European continent" (Garvin, 2000: 36). Ireland has also been classified as a "minor state" (Tonra, 2001: 11, 54, 112-3, 138), or a "fringe" state, alongside Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Austria (Soetendorp, 1999: 35, 47).

Significantly, from the Irish state's inception to the early 1960s the principal features of its foreign policy orientation also confirmed its "small state" status – namely, political isolationism, cultural conservatism, economic protectionism and radical, insular Catholic nationalism (Arthur, 2000: 62-3; Chubb, 1992: 1-23; Crotty, 2002: 2-3; Garvin, 2002: 125-7; Keogh, 2000: 266-7). In fact, republican political philosophy and religious affiliation have historically formed the bedrock of Irish mainstream identities and political orientations, often in intertwined ways (O'Brien, 1995). It is evident, however, that this "traditional nationalism" and Ireland's overall "relative isolation" has been undergoing a "steady diminution" since the early 1960s. Instead, these official worldviews have been largely "replaced by a more outward-looking, dynamic perspective, one that was more conducive to economic growth and less inimical to ethnic inclusion" (Coakley, 2002a: 149-50; see also: Garvin, 2002: 129-31; Garvin, 2005: 291-3).

Internationally, Ireland's "small state" status is evidenced by the fact that Ireland has less vital interests in foreign affairs than other European powers and the

United States (Keown, 2000: 27). Also, Irish foreign policy discourses only rarely construct Ireland's international roles in terms of indigenous political interests and values (Higgins and Kiberd, 2002: 154). Instead, Ireland's foreign policies tend to be constructed as primarily based on commitments to sets of "principles" (Keown, 2000: 27-8, 31; Murphy, 2002: 13). The most prominent of such "principles" are those of military neutrality, "effective multilateralism", "purest internationalism", "collective security", a "human rights based approach to international relations" and a UN-based "international order" (Arthur, 2000: 77; Brown, 1999: 165-8; Connolly and Doyle, 2005: 362-5, 382-3; Crotty, 2002: 11-3, 83; Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 54-5, 117-20, 150-6, 160, 194; Department of the Taoiseach, 2003: 35-6; Keatinge, 1978: 150-2, 158, 161, 171; O'Halpin, 1999: 270, 302, 317, 345; Tonra, 2001: 111; Tonra, 2004: 87; Tonra, 2005: 281-2, 284-7, 297).

The Irish state officially adheres to a policy of military neutrality that has been so "closely bound up with the country's identity" (Ishizuka, 2004: 164) and imbued with "so heavy an emotional investment" throughout history (Lee, 1989: 263-4, 605), that it has consistently assumed the appearance of an "unalterable doctrine" (Keatinge, 1978: 92-3). This policy clearly differentiates Ireland's international orientation from that of many of its European partners, especially since public support for military neutrality is "so ingrained in the national psyche that it did not need to be defined... and no political party was prepared explicitly to advocate the abandonment of 'neutrality' whatever it, in fact, meant" (Ferriter, 2004: 686-7). However, the policy of Irish neutrality has been defined as one that mostly applies to military non-alignment in the context of Irish defense policy and is not, therefore, as exclusively applied to foreign or security policies (Ishizuka,

2004: 170; Tonra, 2005: 285). Certainly, Ireland's commitment to military non-alignment has not precluded the development of significant European and transatlantic political affiliations, as well as official support for "western" foreign policy positions (Carroll, 2004; Fanning, 2000: 311-7; Ishizuka, 2004: 184-5; Keatinge, 1978: 198; Keogh, 1990: 162-5; Keogh, 2000: 269-70; O'Halpin, 1999: 199-200; Salmon, 1989: 2).

However, in contrast to Ireland's consistent rejection of military alignment on the international stage, there has been a consistent and substantial Irish defence force involvement in United Nations peacekeeping operations since the 1950s (Ishizuka, 2004: 11-4). Ireland's "long and honourable tradition" of UN peacekeeping is believed to have "enhanced its position on the international political stage" and is regarded as a "defining aspect" of Ireland's wider policy of supporting the United Nations system (Ishizuka, 2004: 180-5; Miller, 2005: 54; O'Neill, 2005: 299, 316).

Overall and given its "small state" status and colonial past, the Irish state's primary concerns have tended to be relatively provincial and concentrated mostly on the national domestic arena, the "internal hurt of partition" and Anglo-Irish relations (Arthur, 2000: 76-7; Finnegan and McCarron, 2000: 375; Keatinge, 1978: 54-8, 62, 100-2; Keown, 2000: 28; O'Halpin, 1999: 139, 151; Tonra, 2001: 105-7).

Moreover, it is likely that Ireland's direct experience of political conflict, both historically and within the context of Northern Ireland, affects its foreign policy positions in relation to similar international conflicts. In this sense, it is

significant that a number of academic peace/conflict studies have drawn comparisons between Israel and the Palestinian territories, Lebanon and Northern Ireland as “divided” societies, characterised by relatively intractable conflicts that have, nonetheless, been addressed by concurrent “peace processes” (Guelke, 1988: 174-9, 186-7; Knox and Quirk, 2000). Worldwide political and public perceptions regarding the similarities between the conflicts also remain strong (Giliomee, 1990: 1-2). The religious, politico-ideological, or ethno-nationalist dimensions have been the subjects of most frequent comparisons (Akenson, 1992; Anderson, 2000: 76; Connor, 1990).

Furthermore, Ireland’s experience of colonialism bequeathed a legacy of “intellectual isolation.” From the period of the state’s foundation to the 1970s this experience resulted in the Irish state’s dependency on British worldviews (Lee, 1989: 260-1, 627-9). Specifically, in relation to Irish foreign policy-making, the Irish state’s dependency on the foreign policy “outlook and assumptions of the British state in relation to the outside world” meant that it had very limited autonomous and active experience of international affairs (Tonra, 2001: 116; see also: MacQueen, 1983: 71-2; O’Halpin, 1999: 81).

This diplomatic isolationism, in conjunction with the impact of colonialism, meant that Irish foreign policy arenas were seriously under-resourced and marginalized within domestic politics. The Department of External Affairs (later, the Department of Foreign Affairs) was also marred by a “conservative and limited vision of its role” (Keatinge, 1973: 29; Keogh, 1990: 182, 206-12; Kennedy and Morrison-Skelly, 2000a: 17-24; Murphy, 2002: 19; Tonra, 2001: 115-6; Tonra and

Ward, 2002a: 6, 9-10). Consequently, Irish foreign policy has remained largely confined to the government executive and dominated by strong prime ministerial and cabinet control (Farrell, 1971; Soetendorp, 1999: 64).

Generally speaking, international issues tend to be politically marginalized within the Irish public sphere, while foreign policy debates tend to be limited to narrow strata of informed opinion makers who mostly espouse official or elite perspectives (Keatinge, 1978: 216, 219-22; Tonra and Ward, 2002a: 7). Not surprisingly, domestic interest in foreign issues also tends to be relatively low (Murphy, 2002: 28), frequently amounting to a “cycle of detachment” or “indifference” which negatively impacts on the level of investment by Irish media in foreign coverage generally (Little, 2004: 252-5).

While the preceding analysis has focused on the formative impacts exerted by Ireland’s “small state” status on its foreign policy orientations and international roles, the following discussion focuses on the ways that experiences of the post-colonial condition and peripheral isolationism encouraged successive Irish administrations to strongly support multilateral frameworks, such as the UN and the EEC (later, EU), as a means of enhancing Ireland’s autonomy on the international stage (Arthur, 2000: 72-7; Keatinge, 1978: 165-6, 198; Laffan, 2000: 125).

It has been concluded that the primacy of Ireland’s official commitment to the UN system, in conjunction with Ireland’s commitment to EU integration and to close relations with the Anglo-sphere, have been the most significant formative historical influences on Irish foreign policy developments and outcomes (Collins.

1999: 78, 81, 90; de Breadun, 2005; Ferriter, 2004: 681-3). In relation to Irish-American relations, the so-called “transatlantic relationship” is typically regarded as an “indispensable partnership” based on an “enduring relationship” of symbiotic economic and trade investments, “shared prosperity” and an “adherence to democratic values” that are “vital to the security and prosperity of both Europe and the United States” (see: Cowen, 2004: 3-7, 14; <http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/index.asp?docID=1715>; <http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/index.asp?locID=200anddocID=1474> (Accessed on 4 October 2004)). Irish-American relations also tend to be constructed as “special” because they are based on strong historical, personal and socio-economic ties (Cowen, 2004: 12; Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 52-3, 84-6; O’Donnell, 2000a: 200-1). However, this “transatlantic relationship”, albeit an important dimension of Irish international relations, is regarded as relatively secondary or complementary to Ireland’s primary foreign policy objectives – namely, increased Irish integration within the EU and the maintenance of the UN system of international relations.

Ireland’s admission to the UN in 1955 and its continued commitment to the UN system thereafter, is regarded as the high point of Irish international diplomacy. It signalled the state’s achievement of international recognition (Kennedy and Morrison-Skelly, 2000a: 24; Murphy, 2002: 13). It also marked the beginning of the Irish state’s first direct experience of international diplomacy (O’Brien, 1969: 127-34). Generally, Ireland’s position within the UN has been consistently supportive of the so-called “western bloc”, including the United States (Dorr, 2002: 115-6; Keatinge, 1978: 76; Kennedy and Morrison-Skelly, 2000a: 24; Murphy, 2002: 20).



This position was further reinforced by Ireland's admittance to the EEC (later, EU) in 1973 and its continued commitment to increased integration thereafter, as a matter of broad political consensus (Laffan, 1999: 91; O'Donnell, 2000a: 179-80, 190-3, 206).

Generally speaking, EEC membership (later, EU membership) reduced the state's international isolationism and dependence on Britain and forged closer political and diplomatic relations between Ireland and European states (Garvin, 2000: 37-9, 41-3; Halligan, 2000: 19-20, 23, 29-30; Laffan, 1999: 89-90, 103; O'Donnell, 2000a: 163-6; Øhrgaard, 2004: 30-2). It also widened Irish foreign policy interests and provided the Irish state with a regional setting wherein to establish greater diplomatic ties with geographic regions, such as the Middle East (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 59-60, 321-2; Dorr, 2002: 125-6; Hume, 1999: 327; Ishizuka, 2004: 109; Keatinge, 1978: 77-8, 80, 165-6, 210-6; Laffan, 2002: 47-9; McNamara, 2003: 75, 83, 94).

In terms of Irish foreign policy worldviews, accession to the EEC reflected a "shift from protectionism to outward orientation" and a "drive to overcome the limits of closure and isolation" (O'Donnell, 2000a: 162-3). Thereafter, Anglo-Irish and Irish-American relations, previously regarded as the "*domaines reservees*" of national foreign policy, came to be more strongly counterbalanced with pro-European policy perspectives, so that "the international backdrop for Ireland today consists of far more than just the totality of relationships between Ireland and Britain" (Manseragh, 2002: 93; Tonra and Ward, 2002a: 5; see also: Hederman-O'Brien, 2002: 163-4).

With specific reference to the four-year period of this case study's analysis, the fact that the Irish economy underwent a period of unprecedented growth, based primarily on foreign investment from the United States and a shift towards high-tech productivity, gave rise to a greater international profile of Ireland as the "Celtic Tiger" (Ferriter, 2004: 662, 671, 674; O'Donnell, 2000a: 209-12). These changes have, in turn, led some analysts to refer to Ireland as a "middle power" on the international stage (Murphy, 2005: 318). Other commentators have similarly argued that Ireland's higher international profile, coupled with Ireland's role in achieving political stability in Northern Ireland, has "elevated Ireland out of the ranks of the poorer, peripheral EU countries" (Manseragh, 2002: 100-3; see also: Crotty, 2002: 1-10; Laffan, 1999: 89; O'Halpin, 1999: 304). Another separate development that also increased Ireland's international standing was Ireland's election to a two-year membership of the UNSC in 2001 (Connolly and Doyle, 2005: 376-7; Dorr, 2002: 104-5, 126). Furthermore, Ireland's Presidency of the EU during the first six months of 2004 increased Ireland's influence within European foreign policy forums.

However, it is also important to reiterate the key argument stressed above that, despite these more contemporaneous changes in Ireland's international standing, Ireland's relatively unique history of colonial dependency and its "small state" status ensures that the "perception and presentation of Ireland as an impoverished, small state 'on the periphery of Europe'" still retains its resonance (O'Neill, 2005: 317). Ireland's economic and geo-political history have also meant that Ireland's international role diverges from that characterising other European "neutrals" which are, in contrast, influenced by "well established foreign policy histories and experience" (Tonra, 2001: 106). As will be discussed in more detail in

the following sections, Ireland's politico-cultural sympathies in relation to international affairs are also likely to differ from those adopted by the United States, Britain and core European states (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 51, 54-5; Dorr, 2002: 108, 111).

This section has highlighted the ways in which two separate sets of historical influences potentially impact on the general political context surrounding Irish national press coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004. The first set of historical influences relate to Ireland's international position as that of a peripheral or "small" European state. Because of Ireland's "small state" status, Irish foreign policy structures and networks of international diplomatic relations are relatively under-developed and under-resourced. Irish foreign policy discourses, therefore, tend to be based on somewhat isolationist, "multilateral" and "principled" worldviews, rather than "realist" positions, or vital national foreign policy interests. Furthermore, Irish foreign policy discourses do not ordinarily achieve high levels of prominence within the political domain or public sphere.

Secondly, Ireland's overriding commitment to the UN system and furthering European integration, as well as strengthening Irish transatlantic relationships were identified as significant historical influences. Particularly, these influences encourage Irish political reliance on foreign policy perspectives that are broadly consonant with, or mostly reside within the limits of UN and EU discourses on international issues, including the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

To conclude, it is hoped that the above discussions provide useful introductions to this chapter's more detailed analyses of the history of Ireland's relations with Israel and the Palestinians, which are presented within the next two sections, respectively. This chapter's final analysis then explores Ireland's more contemporary relations with Israel and the Palestinians.

### **3. Irish-Jewish/Israeli Relations - Mid-1930s to Early 1970s**

Within this case study, literature-based research and interview-based research were combined to analyse the potential contextual impacts exerted by the arena of Irish-Jewish/Israeli relations on political and media constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This discussion here presents the findings of this analysis. Particularly, it describes the ways that Ireland's relations with Israel unfolded from the 1940s to the early 1970s. It begins by briefly outlining the Irish official response to the Holocaust and Irish foreign policy perspectives on the question of granting recognition to the Israeli state during the 1940s. It then discusses the various factors influencing Irish-Israeli relations. It is concluded that, within the context of this case study, it is significant that Ireland has not had any strong ties with Israel.

One of the most defining historical factors that characterised the earliest phases of Irish-Israeli relations was Ireland's adoption of an official policy of restricting Jewish immigration during and after World War II. In fact, historians have argued that the Irish government adopted a "niggardly", "restrictive" and

“shameful” response to the post-World War II Jewish refugee crisis (Goldstone, 2000: 117, 135; see also: Keogh, 1995: 191; Keogh, 1998: 224). Although there is a lack of detailed statistics, it seems clear that from 1933 to 1947 only a tiny percentage of Jewish applications for admittance to Ireland were approved despite indications that thousands of applications had been received (Goldstone, 2000: 135; Keogh, 1995: 141; Keogh, 1998: 192).

Restrictions on Jewish immigration were rigidly imposed during the war, more for “pragmatic” than “ideological” objectives (Keogh, 1990: 110-2). It was argued that marginal rises in Irish public anti-Semitism “simply confirmed what many bureaucrats already believed: Too many Jews were a potential threat to public order” (Goldstone, 2000: 133). Michael Foley, a lecturer in the Department of Journalism and Communications (Dublin Institute of Technology) and a former journalist with *The Irish Times*, emphasised that this “appalling” official attitude towards Jewish refugees, combined with the effects of wartime censorship, meant that the “whole question of Jews in Europe and the Holocaust was very late in coming to Ireland.” Also, “even after the war, there was quite a questioning in Ireland as to the authenticity of accounts of the Holocaust” (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005).

Following Israel’s declaration of statehood on 14 May 1948, the Irish government’s response was both hesitant and minimalist (Wylie, 2000: 137, 141). This response was detailed in a Department of External Affairs memorandum which advised that Ireland grant the “virtual minimum of recognition”, that it was “possible to concede” (Cited in: Wylie, 2000: 137). In fact, it was not until February

1949 that *de facto* recognition was accorded to Israel, in light of the “advanced stage” at which international legitimacy was being granted (Wylie, 2000: 150). These responses mostly resulted from Ireland’s policy of supporting the Vatican’s call that Israel guarantee international access to the Holy Places prior to the accordance of diplomatic recognition (Wylie, 2000: 139, 147). This policy also resulted in Ireland’s continued denial of *de jure* recognition to Israel throughout the 1950s (Wylie, 2000: 138, 145-8, 152-3). In fact, it was only in May 1963 that Ireland recognised Israel *de jure*, which was seen as essential for economic, rather than politico-diplomatic reasons (Wylie, 2000: 138). In December 1974 Irish-Israeli diplomatic relations were formalized on a non-residential ambassadorial basis. Henceforth, diplomatic relations were conducted via the Israeli embassy in London and the Irish embassy in Athens (Miller, 2004c: 82-4, 115).

In addition to the lack of strong political-diplomatic ties between Ireland and Israel (outlined above), Irish-Israeli relations have not been characterised by any appreciable cultural or personal affiliations. In absolute terms, rates of Jewish immigration into Ireland have been miniscule. Moreover, the rate of Irish-Jewish emigration to Israel, totalling approximately 300 emigrants, has also been relatively small and meant that Ireland-Israel ties were substantially weaker than those that pertained between other European countries and Israel (Lentin, 2002). Within Ireland the Jewish community has never numbered more than 5,000. According to the 2002 National Census, less than 1,800 Jews were living in Ireland, representing a decline from 3,255 in 1961 (Rivlin, 2003: 54, 91, 238). The Irish-Jewish community has been described as a “well educated, influential beyond its numbers, reasonably affluent” community (Rivlin, 2003: 254). However, ninety percent of the

Irish-Jewish community have been concentrated in Dublin (Rivlin, 2003: 1, 45) and the influence of the community has been further diminished by the ongoing effects of increased emigration and assimilation (Rivlin, 2003: 239). Furthermore, although it has been argued that “the small size of the Jewish community is irrelevant to the fact that it was a very Zionist and pro-Israeli community”<sup>8</sup>, the influence of that community within Irish public and official spheres has remained limited. Thus, an Israeli diplomat, interviewed as part of this research, argued that:

The problem is the tiny size of the Jewish community, much smaller than what you would have in Britain, in Europe and certainly in the United States... There’s no Jewish intellectual body politic that will come out... My point is that the only people who are dealing with the press on a day-by-day level from the Israeli angle is the Embassy. And, in Britain you have public relations groups, the British-Israel Committee, you have Jewish members of Parliament, you have Rabbis... You have the whole gamut, the whole spectrum. There’s 400,000 or 350,000 Jews there, in all walks of life... So, it’s in Britain that you have much more wide-ranging media (Interview with Author, 20 July 2004).

An Irish foreign policy adviser with considerable experience of working in the area of Irish-Israeli/Palestinian relations, interviewed as part of this research, argued that, “because there are only a miniscule number of Jews in Ireland – approximately 1,500 – this would make the issue of the conflict of less interest to Ireland as a whole, than in other countries with sizable and influential Jewish communities, such as the United States, for instance.” This adviser also argued that while, “there are some shared historical experiences between the Jewish and Irish diaspora peoples”, Israeli policies in the Palestinian territories after 1967 meant that “sympathies within Ireland shifted towards support for the oppressed Palestinians” (Interview with Author, 19 October 2004).

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<sup>8</sup> Email correspondence received from Dr Rory Miller, 21 July 2005.

Hence, the above analysis highlights that the relative lack of historical, political, or cultural resonance of Israeli protagonists' positions within the Irish political domain is a potentially significant contextual factor affecting the politico-discursive environment within which the sampled Irish newspapers reported on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

The following discussion of the history of Irish foreign policies in relation to the Palestinian question also sheds further light on the history of Irish-Israeli relations. This discussion analyses Irish foreign policy positions on the Palestinian question as having historically evolved from positions that closely followed the Vatican position (1948-1955), outlined above, to positions that reflected UN discourses (after 1955) and finally to positions that were mostly tailored to European policies (after Ireland's entry to the EEC, later EU, in 1973) (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 262, 264-5). Thus, Ireland's strong adherence to UN resolutions and EEC (later, EU) policies on the Palestinian question constitutes a crucial context that defines its relationship with Israel and the Palestinians.

#### **4. Ireland's Relationship to the Palestinian Question – A Historical Outline**

This section outlines the major historical influences on Ireland's foreign policy positions on the Palestinian question. These influences include Ireland's colonial history, its nationalistic political culture and its "minor" international status. This outline also assesses the evolution of Irish policies on the Palestinian



question within the context of Ireland's commitment to the UN system and Ireland's membership of the EEC (later, EU).

Ireland's direct experience of international diplomacy and the issue of Israel and the Palestinian territories only began after its admittance to the UN in 1955 and its acceptance onto the UNGA in 1956. Thereafter, support for the UN was a "cornerstone" of Irish foreign policy (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 150) and the major approach of successive Irish governments was to "promote and develop the United Nations' legitimacy and status as a key player in the Middle East" (Miller, 2005: 78). Furthermore, Irish official discourses have consistently adhered to UN resolutions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, especially resolutions that called on Israel to solve the Palestinian refugee crises which developed after the Arab-Israeli Wars of 1947-1949 and June 1967 and to withdraw from territories captured during the June 1967 War, as well as resolutions that called on the Arab states to recognise Israel's right to exist (Miller, 2005: 58-68; Spelman, 2005: 235-7).

Significantly, these UN resolutions challenged the Israeli-United States political consensus forged during the aftermath of the June 1967 War, when the United States became the primary ally of Israel internationally, providing Israel with unprecedented levels of diplomatic, military, economic and political support (Bennis, 2003: 22-32; CAAT, 2002: 12; Hirst, 2004). The Israeli-United States consensus rendered international law and UN resolutions relating to the conflict irrelevant (Bennis, 2003: 22-4). It also exclusively focused on the theme that "peace" is solely dependent on Palestinian renunciation of "terrorism" and that the

conflict's settlement should privilege the "security and well-being of Israel" (Knox and Quirk, 2000: 93; Perthes, 2001: 109-10).

Particularly, during the 1970s and 1980s UN resolutions calling for recognition of Palestinian political rights began to form an "international consensus" on the Palestinian question (Chomsky, 2003: x, 182; Falk, 2000: 2; Lukacs, 1992: 15; Neff, 1995: 113-4). Also, in November 1974 after Arafat's first speech to the UNGA, the UNGA recognised the PLO as the official "representative of the Palestinian people" (Lukacs, 1992: 15). This UN-sponsored move also provided the opportunity for individual countries to grant similar official recognition to the PLO. During 1980 Ireland, France and Austria became the first European countries to grant official recognition to the PLO.

In addition to adhering to UN resolutions, Ireland's positions on Israel and the Palestinian territories have also broadly approximated the positions espoused within EEC forums (later, EU forums) (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 262, 264-5). Therefore, Ireland's membership of the EEC from 1973 onwards was the second most important historical factor influencing the evolution of Irish foreign policy in relation to the Palestinian question.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the discourse arena of the ECC (later, EU) forged a consensus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that largely reflected UN discourses. The issue of Middle East policy was placed on the European Political Cooperation (EPC) Agenda during the early 1970s (Tonra, 2001: 194), largely under the influence of French diplomacy that favoured the Arab position in relation

to the conflict (Soetendorp, 1999: 97-103). The 6 November 1973 Declaration represented the first European collective shift towards supporting the Arab interpretation of UN resolutions. It called for peace to be based on an end to “the territorial occupation” and for the “establishment of a just and lasting peace” that would take account of the “legitimate rights of the Palestinians... to the expression of their national identity” (EC Bulletin No. 10 1973, cited in: Tonra, 2001: 178). The Paris Declaration of 18 June 1979 called for an international framework for peace and the establishment of a Palestinian homeland. It also condemned Israeli occupation and settlements in the Palestinian territories (Tonra, 2001: 179).

On 13 June 1980 the European “Venice Declaration” was issued. It stressed that a “just solution must finally be found to the Palestinian problem which is not simply one of refugees. The Palestinian people, which is conscious of existing as such, must... exercise fully its right to self-determination.” The “Venice Declaration” also condemned Israeli settlements as “illegal under international law,” and as a “serious obstacle to the peace process” (Lukacs, 1992: 17-9). For these reasons, the Venice Declaration has been described as the “pinnacle of EPC achievement on Middle East policy”, despite the fact that it argues for a largely subsidiary European role within the Middle East (Tonra, 2001: 183; see also: Soetendorp, 1999: 107-9). Subsequently, on 27 March 1984 European Foreign Ministers called for the “right of the Palestinian people to self-determination with all that this implies” (European Community Foreign Ministers’ Declaration, Paris, 27 March 1984; cited in: Fisk, 2002: 178).

In conclusion, during the 1970s and the 1980s European discourses argued for an accommodation of *both* Israeli and Palestinian rights within a “comprehensive” regional conflict settlement, in conformity with international legal instruments, including UNSCR 242 and 338 (Perthes, 2001: 105, 108-10, 113-5). These discourses reflected a so-called “even-handed policy” that was informed by French and British interests in the region and supported by other member states (Soetendorp, 1999: 150-1). Moreover, this policy was based on a “vision” of the Middle East as the “most problematic flank of Europe” and on a strong recognition of the conflict’s impact on European security and political stability (King and Donati, 1999: 132, 150-4).

Furthermore, in line with the EEC (later, EU) foreign policy agenda generally, member states’ relations with the Middle East attempted to adhere to the principles of international law, “effective multilateralism” and “soft power”, as opposed to the principles embodied within “hard power”, such as pre-emptive military strikes or “total war” (Cowen, 2004: 11-2; Gillespie, 2004: 99-102). EU official foreign policy discourses also tend to construct its relations with third states around the themes of economic prosperity, democratisation, human rights, cultural tolerance, “preventive diplomacy”, dialogue and cooperation, as opposed to the tendency of United States foreign policy to be more or less exclusively focused upon the narrow issue of ensuring “state security” by engaging in a pre-emptive and unilateral “war on terrorism” against identified security threats (Gillespie, 2004: 106; King and Donati, 1999: 155-62; Tonra, 2004: 85-91).

Irish foreign policies in relation to the Palestinian question were strongly influenced by the above-outlined European context, particularly as Ireland strongly identified with the French “pro-Arab” perspective, which “became gradually centralised in EEC foreign policy” during the 1980s (Ishizuka, 2004: 111-2. 184).

Many of this case study’s interview participants also highlighted the impact of membership of the UN and EEC (later, EU) on Ireland’s policies in the Middle East. For instance, the Irish Representative to the Palestinian Authority, Dr Niall Holohan argued that Irish foreign policy in relation to Israel and the Palestinian territories is “very much set in the framework of European Union policy... And we also realise that there has to be a broader context, which is the United Nations... Britain and the United States take a much more strategic viewpoint. Perhaps, you could call it an imperialist viewpoint... their interests are very different from those of small countries” (Interview with Author, 19 July 2004). An Israeli diplomat similarly explained that:

Ireland puts a lot of influence on the United Nations... It’s a small country. They look for consensus in the world... They [Ireland] are always thinking in terms, which any small country would, of compromise and balance... I would call Irish policy towards the Middle East balanced-minus... Ireland basically toes the line of the European Union, rather than its own foreign policy line (Interview with Author, 20 July 2004).

An Irish diplomat with experience of Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations also argued that Ireland’s position on the Palestinian question “stems perhaps from the fact that Ireland has no major national interests in this conflict and that our main interest in it is as a threat to international peace and security.” Furthermore, the “geo-political terms in which we look at it [the conflict] are rather different from those that say the United States, or China, or even Britain, or France

would employ” (Interview with Author, 4 August 2004). This diplomat also argued that Ireland views the conflict firstly in terms of its “own historical experience”, particularly its “struggle for national independence” and secondly, “in terms of the principles which underlie our foreign policy – the peaceful resolution of disputes, the importance of international law, the central role of the United Nations, our own role within the European Union and our commitment to international development... rather than specific Irish interests” (Interview with Author, 4 August 2004).

It has been acknowledged by historians and interview participants alike, that the pro-UN/EEC (later, EU) slant of Irish policies towards Israel and the Palestinian territories is further influenced by Ireland’s own historical experience. Thus, one historian argued that:

Ireland’s general position on the Middle East might best be characterised as having been at the edge of mainstream opinion. Lacking any domestic political resonance for the tragic contemporary history of European Jews, possessing a strong sympathy for the nationalist cause of Palestinians and experiencing bilateral friction with the Israeli government, Ireland was firmly on the more Arabist side of European policy debates (Tonra, 2001: 195).

From a cultural perspective, it has been argued that Ireland’s “long struggle against colonial imperialism... in combination with Ireland’s geographical positioning on the doorstep of Europe” inflected Irish political discourses with “an empathy for the underdog, an anti-militarism and a dedication to promoting peace, a sensitivity to exploitation” (Crotty, 2002: 11; Keatinge, 1978: 172, 186-7).

One Irish journalist indicated that media coverage of Israel and the Palestinian territories is influenced by the fact that Irish public attitudes to Israel

have been historically “different to attitudes in countries such as Germany and Holland, which were implicated in anti-Semitism and the Holocaust.” Instead, this journalist argued that a historical resonance between the Irish and Palestinian situations meant that, “We remember that Irish people were told ‘to hell or to Connaught’ and that Palestinians are now being told ‘to hell or to Gaza’” (Interview with Author, 29 June 2004). The editor of *An Phoblacht*, Martin Spain stated that he believed *An Phoblacht*’s views of the conflict are rooted in Irish people’s “experience of oppression” and in their “more instinctive grasp of the old saying that ‘one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom-fighter’” (Interview with Author, 2 September 2004).

Furthermore, the Delegate General of Palestine to Ireland, Dr Ali Halimeh stressed the impact of the Irish experience of “British colonial power” and the Northern Ireland conflict in enhancing “general sympathy” for the Palestinians. Hence, the Irish media “understand very well the Middle East. Especially, you have the conflict in Northern Ireland here and they know the nature of this conflict. And they know that we have so much in common between there and here. Not a hundred percent, but enough” (Interview with Author, 5 August 2004).

Senator David Norris, a long-standing political campaigner in relation to the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, asserted that he believed Irish public sympathy for the Palestinian cause was related to its “traditional” sympathy for the “underdog” which changed “in line with changes in events on the ground and in the nature of the conflict” (Interview with Author, 20 October 2004).

Additionally, the Chairman of the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity campaign, Raymond Deane stated that:

I do think that the sentimental attachment of the Irish to the Palestinians does have links to Irish history... but then on that same basis, Irish sympathy for the Jews and the Jewish condition of diaspora and exile stands similarly in the sense of historic affiliation... But now, it is so patently the case that the Palestinians are the underdog and there is a natural sympathy for the underdog. Unfortunately, that does not translate into political realities (Interview with Author, 2 June 2005).

Thus, several interview participants shared the perception that general public sympathy for Palestinians was high within Ireland. However, this perception contrasts with the fact that historically and contemporaneously political support for the Palestinian cause has been mostly implicit and non-prominent. Support has always accrued to the Palestinian cause from the Irish political left, the Republican movement, including Sinn Fein, the Irish Trade Union Movement and Christian Aid (Miller, 2004c: 135-6). However, within the context of national politics, this support has been somewhat peripheralised, particularly in relation to mainstream political debates and issue-agendas.

While the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign, founded in November 2001 by political activists such as Tom Hyland (East Timor Solidarity Campaign), Barbara O'Shea (AFRI) and Raymond Deane (Chairman of Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign), has forged links with the Irish Anti-War Movement and International and European Co-ordinating bodies for NGO's on Palestine, it too is regarded as a marginal, rather than a popular, or mainstream NGO. Raymond Deane defined the Campaign as an "awareness group basically and fundamentally" because "quiet central to what we do is the attempt to wake up the media, to try and



get the media to change the nature of its coverage” (Interview with Author, 2 June 2005).

The relative lack of domestic political interest in the Palestinian question seems to be related strongly to the fact that historically Ireland’s vital or national interest in Israel or the Palestinian question (especially from the period of the 1940s to the late 1960s), has been more limited and qualitatively different from United States, British or French interests (Wylie, 2000: 142). Secondly, the fact that there are no appreciable numbers from the Palestinian diaspora residing in Ireland impacts adversely on Irish cultural and personal ties with the Palestinians.

Moreover, Ireland’s involvement in the Middle East region generally has been mostly confined to bi-lateral economic and trade relations. During the 1970s and 1980s greater increases occurred in Ireland’s formal and economic relations with the oil-exporting and beef-importing Arab states of the Middle East (Miller, 2004c: 116-8, 189). Thereafter, Irish-Arab trade relations have had some impact on Ireland’s attitude to the question of Palestine, especially in conjunction with Ireland’s “belief in the moral justness of the Palestinian cause for self-determination and the legitimacy of the PLO” (Miller, 2004c: 115-8).<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, these relations remain important to the Irish economy, as do Irish-Israeli economic relations, which were strengthened from the mid-1990s onwards.

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<sup>9</sup> “Mid-East instability in general and Israel-Arab wars were viewed as a strategic threat to Ireland from 1967 because of its oil needs... and into the 1980s when Iraq and Iran became the dominant beef markets. Irish governments – and they admitted it – saw their attitude to the Palestine question as a function of improving economic ties with the Arab world. Moreover, by adhering to the EU view on the conflict over this period it was also making a strategic decision because the EU’s approach was also influenced greatly by strategic interests” (Email correspondence received from Dr Rory Miller, 21 July 2005).

In addition to these economic and trade relations, Ireland has maintained an ongoing commitment to two “soft” foreign policy roles. Firstly, during the 1970s Ireland became an important and regular donor to the PA, in the form of a small programme of bilateral assistance to the Palestinian territories. This assistance was additional to Ireland’s long-standing provision of financial assistance to UNRWA (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 262-3). Secondly, Ireland made consistent commitments to several UN peacekeeping missions in the region. The first such Irish contribution was its participation in the UN Observer Group mission to Lebanon, which was established in June 1958. Irish forces participated in the UNTSO Mission to the Golan Heights and the Israeli-Lebanese/Egyptian borders (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 262-3; Miller, 2005: 57-8). Ireland has also been the only EU country to have continuously contributed to the UNIFIL mission established in southern Lebanon in 1978 (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 262-3). From 1978 to November 2001 over 38,100 Irish troops had served in the Lebanon (Miller, 2005: 73).

One Israel-based journalist emphasised the impact of Irish involvement in UN peacekeeping in southern Lebanon, in conjunction with the “centrality of religion” in Ireland, in maintaining Irish media interest in the conflict (Interview with Author, 11 July 2004). In fact, the Irish UNIFIL contingent’s difficult experience of Israeli military aggression in Southern Lebanon increased Irish sympathies for the Palestinians and Irish-sponsored political criticisms of Israel (Miller, 2005: 71-3; O’Halpin, 1999: 270, 343; Tonra, 2001: 196). One Irish diplomat argued that during periods of Israeli military operations in Lebanon during the 1980s and 1990s a “rather unfavourable impression of the Israeli position”

developed within Irish political-military circles and public opinion generally (Interview with Author, 4 August 2004). Michael Foley, a lecturer in the Department of Journalism and Communications (Dublin Institute of Technology) and a former journalist with *The Irish Times*, further explained that the ongoing presence of Irish troops in Lebanon ensured that,

Whereas the United States tends to accept the official Israeli line that they are a nation under attack, Irish peacekeepers have propounded the view that it is Israel that is the biggest military threat within the region. It is also important that the Irish army's press office has been a very sophisticated media source for a long time on this issue... The issue of the Middle East has always had a resonance for Irish newspapers... because Irish troops are there... there is some coverage... even if it is only by accident (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005).

Similarly, the foreign editor of *The Irish Times*, Paddy Smyth stated that the “atrocious behaviour of the Israelis in supporting militias in southern Lebanon which attacked Irish troops” was documented within the Irish public sphere over several years and, therefore, acted as “part of the galvanizing effect of opinion in favour of the Palestinian people” as a people who are “struggling for independence and are put upon by the big powers and are victims of history” (Interview with Author, 16 June 2005).

To summarise, therefore, the historical developments that are concluded to have significant constructivist impacts on Ireland's contemporary relations with Israel and the Palestinians were outlined above in terms of an overall evolution of Irish foreign policy in relation to Israel and the Palestinian question. This evolution was discussed in terms of three separate historical phases. During the 1940s until the mid-1950s Ireland adhered to the Vatican's positions on Israel. From the mid-1950s onwards Ireland's foreign policy in relation to the Middle East was

influenced by its appropriation of UN positions. The third and perhaps most significant phase of Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations began with Irish entry to the EEC in 1973. Thereafter, EEC (later, EU) perspectives and discourses on Israel and the Palestinian territories became very influential in structuring Ireland's official perspectives on the conflict's settlement.

The above discussion also concluded that while Ireland did not have "hard" diplomatic interests, or direct involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict per se, Ireland did have significant economic and trade relations with Israel and the Arab states, as well as strong rates of participation in UN peacekeeping missions in the region and in financial donor programmes to UNRWA and the PA. These latter dimensions of Irish involvement in the Middle East, Israel and the Palestinian territories, in turn, ensured some ongoing official interest in the Palestinian question. In particular, Irish peacekeeping interests in the Middle East focused Irish political attentions on international human rights perspectives and increased Irish political criticisms of Israel. These criticisms became more pronounced during events such as the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and throughout the first Palestinian *intifada* – from December 1987 to September 1993.

In response to the widespread violence that accompanied the first Palestinian *intifada* from December 1987 onwards the Irish government supported EEC calls for a "comprehensive, just and lasting political settlement of conflict" as the "only solution." The Irish government also concurred with EEC criticisms of Israel's ongoing occupation and military response as "not excusable on any grounds" (Miller, 2004c: 128-9, 140-1). Ireland "welcomed" Yasser Arafat's declaration to

the PNC on 15 November 1988 and supported EEC calls for the convening of an international peace conference and for full PLO representation in future negotiations regarding the settlement of the Palestinian question (Miller, 2004c: 130-3).

As was outlined in the previous chapter, the cessation of the Palestinian uprising and the development of the Oslo “peace process” exacted significant changes in Israeli-Palestinian relations, as well as changes in international media constructions of the conflict and its protagonists. The following section focuses on the changes that these developments had on Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations.

## **5. Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian Relations - September 1993 to July 2004**

This section discusses the impact that the changed Oslo “peace process” context had on Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations. Broadly speaking, the signing of the DoPs on 13 September 1993 provided the framework for a historically unprecedented process of United States-sponsored Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the signing of a series of interim and partial agreements (Beilin, 1999; Savir, 1998; Shehadeh, 1997; Shlaim, 1994a).<sup>10</sup> The EU supported the Oslo “peace process” by playing a “sidelines” or “complementary” role (Fisk, 2002: 191-

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<sup>10</sup> See: Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area (May 1994), Protocol of Further Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities (August 1995), Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip or Oslo II (September 1995), Wye River Memorandum (October 1998), Sharm El Sheikh Memorandum (September 1999) and the abortive Permanent Status Negotiations, (first begun in May 1996, but postponed to March 1997 under the Hebron Protocol). Negotiations were resumed without success on 13 September 1999 and at Camp David in July 2000.

2; Perthes, 2001: 104, 115; Soetendorp, 1999: 107-9, 112). This role focused mostly on the “partnership” or “soft” dimensions of EU-Middle East relations, such as socio-economic and cultural dimensions (Perthes, 2001: 113-5).

Ireland strongly supported the Common Foreign and Security Policy Joint Action that was published on 19 April 1994. This CFSP Joint Action committed the EU to participation in the Oslo “peace process” and to becoming a major financial donor to the PA (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 264; Tonra, 2001: 190). Thereafter, the EU became the PA’s largest international donor (Soetendorp, 1999: 112). Ireland also supported the outcome of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference in Barcelona in 1995, which promoted greater regional politico-economic relations with Israel and Arab states (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 263-4). In 1996 the EU renewed the bilateral preferential trade agreement (which was originally established with Israel in 1975) as a full Association Agreement.<sup>11</sup>

The signing of the DoPs also led to a significant opening-up of Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations (Keatinge, 1994: 149; Miller, 2004c: 152-5). Specifically, in 1996 the Israeli Embassy was opened in Dublin and an Irish Embassy was opened in Tel Aviv (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 323). The Irish White Paper on Foreign Policy in 1996 fully endorsed the “particular contribution” of the EU in “fostering peace in the region” and referred to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as “one of the greatest challenges to regional and world peace”.

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<sup>11</sup>Since mid-2000 there has been an ongoing debate surrounding the continued existence and renewal of this Agreement in light of Israel’s repeated contraventions of its “human rights” clause, embodied in Article 2 (EMHRN, 2004: 7-9, 13, 15, 17, 20).

especially in terms of the Palestinian refugee problem and the “strategic importance of the Middle East with its heavy concentration of oil resources” (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 261, 263).

During the 1990s the Irish government increased its financial aid to the PA (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996: 262). Furthermore, “highly positive” relations developed between Ireland and the PA, culminating in Yasser Arafat’s visit to Dublin in May 1999 and Taoiseach Ahern’s pledge that “we will continue to support your just cause in every way we can” (Cited in: Miller, 2004c: 170-3). Also, following the signing of the Wye Agreement in October 1998, Ireland committed itself to the annual provision of US\$2 million for education and health projects within PA-administered areas from 1999 to 2003 (Miller, 2004c: 172). In 2000 an Irish representative office was established in Ramallah to facilitate administration of Irish aid and solidify Irish-Palestinian diplomatic relations. In response to the outbreak of widespread hostilities in mid-October 2000, the Irish government approved a one-off humanitarian donation of US\$100,000 to aid the Palestinian medical relief effort, in addition to substantially increasing its annual contribution (Miller, 2004c: 184-5).

Furthermore, during the period of the second Palestinian *intifada* “the defence of the PA, especially Yasser Arafat, from any Israeli policy of exclusion or marginalization has been a central concern of Ireland’s Palestine policy” (Miller, 2004c: 179). This concern, in turn, distinguished the Irish approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, especially in the light of increasing international criticism of the Palestinian leadership from mid-2000 until Arafat’s death in November 2004.

Ireland's decision to grant humanitarian leave-to-remain to two of the thirteen militants involved in the siege at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, who arrived in Dublin on 23 May 2002, is also taken as demonstrative of official support for the Palestinian position (Miller, 2004c: 185). The wounding of Irish volunteer activist, Caoimhe Butterly, in Jenin refugee camp in April 2002 and the arrest and deportation of Irish volunteers, Mary Kelly and Salah Afifi in May 2002 and August 2002, respectively, highlighted Irish NGO support for the Palestinian cause within the public domain (Miller, 2004c: 188).

Ireland's membership of the UNSC from January 2001 onwards, especially its presidency of the Council during October 2001, positioned it at the "centre of the Middle East crisis at a highly sensitive time" (Miller, 2004c: 181). Ireland's response to the collapse of the Oslo "peace process" in July 2000 and the crisis situation afflicting the Palestinian territories from October 2000 onwards closely resembled that of the EU, in that it consistently challenged Israel's militarization of the conflict as "excessive and disproportionate" (Cited in: Miller, 2004c: 178-9). In May 2001 Ireland fully endorsed the Mitchell Report's recommendations within the UNSC. Ireland also approved the Saudi Peace Plan, which was announced in February 2002. In 2002 Ireland supported UNSC Resolution 1397 calling for Palestinian statehood and co-sponsored UNSC Resolution 1435 calling on the PA to combat terrorism and for Israel to cease its re-occupation of Palestinian areas, including Yasser Arafat's headquarters (Miller, 2004c: 182-4). In September 2003 the Irish government strongly opposed the Israeli cabinet decision to expel Yasser Arafat and endorsed the UNGA resolution condemning this planned expulsion



(Miller, 2004c: 194). In October 2003 Ireland supported the UN Draft Resolution condemning the construction of the Separation Barrier (Miller, 2004c: 195).

During the first half of 2004 Ireland's presidency of the EU increased its diplomatic involvement in the conflict. Foreign Minister, Brian Cowen confirmed that the issue would be on the Irish presidency's agenda and he undertook two visits to Israel and the Palestinian territories in June 2003 and in January 2004, respectively. However, notwithstanding this contribution, Ireland's wider history of confining itself to "soft" roles, that are highly dependent upon UN and EU perspectives, remained the primary factor influencing its positions on Israel and the Palestinian territories from the early 1990s onwards. Moreover, this confinement of Irish foreign policy in the Middle East to "minor" or "soft" roles, particularly in the areas of economic relations and peacekeeping commitments, ensured that while there was some ongoing official interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that was somewhat more sympathetic to the Palestinian perspective, this was not a "hard" or "vital" foreign interest.

Consequently, Ireland's relative lack of "hard" interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as the relative weakness of Irish political-diplomatic ties with Israel and the Palestinians, reduced direct governmental involvement in Israel and the Palestinian territories and the prominence of the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the Irish public sphere.

## 6. Conclusions

The primary research objective of this chapter is similar to that adopted by chapter 3. Both chapters have sought to provide separate historical background analyses that would adequately contextualize the analyses presented in chapter 6 and chapter 7 regarding sampled Irish newspapers' presentations and frames of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

This chapter began by providing a general outline of the major historical factors influencing the development of Ireland's international role and Irish foreign policy traditions, particularly as they relate to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This outline concluded that factors such as Ireland's "small state" and peripheral international status, its colonial history and direct experience of political conflict, had important influences on the evolution of Irish foreign policy traditions. Other significant formative foreign policy influences were the Irish state's early adoption of Catholic nationalism as its "official" ethos and its adoption of policies of military neutrality and partial isolationism.

It was also concluded that Ireland's lack of "hard power", or "vital" national foreign policy interests in Israel and the Palestinian territories, meant that Irish official governmental positions on the Palestinian question often tended to be qualitatively different from those adopted by more powerful states, such as the United States, Britain, France, or Germany. Moreover, while this outline concluded that Ireland's historic dependency on the worldviews of the British foreign office was a key feature of its foreign policy orientation until the 1970s, successive Irish

governments have also consistently relied upon a combination of UN perspectives (after 1955) and EEC (later, EU) perspectives (after 1973) to construct its positions and responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This initial general outline, therefore, served as a useful introduction to this chapter's analysis of the history of Irish-Jewish/Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations. It was concluded that Irish-Israeli relations have not been based on any strong political, diplomatic, cultural, or personal ties. It was illustrated that the Jewish community living in Ireland is relatively small, especially when compared with other core European states and the United States. Furthermore, Ireland's construction of itself as a "Catholic nation", its military neutrality during World War II and its consequent lack of direct witnessing of the Holocaust, in addition to the Irish state's reluctance to grant full diplomatic recognition to Israel, hindered the development of Irish-Israeli relations. These factors also ensured that Israeli political discourses did not have a strong historical resonance within the Irish public sphere.

The primacy accorded by Irish foreign policy makers to UN and EEC (later, EU) perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in addition to Ireland's support for UN peacekeeping missions in the Middle East, were cited as important historical factors affecting successive Irish governments' positions on the Palestinian question. Moreover, while Ireland lacked "hard" or "vital" foreign policy interests in Israel and the Palestinian territories, its "soft" policy roles, particularly in supporting the PA and UN peacekeeping missions, in addition to successive Irish governments' underlying "sympathy" with the plight of the Palestinian people,

fostered the perception that Ireland was more “pro-Palestinian” than other EEC (later, EU) member states.

The final section of this chapter extended this historical analysis by focusing on the key issues and events defining more contemporary manifestations of Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian relations. Therefore, this section is a useful introduction to the following chapter’s analysis of the contemporary political context defining the arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of this case study – from July 2000 to July 2004.

The following chapter focuses on how the “collapse” of the Oslo “peace process”, signalled by the failure of Israel and the Palestinians to conclude a final status agreement at Camp David in July 2000, was a highly significant event, especially in terms of the conflict’s wider history. The following chapter then focuses on the major developments characterising the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004 and argues that this period constitutes a theoretically and empirically appropriate time-period for this analysis.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **THE POLITICAL CONTEXT AND DYNAMICS OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT – JULY 2000 TO JULY 2004**

#### **1. Introduction**

This chapter analyses the key developments and events that defined the wider political-diplomatic and discursive context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004.<sup>12</sup> This analysis is based on the assumption that this wider context is likely to have some impacts on Irish national media coverage (Jabri, 1996: 15, 36, 90, 110, 128; MacDonald, 2003: 1, 10-1, 25, 42-3, 50). This chapter begins with an account of how the “collapse” of the Camp David Summit in July 2000 signalled a “turning point in Israeli-Palestinian relations” (Reinhart, 2002: 21). This “collapse” culminated in the “death of Oslo” and produced the conditions for the emergence of a “post-Oslo era” of Israeli-Palestinian relations that were increasingly characterised by a dramatic rise in the levels of Israeli and Palestinian militant violence. This “post-Oslo era”, therefore, supplied a completely altered context within which the international media operated (Noakes and Wilkins, 2002: 666-7).

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<sup>12</sup> This analysis is supplemented by a detailed time-line of the major political developments that occurred during the period of July 2000 to July 2004, which is presented in Appendix 1.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is structured by deeply embedded political relations of domination, subordination and resistance (Chomsky, 2003: 49-50; Nordstrom and Martin, 1992a: 1-12; Sluka, 1992: 27-31). Thus, the conflict is not simply reducible to its discursive or media constructions (Gilboa, 1993: 93). In fact, the “discursive fields” of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are themselves “culturally articulated” dimensions of the overall conflict (Nordstrom and Martin, 1992a: 11; Purvis and Hunt, 1993: 485-6, 489-91, 497-8). Moreover, as already outlined in chapter 3, Israeli and Palestinian political discourses, as well as international media discourses, also draw on competing narratives that are firmly rooted within the conflict’s wider history (Heisey, 1997: 14-6, 19-21; Sluka, 1992: 25-6).

The spirals of political violence that have characterised the conflict to date consist of *both* Israeli state-perpetrated “structural violence” and Palestinian extra-parliamentary violence (Galtung, 1981: 83-96). In the wider sense, the conflict has been defined as an ongoing historical contest over land (Oliver and Steinberg, 1993: 16), which is itself embedded within competing national and religious identities (Murphy-O’Connor, 2003: 263; Oliver and Steinberg, 1993: 17). Both communities construct the conflict as a national liberation struggle and rely on opposing narratives regarding the genuineness of their respective peoples’ claims to historic Palestine as their ancestral “homeland” (Chomsky, 2003: 3, 46-7, 73, 77, 80, 82-4). Both communities also advocate “strong and competing claims about deep historical injustices” (Gamson, 1992b: 54). These competing constructions, in turn, are based on mutually exclusive collective constructs that operate at the “deepest levels of identity and existence” within a “totality of war” environment (Shinar, 2002: 281-3).

This chapter's analysis of the wider politico-diplomatic and discursive context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004 is thematically organised. Particularly, it focuses on the ways in which themes of "Palestinian terrorism", "unilateral disengagement" and "complete separation" assumed pre-eminence within Israeli political domains, at the expense of "equal partnership" and "conflict resolution" themes. Also, within Palestinian political domains, the themes of "Israeli aggression", "Palestinian injustice" and "resistance" gained increased public visibility, particularly in response to increased Israeli politico-economic and structural violence against Palestinians from late September 2000 onwards.

## **2. Israeli-Palestinian Relations - From the "Death of Oslo" to the "Disengagement Plan" – July 2000 to July 2004**

The Camp David negotiations, involving the participation of President Clinton, Prime Minister Ehud Barak and President Yasser Arafat, began on 11 July 2000, but ended without agreement on 25 July, amid substantive contentions (Morris, 2001: 659). Thereafter, the Israeli government launched an extensive public relations campaign centred on the theme of Arafat's total culpability for Camp David's "failure" (see: Interview with Ehud Barak, cited in: Morris, 2002a). The Clinton administration also adhered to this "script" (Ackerman, 2001; Reinhart, 2002: 22; Smith, 2004). Arafat was charged with rejecting Barak's "generous" offer to return over 95% of the Palestinian territories and most of Arab East Jerusalem, to dismantle Israeli settlements and to establish shared sovereignty over Haram al-

Sharif (Wolfsfeld, 2004: 190). Thereafter, the official Israeli consensus adopted a narrative of “Israeli generosity versus Arab rejectionism”, which de-legitimised the Palestinians as a “partner for peace”, demonised Palestinian resistance to occupation and justified the resultant return to violence as a “no choice war over Israel’s very existence” (Christison, 2002b; Dor, 2004: 16, 55-6, 81-2; Kimmerling, 2003; Klein, 2002: 2-6; Reinhart, 2002: 87; Sayigh, 2001: 48).

Moreover, Barak’s claims regarding his offer to “put an end to occupation” and to have “turned every stone” by offering unprecedented “territorial compromises”, are thought to have fallen far short of what Palestinian perspectives regarded as a just resolution to the conflict (Dor, 2004: 150-3). In fact, Israel’s territorial offer is thought to have amounted to returning between 42% and 62% of “cantonised” areas of the West Bank, in addition to the Gaza Strip, while leaving the remaining West Bank territory (ranging from 38% to 58%), as annexable to Israel (Isaac and Rizik, 2002: 3-4; Reinhart, 2002: 42-6). Within Palestinian perspectives, therefore, the decisive factor in the “collapse” of the Camp David negotiations was Barak’s unswerving adherence to the “‘five no’s’... no withdrawal to the June 1967 boundaries; no dismantling of (all) settlements; no division of Jerusalem; no Arab army west of the Jordan river; and no return of Palestinian refugees” (Rabbani, 2001: 78).

Despite Arafat and Barak’s stated commitment to a ceasefire at the Sharm El Sheikh Summit on 17 October 2000 the violence associated with the *Al Aqsa intifada* continued unabated (see: Appendix 1; see also: <http://www.jmcc.org/peace/agreements/sharmoct.htm> (Accessed on 10 March



2004)). In January 2001 further talks were held in Taba. The Israeli and United States' negotiating teams emphasised the "generosity" of the "Clinton Parameters", initially presented to Arafat and Barak on 23 December 2000 (Reinhart, 2002: 208-12). According to the EU Envoy Miguel Moratinos, the Palestinian delegation had broadly accepted Clinton's proposal as constituting the parameters for future negotiations (Klein, 2002: 6), despite the Israeli government "line" that the Palestinians had rejected yet another "historic chance to negotiate a settlement" (Agha and Malley, 2002; Morris, 2002a; Morris, 2002b; Ross, 2002: 1-2; Ross, 2004).

However, the Palestinian delegation expressed "reservations" regarding the "vague percentages of territory" on offer, which rendered UNSCR 242 null and void and reduced the territorial contiguity of any future Palestinian state (Christison, 2002a). Israel's "generous" offer of "97% of the West Bank" was argued to consist of only 78%, as 12% of the West Bank lands that held the largest Israeli settlements were to be earmarked for annexation (Isaac and Rizik, 2002: 5). Specifically, the Israeli side refused to concede the territory between the West Bank settlements, arguing that settlement expansions should continue within the West Bank. The Israeli side also insisted that the areas on which settlements are located should be annexed in "blocks", regardless of the fact that the Palestinian delegation regarded those "blocks" as essential for the territorial contiguity of any future Palestinian state (Reinhart, 2002: 214, 216-7). The minimal "symbolic" return of Palestinian refugees, in addition to Israel's refusal to acknowledge "responsibility" for the refugee crisis, was also regarded as unacceptable by the Palestinian delegation (Hammani and Tamari, 2001).

The February 2001 election of Ariel Sharon and his re-election in 2002 and 2003 signalled a “clear shift to the right” within Israel (Bar-On, 2003: 1). The Sharon-led governments dismantled the traditional “eternal negotiations” model that had characterised the Labour party’s relations with the PA since the early 1990s and also de-legitimised the Barak-sponsored “generous” peace model pursued from July 2000 to January 2001 (Reinhart, 2002: 221, 225-6).

Instead, from 2001 to mid-2004 the Sharon-led governments escalated military repression in order to eliminate Palestinian resistance (see: Appendix 1; see also: Reinhart, 2002: 191-4). This was justified in terms of a so-called “security logic” (Bishara, 2002: 3, 6-9, 89-90). Policies aimed at increasing settlement expansions and halting any “territorial compromises” were also implemented. These policies formed part of the wider “redemption of land” ideology historically prominent within the Israeli military-political elite (Reinhart, 2002: 193-9).

In fact, right from the beginning of its ascendance to power in February 2001 the Sharon-led government argued that the Taba “concessions” no longer constituted tenable or desirable options (see: <http://www.mideastweb.org/quartetrm3.htm> (Accessed on 4 July 2004); see also: Sussman, 2004: 2-5). Moreover, this argument was intensified within Israeli political circles throughout this period and right up until July 2004.

The role of the United States within the arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during this period of July 2000 to July 2004 is best explained within a discourse analytic perspective, which argues that fields of international relations are

constructed outcomes (Shapiro, 1989: 14). The George W. Bush administration, elected in early 2001, initially implemented a more minimalist and distanced approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, following the attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, changes occurred within United States foreign policy towards the Middle East. From October 2001 to July 2004 the United States became more directly involved, especially by promoting President Bush's so-called "vision" of Palestinian statehood and the "Roadmap" (see: Appendix 1). Moreover, by April 2004 the role of the United States became more explicitly partial towards Israel's positions, signified on 14 April 2004 by President Bush's statement welcoming the Disengagement Plan, as marking "real progress toward realising the vision I set forth in June 2002" (see: Appendix 1).

These changes in the United States' relationship to Israel were part of the wider radical shifts that occurred within the United States' foreign policy during the post-11 September 2001 period. The attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon were "focusing events" that strongly influenced the United States' foreign policy agendas and international media coverage (Kent and Schmid, 2004: 12-4). In the aftermath of 11 September the United States administration increasingly deployed a "discourse of moral certitude" to construct the international order into "terrorist" actors and "anti-terrorist" actors. This discourse focused particularly on demonising the "enemy" as a global "terrorist" threat within simplistic and exclusivist terminology (Anderson, 2004: 306, 313, 320-1; Campbell, 1993: 2, 22; Cottey, 2004: 32-45; see also: "Declaration by G.W. Bush to Joint Session of the US Congress on 20 September 2001, State of the Union Address", 29 January 2002." cited in: Bowden, 2004: 88-9).

Specifically, the “war on terrorism” discourse provided media in the United States with an all-encompassing global “anchoring paradigm comparable to the Cold War,” though in a somewhat more ambiguous and contested way (Entman, 2003: 424; see also: Entman, 2004: 107-22). Thereafter, this paradigm “echoed through” international media coverage and the terms - “war on terror” and “terrorist” - became part of media “common usage” (Moeller, 2004: 60, 69, 71). Furthermore, from 2002 onwards and especially during the first half of 2003, the Bush administration achieved sufficient success in framing its plans to unilaterally invade Iraq within the “war on terror” paradigm (Entman, 2004: 95, 112, 116-7, 121-2).

With particular reference to discursive constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this “war on terror” rhetoric enabled the United States and Israeli administrations to construct Yasser Arafat as a “terrorist” and to construct the Israeli military suppression of Palestinian “resistance” as an adjunctive, or parallel “war on terror” (see: Appendix 1; see also: Bacik, 2004: 26; Bishara, 2002: 4, 17-8; Coleman, 2005: 178-9; Malek, 2004: 162, 165; Moeller, 2004: 65; Reinhart, 2002: 142, 179).

This international context, therefore, is assumed to have had some impact on the politico-discursive arena surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict throughout this case study’s sampling interval. More significant, however, is the fact that by July 2004, despite the nominal acceptance of the internationally endorsed “roadmap” by Israel and the Palestinians, its first phase remained unimplemented (see: Appendix 1). Within Israeli “discursive fields” the “roadmap” solution was

increasingly challenged by discourses which argued that the “unilateral withdrawal” plan and the construction of the so-called “Separation Barrier” constituted more preferred political outcomes (see: Appendix 1; see also: Reinhart, 2002: 226-32). However, Palestinian political discourses challenged and opposed these plans as illegal forms of territorial annexation or “apartheid” (Bishara, 2003; Shlaim, 2003).

Significantly, as the following section outlines, this “post-Oslo” discursive-diplomatic context was also defined by intensified escalations of the conflict on the part of the Israeli state and Palestinian militant groups. Israeli violence consisted of spirals of assassinations “targeting” Palestinian militant leaders, military strikes against Yasser Arafat and the PA infrastructure and re-occupations of Palestinian areas. During this period Israel also imposed a system of economic and civil repression within the Palestinian territories that was of a historically unprecedented severity (see: Appendix 1; see also: Bishara, 2002: 9-13, 20, 24, 129; Reinhart, 2002: 116-24, 137, 174-8).

The escalations of the conflict for which Palestinian militant groups were responsible included shootings and bomb attacks on settler and security “targets” within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and unprecedentedly high rates of “suicide” attacks within Israel (see: Appendix 1). As is also discussed in the following section, these escalations were part of a wider campaign of Palestinian “resistance” against the Israeli occupation, which began as a series of protests in late September 2000, assuming the form of a second Palestinian uprising, or *Al Aqsa intifada*.

### 3. **Competing Constructions of the *Al Aqsa Intifada* - “Terrorism” Versus “Resistance” - September 2000 to July 2004**

The *Al Aqsa intifada* owes its immediate origins to the unarmed Palestinian protest that occurred in East Jerusalem on 29 September 2000. The protest was precipitated by Ariel Sharon’s (the then Likud opposition leader) visit to Haram al-Sharif (Agha and Malley, 2002; Mitchell, 2001: 5-6; Reinhart, 2002: 88-94; Selfa, 2000: 2). Over the following weeks a low intensity and asymmetrical war of attrition developed within the Palestinian territories (see: Appendix 1). This war primarily involved clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli forces and resulted in huge Palestinian fatalities (Bishara, 2002: 17, 22). Particularly, during the earliest phases of the fighting the recurring media image was that of a “mighty Israeli Goliath... fighting a stone-throwing Palestinian David” (Bishara, 2002: 21). There was also enormous destruction of Palestinian property, exchanges of fire between settlers and local Palestinians and a range of shooting incidents perpetrated by Palestinian militants (La Guardia, 2003: 262-5; Mitchell, 2001: 6, 12-3).

During the first ten days of the clashes seventy-four Palestinians were killed in demonstrations in the Palestinian territories (Milne, 2004; Shay and Schweitzer, 2001: 3). Also, in early October 2000 the IDF killed thirteen Arab Israelis and wounded several hundred during demonstrations in northern Israeli towns, which evidenced the “collapse” of any “integration illusion” (Bishara, 2000: 4; Bishara, 2002: 47-52; Reinhart, 2002: 108-10). During the entire period of the uprising, levels of Israeli firearm deployment were far higher than during any previous period

(Eid, 2002: 1; Mitchell, 2001: 6, 13; Reinhart, 2002: 94-6; Sayigh, 2001: 56; Selfa, 2000: 2; Wolfsfeld, 2004: 204).

The longer term origins of the *intifada* lie in the progressive rise in Palestinian disillusionment with the failures of the “peace process” to deliver what are regarded as basic prerequisites for an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Agha and Malley, 2002; Bishara, 2000: 5; Bishara, 2002: 27, 31, 42-3, 61-9; Mitchell, 2001: 6-8). Within Palestinian perspectives the *Al Aqsa intifada* is a “resistance” campaign that aims to force an end to the Israeli occupation (Bishara, 2002: 17, 21, 160-1; La Guardia, 2001: 266; La Guardia, 2003: 273-4; Shalom and Shalom, 2000) and to achieve Palestinian political and territorial rights (Kimmerling, 2003; Rabbani, 2001: 72-6; Said, 2001: 33-40; Shay and Schweitzer, 2001: 1). The origins of the *intifada*, therefore, powerfully displayed the demise of majority Palestinian support for the Oslo “peace process” (Selfa, 2000: 1).

Within Israeli political perspectives, however, Palestinian protests amounted to a series of civil disturbances (Blum-Kulka and Liebes, 1993: 38), which proved the winning-out of “terrorism” over “democratic rule” within the Palestinian territories and the “no partner for peace” theme (Klein, 2002: 7). The protests and resultant clashes were officially defined within Israel as amounting to an “armed conflict” situation (Human Rights Watch, 2001a: 1). Hence, Israeli political-military discourses primarily constructed its attacks as attempts to minimise the “terrorism” threat and as a “necessary evil” (Bertini, 2002: 3; Knox and Quirk, 2000: 103; UNSCO, 2001: 2).

Moreover, while available evidence suggested that Yasser Arafat possessed little direct control over Palestinian militant groups (Agha and Malley, 2002; Bar-On, 2003: 3; Eid, 2002: 2; Malley, 2004; Mitchell, 2001; Morris, 2001: 671-2; Rabbani, 2001: 81-2; Sayigh, 2001: 52, 55), Israeli sources constructed the *Al Aqsa intifada* as “deliberately engineered by the PA” (Christison, 2002c; Reinhart, 2002: 1-7, 13; see: “GOI Second Statement: Para 2,” cited in: Mitchell, 2001: 5-6; see also: statement by Ehud Barak, cited in: Morris, 2002a; Sayigh, 2001: 48).

International human rights discourses challenged this “terrorism” discourse by denouncing Israel’s use of force as “illegal”, “excessive” and “disproportionate” (see: Amnesty International, 2001a; Amnesty International, 2001b; Amnesty International, 2002c; Amnesty International, 2002d; Falk, 2000; Human Rights Watch, 2001a: 1, 2, 5; Human Rights Watch, 2001b: 1; Human Rights Watch, 2002a: 3; Human Rights Watch, 2003b: 1; Human Rights Watch, 2003c: 3; Palestine Red Crescent Society, 2002a: 6, 9). Approximately seventy-five percent of all fatalities were likely within any given time period to have been Palestinian (PHRMG, 2003a: 1). In total, from late September 2000 to late July 2004, 3,116 Palestinians had died during *intifada*-related violence (Available from: [http://www.palestinercs.org/crisistables/table\\_of\\_figures.htm](http://www.palestinercs.org/crisistables/table_of_figures.htm) (Accessed on 8 November 2004)). During this same time period, 908 Israeli fatalities were recorded (Available from: [http://www.mepc.org/resources\\_counts/04\\_07\\_1.asp](http://www.mepc.org/resources_counts/04_07_1.asp) (Accessed on 8 November 2004)).

The rate of administrative detention spiralled during 2002 so that by the beginning of 2003 and for the first time since 1991, over one thousand Palestinians



were administratively detained (B'Tselem, 2003a). During 2002 alone, approximately 3,800 Palestinians detainees were tried before military courts in circumstances that failed to meet international standards (Amnesty International, 2003a: 1).

Moreover, the complete border closures and internal closures that were routinely imposed during the *Al Aqsa intifada* were the most severe and sustained since Israel occupied the Palestinian territories in 1967 and since the first imposition of the closure policy in 1993 (Bishara, 2002: 12, 35, 124; La Guardia, 2003: 315; Roy, 2001: 92; UNSCO, 2001: 2-4). Human Rights organisations criticised closures as “severe restrictions on movement that far exceed any possible military necessity”, thereby constituting “collective punishment” (Human Rights Watch, 2001b: 1; see also: Amnesty International, 2003c; Amnesty International, 2004a; Bertini, 2002; Human Rights Watch, 2001a: 5; Human Rights Watch, 2003c: 4; Palestine Red Crescent Society, 2002a; PHRMG, 2002e: 1).

Palestinian and international human rights discourses also constructed the Israeli-perpetrated “assassinations” as illegal “summary executions” (Amnesty International, 2003b; Human Rights Watch, 2001a: 6; Mitchell, 2001: 6). Israeli “assassinations” were directly responsible for several sharp escalations in the conflict (see: Appendix 1; see also: JMCC, 2001: 2; PHRMG, 2001: 2). “Assassinations” were intensified during 2002 (Human Rights Watch, 2003c: 3), as a “proactive” means of “preventing terrorism” (Shay and Schweitzer, 2001: 9-10). From November 2000 to 25 September 2003 it is estimated that 207 Palestinian

deaths occurred as a result of such assassinations, including at least eighty-four civilian bystanders (B'Tselem, 2003b).

However, it was Israel's repeated military raids on Palestinian controlled areas, including civilian areas, which constituted the most severe and destructive deployment of military force in the history of the conflict (see: Appendix 1; see also: Amnesty International, 2002d: 2-3; Bishara, 2002: 9-12, 34, 41; Human Rights Watch, 2003c: 1-2; La Guardia, 2003: 265). By the end of 2001 the Israeli cabinet declared the PA "a terror-supporting entity" and blamed Yasser Arafat as "directly responsible" for "suicide" attacks against Israelis. At several different stages of the conflict, Yasser Arafat's headquarters, or *Muqata*, in Ramallah was the direct "target" of Israeli military strikes. Furthermore, from mid-2002 onwards Arafat was placed under permanent "house arrest" (see: Appendix 1). "Operation Defensive Shield" (March-April 2002) and "Operation Determined Path" (June 2002) constituted two of the largest Israeli military raids into West Bank towns (see: Appendix 1). Additionally, the regular military strikes undertaken in the Gaza Strip from late 2003 and right up until "Operation Rainbow" in May 2004, resulted in huge Palestinian fatalities, casualties and property destruction (see: Appendix 1).

In terms of international media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the increase in Palestinian militant attacks against Israel that occurred from January 2001 onwards is a highly significant development. So, while only thirty percent of the earliest months of *Al Aqsa intifada*-related events could be characterised as "armed resistance" (B'Tselem, 2000: 4; Milne, 2004; Mitchell, 2001: 5-6, 11-3; Shay and Schweitzer, 2001: 6-7), from 2001 onwards armed Palestinian attacks

within Israel increased dramatically (see: Appendix 1; see also: Amnesty International, 2002b: 2). From January 2001 to June 2003 a total of 137 “suicide” attacks had been perpetrated against Israeli “targets” and civilians (PHRMG, 2003b). “Suicide” attacks also continued throughout the first half of 2004 (see: Appendix 1).

Consequently, throughout the period of early 2001 to mid-2004 Palestinian “suicide” attacks competed with Israeli military “aggression” as primary symbols of the conflict. Therefore, on the one hand, escalations in Israeli political and structural violence against Palestinians from late-September 2000 onwards are likely to have re-enacted international depictions of Israel as the “aggressor.” On the other hand, however, the increased visibility of Palestinian “suicide” attacks within Israel from early 2001 onwards might also be expected to reverse these depictions and enhance the resonance of Israeli “terrorism” and “national security” themes within international media discourses.

#### **4. Conclusions**

This chapter has attempted to summarise the major developments and events that defined the political environment surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004. It begins with an account of how the Camp David Summit “collapse” in July 2000 signalled the “death of Oslo” and the emergence of a “post-Oslo era” of Israeli-Palestinian relations. During this “era” Israeli-Palestinian relations were dominated by diplomatic stalemate and the Israeli

rhetorical construction of the PA and Yasser Arafat as “terrorist entities.” “Terrorism” and “national security” discourses assumed increased influence within Israeli political domains, ensuring the prominence of “unilateral disengagement” and “complete separation” themes, at the expense of “compromise” and “reconciliation” themes. These discourses were, however, compelled to compete internationally with Palestinian nationalist discourses that underwent a concomitant resurgence during this period.

Within the type of social constructivist media analysis undertaken by this research, it is assumed that media coverage is at least to some extent reflective of the wider political situation it seeks to cover. Thus, changes in political situations invariably produce changes in the news-sourcing strategies and interpretive frameworks incorporated by the media (Cook, 2003: 77, 86). In relation to the period of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that this case study focuses on, this chapter indicates that a number of situational or contextual factors might potentially exert influences on international media coverage.

Firstly, given the nature of the events and developments that defined the arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004, it is likely that the conflict might achieve relatively high levels of media attention during this period.

Secondly, it was suggested that the renewed centrality of political conflict and “war” discourses from July 2000 to July 2004, in conjunction with the orientation of foreign news towards covering conflicts, might result in the

predominance of “conflict”/“political violence” topics within media coverage, at the expense of “peace” topics. On the other hand, however, the politico-diplomatic developments that did occur during this period might also be expected to accord “peace” themes with a certain degree of public and media visibility.

Thirdly, given the highly contested nature of the “discursive fields” of the conflict’s political arenas during the period of July 2000 to July 2004, as well as the international visibility of *both* Israeli and Palestinian frames of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it might be assumed that media coverage would be contested rather than consensual and, therefore, would feature *both* Israeli and Palestinian frames to varying degrees.

The implications of this wider politico-discursive context, in conjunction with the influences exerted by the wider politico-cultural and media contexts characterising the Irish public sphere, therefore, constitute important focuses for this case study’s empirical and qualitative analyses of sampled Irish newspapers’ coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004. As chapter 2 outlined, these analyses are undertaken within a methodological framework that integrates descriptive analysis and frame analysis with an exploratory, qualitative interview process. The following chapter presents the findings of this case study’s semi-quantitative and descriptive newspaper analysis. Where appropriate, the following chapter also discusses the interview-derived findings that have relevance for this analysis.

## CHAPTER 6

### **MANIFEST PRESENTATIONAL FEATURES OF THE SAMPLED NEWSPAPERS' COVERAGE OF THE ISRAELI- PALESTINIAN CONFLICT (JULY 2000 TO JULY 2004)**

#### **1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the first stage of this case study's analysis - the cross-comparative descriptive analysis of sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. As already outlined in chapter 2, the total sample size consisted of 256 newspaper items, which were sampled from a total of 196 newspaper editions, or 49 editions of each newspaper.

The descriptive analysis consisted of an analysis of the rate of newspaper attention and prominence accorded to covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, an analysis of topic/subject-matter presentations and an analysis of the patterns of the source access and representation trends displayed by sampled coverage. Deductive readings, formal numerical coding and semi-quantitative measures were employed to analyse these structural and presentational variables. The coding categories consisted of a mixture of nominal and ordinal values and interval scales (Reid, 1987: 35-8). It is important to state at the outset, however, that this descriptive

analysis is not strictly quantitative, or aimed at elaborate statistical hypotheses testing. Instead, it is intended to serve more exploratory functions, permitting the researcher to delineate and comparatively assess manifest trends occurring in Irish newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict over time (Adoni, Bantz and Cohen, 1990: 69).

This chapter also incorporates some of the findings of this case study's interview-based research undertaken with key media, political/diplomatic and NGO actors. As already outlined in Chapter 2, qualitative interviews were employed to explore possible correlations between trends in the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the wider politico-cultural and media contexts relevant to the sampled newspapers' roles in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004. Moreover, the findings of the combined descriptive and interview-based research presented in this chapter provide valuable research signposts for the qualitative frame analysis undertaken in chapter 7.

## **2. Attention Trends Displayed by the Sampled Newspapers**

One of the first variables measured by this case study's descriptive analysis is the rate of attention given by the sampled newspapers to covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004. Table 2 (below) illustrates that out of the total sample size the largest number of items were sourced from *The Irish Times* – 83 news items (average daily coverage of 1.7 news items), or 32.4% of total items. The sampled *Sunday Tribune* editions supplied 69 items to the total sample

(average weekly coverage of 1.4 news items). The *Irish Independent* supplied 56 items (average daily coverage of one news item). The lowest number of items is recorded for the *Sunday Independent* - 48 items (average weekly coverage of less than one item), or 18.7% of total items.

Because these figures were generated in randomly stratified ways they can be taken to reliably indicate average daily/weekly coverage trends for each newspaper. Therefore, these figures illustrate that the Irish press generally regards coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a regular (albeit frequently semi-/non-prominent), foreign news-beat and covers the conflict in an ongoing way, rather than in random and “hot-event” focused ways (Lederman, 1992: 252, 261-72). Readings of total foreign news output during the course of this newspaper analysis also revealed that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict tended to be accorded comparatively greater amounts of attention than other foreign conflicts.

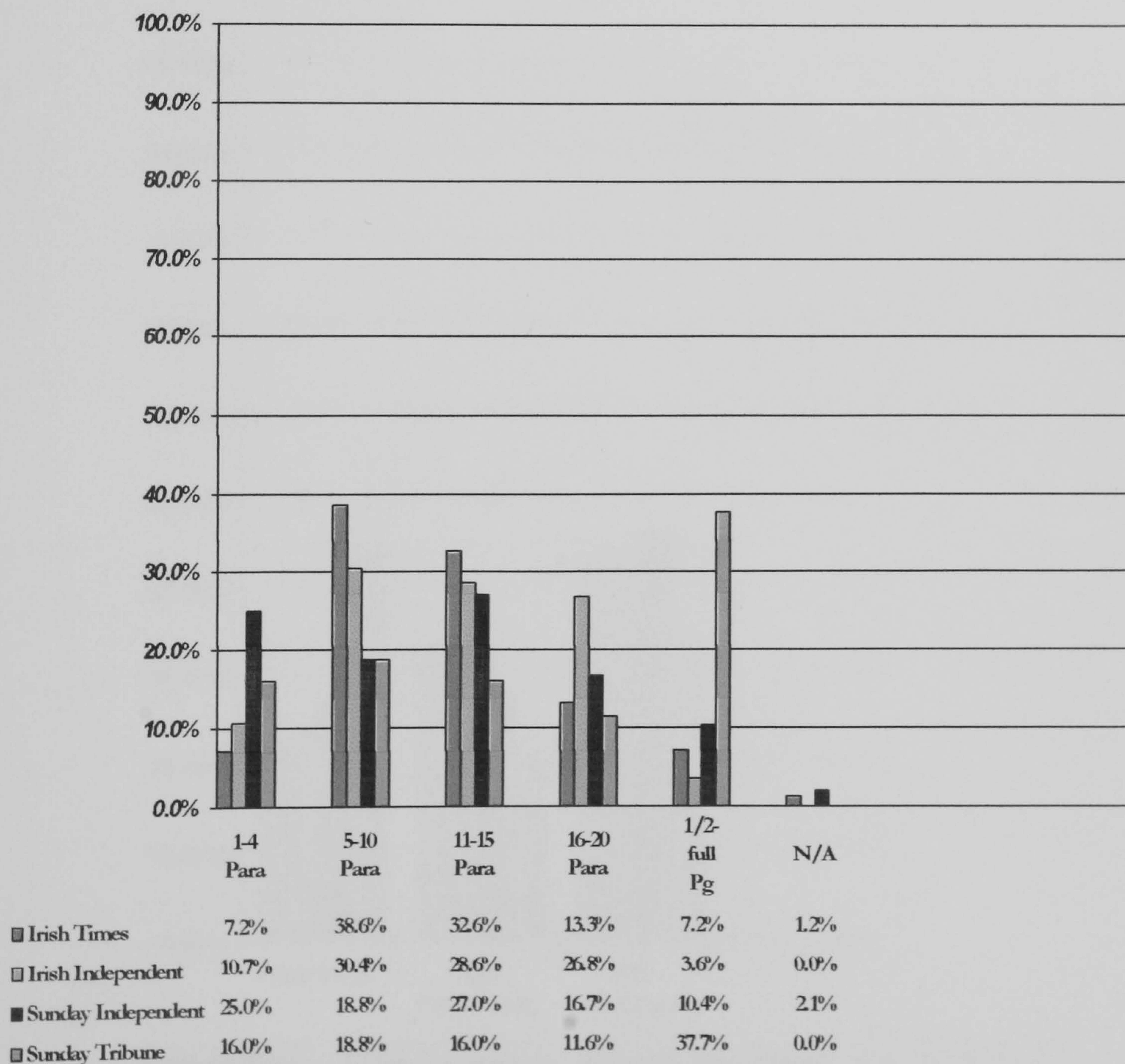
**Table 2: Rate of Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict  
by Newspaper (July 2000 to July 2004)**

<b>News Item Source</b>	<b>Total Items</b>	<b>Jul '00 - Jun '01</b>	<b>Jul '01 - Jun '02</b>	<b>Jul '02 - Jun '03</b>	<b>Jul '03 - Jul '04</b>
<i>Irish Times</i>	<b>83</b>	18	26	17	22
<i>Irish Independent</i>	<b>56</b>	17	16	12	11
<i>Sunday Independent</i>	<b>48</b>	7	16	10	15
<i>Sunday Tribune</i>	<b>69</b>	16	16	20	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>65</b>



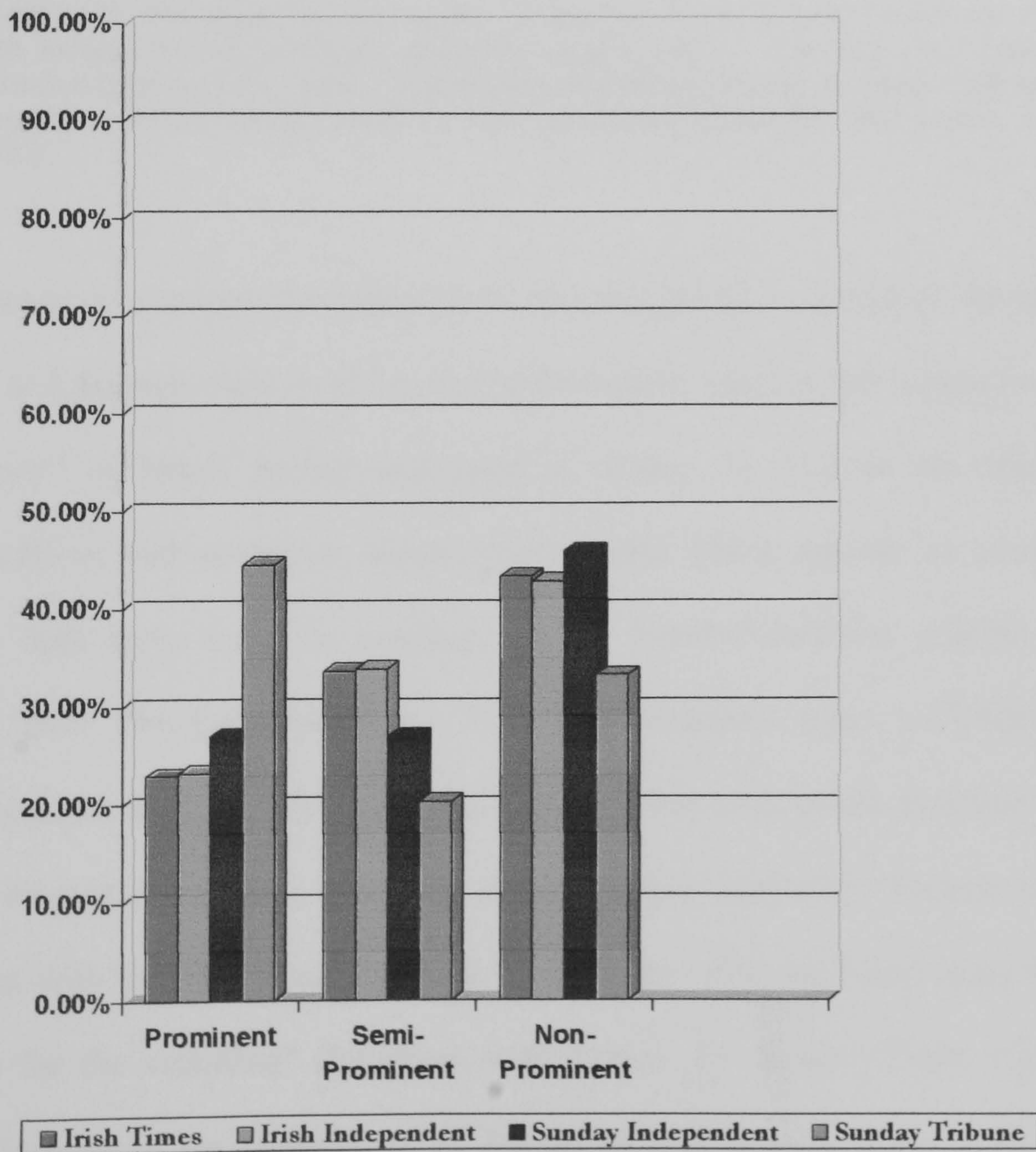
Further measures of the rate of newspaper coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were measures of item length and prominence. Figure 1 (below) illustrates that the highest percentage of news items had length measures that ranged between 5 and 15 paragraphs (see: Appendix 3, 1- Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures, Variable 6). The exception is the *Sunday Tribune*, which had relatively higher numbers of news items that ranged between half to full page in length.

**Figure 1: News Item Length by Newspaper (July 2000 to July 2004)**



Each item's prominence was measured by gauging its level of display *in relation to* the display of other items on the news page (see: Appendix 3, 1- Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures, Variable 7). Figure 2 (below) illustrates that the *Sunday Tribune* recorded the highest number of prominent news items; namely, 46.4%. *The Irish Times*, *Irish Independent* and *Sunday Independent* recorded reverse trends, in that between 42% and 46% of their news coverage was coded as “non-prominent.”

**Figure 2: Trends in level of Prominence by Newspaper (July 2000 to July 2004)**



In conclusion, therefore, this finding that each newspaper covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict regularly indicates that an appreciable degree of newsworthiness was attached to its coverage. It would appear that a combination of media factors, such as editorial criteria and news values, as well as politico-historical factors, play important roles here. In this regard, Professor John Horgan, Professor of Journalism in the School of Communications, Dublin City University, argued that a combination of linguistic, cultural and political factors are likely to influence the criteria of news worthiness displayed by the sampled newspapers' foreign coverage trends:

I would think that the primary factors governing foreign coverage are language, good familiarity with the United States, although it doesn't apply to Canada which is regarded as somewhere way up off the edge of the known world. And that apart, the European Union would be the next major covered region... Things that have a cultural consonance with an Irish audience will tend obviously to assume a higher profile... It is to do with relevance... Whatever is on the Irish political agenda generally that chimes with whatever might be on a European political agenda, are given more prominence (Interview with Author, 3 June 2005).

However, it would also appear to be the case that factors such as the highly symbolic and dramatic history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the "openness and transparency" of Israeli society and political culture, as well as the excellent communications and economic infrastructure within Israel, operate to accord a relatively high news value to coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (El-Nawawy, 2002: 184; Lederman, 1992: 275). Thus, Michael Jansen, a Middle East stringer correspondent for *The Irish Times*, argued that Irish media maintain their levels of interest in covering Israel and the Palestinian territories "because of the connection with the Holy Land, because of sympathy with the Palestinians itself. sympathy for the underdog" (Interview with Author, 22 January 2006). Michael Foley, a lecturer in the Department of Journalism and Communications (Dublin

Institute of Technology) and a former journalist with *The Irish Times*, also argued that because Israeli politics is based on the democratic constitutional model that “journalists are at home” with, encourages national media from liberal democratic societies to consistently focus on the conflict (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005). Moreover, the international significance and resonance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for “western” states and the collectively conscious perception in the United States and Europe that Israel is somehow “like us”, also ensures ongoing international media interest (Cramer, 2004: 6-11; Hess, 1996: 43; Lederman, 1992: 275; McLaughlin, 2002: 186-7; see also: Interview with Andrew Steele, BBC’s Middle East Bureau Chief, cited in: McGregor-Wood and Schenker, 2003: 71).

The foreign editor of *The Irish Times*, Paddy Smyth asserted that a combination of domestic and international factors explain the ongoing interest of *The Irish Times* and other Irish news outlets in covering Israel and the Palestinian territories:

For as long as... I’ve been involved on the foreign desk, it has been the region which has dominated and had more coverage than any other region. The European Union obviously features more because we are more involved in it... It has historically been an area where there is a lot of interest here, partly because of Irish troops in the Lebanon and partly because... it seems to be the cockpit of an incredibly dangerous, explosive world situation... I think from a world strategic point of view you have to say objectively that this is an incredibly important region because of the interface between Islam and the west, because of oil, the economy and because of the whole history of the Jewish state and its relationship to Europe and Germany. It is a very powerful issue, even within the European Union (Interview with Author, 16 June 2005).

The deputy foreign editor of the *Irish Independent*, Michael Wolsey outlined that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict regularly “tends to erupt and blast its way onto the pages” because it “tends to get linked in our psyche, I think under a great kind of Middle Eastern thing.” The conflict’s status as an “important flashpoint in

international affairs” and “East/West” relations, in addition to its “capacity to produce a range of violence” and to “explode into a wider war”, sustain ongoing international media interest. He also argued that, because “Israel is essentially an English-speaking country” and “because they are good communicators” international news access is not as inhibited as it would be in other conflict situations (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005).

An Israel-based journalist also argued that Irish media, like other international media, regularly cover the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because it is “an easy one to cover, especially when you look at simultaneous conflicts in other parts of the world” and because it is “fraught with tension and has such far-reaching implications internationally” (Interview with Author, 11 July 2004). Another Israel-based journalist argued that the “epic” historical, geo-political and religious dimensions of the conflict “sharpen interest in it” and guarantee a regular international media focus (Interview with Author, 16 July 2004). An Irish journalist argued further, that:

Overall, I would say that the conflict gets too much coverage, considering the space left available for covering other conflicts, such as African conflicts. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is considered more newsworthy because it is a pivotal conflict for the peace of the world... [because of] its central role in American politics [and]... the fact that it is located in a region which contains the oil reserves required by the economies of the West (Interview with Author, 29 June 2004).

Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien,<sup>13</sup> a columnist with the *Irish Independent* and *Sunday Independent* and former editor of *The Observer*, expressed the opinion that the inherent newsworthiness of the conflict's violent episodes was a significant factor explaining regular levels of media attention:

What's newsworthy is whatever is going on, after a time... What's missing is any substantive analysis of what can be done... It's the nature of news. It results from what's been called by one critic once as the 'politics of the last atrocity' (Interview with Author, 30 June 2004).

The Communications and Fund-Raising Manager with the British and Irish Sections of Amnesty International, Brian Dooley argued that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is "very high up" on international news agendas and that Irish newspapers merely "feed off of" this agenda that is "beyond any person's control" (Interview with Author, 2 September 2004).

It is significant that each of the above interview-derived insights largely concur with previous studies that have sought to explain foreign news attention trends. For instance, previous studies have concluded that media devote proportionately more attention to covering foreign conflicts occurring in geographically-, politically- and culturally-proximate regions, or conflicts that involve high levels of dramatic, emotional, or symbolic potentials (Entman, 2004: 104-5; Sonwalkar, 2004: 207, 210-1). Previous studies have also found that foreign news attention spans reflect national, political, or ethnocentric "worldviews" and

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<sup>13</sup> Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien has had a high-profile career in academia and has written several historical, political and biographical works. He has also held a series of appointments in the Department of External Affairs, (later, Department of Foreign Affairs) and the Irish Delegation to the United Nations. He was a former Minister for Posts and Telegraphs (1973-1977) and a former member of the United Kingdom Unionist Party (1996-1998).

human-interest values (Bissell, 2002: 311-2, 319; Carragee, 1996: 37-9; Mowlana, 1984b: 77-8, 86, 89; Rivenburgh, 1997: 81; Schaefer, 2003: 94; Wittebols, 1996: 356). Likewise, other studies concluded that foreign conflicts which are more amenable to “domesticated” framings are more frequently and prominently covered by national media outlets (Beaudoin and Thorson, 2002: 56, 58; Chang, 1998; Chang, Shoemaker and Brendlinger, 1987; Galtung and Ruge, 1965; Galtung and Ruge, 1981; Gans, 1980: 31-2, 35-8, 42; Minear, Scott and Weiss, 1996: 38-40; Shoemaker, Chang and Brendlinger, 1986; Thussu and Freedman, 2003a: 1).

In light of the above findings, it is also noteworthy that the discussion in chapter 4 of the Irish foreign policy context surrounding national-based media concluded that Ireland has general economic and trade interests in the Middle East region, in addition to a number of “soft” foreign policy interests in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly in its capacity as a longstanding contributor to UN peacekeeping missions in the Middle East and as a financial donor to UNRWA and the PA. Therefore, Irish media might be expected to display levels of media attention commensurate with these foreign policy interests – namely, ongoing and regular forms of newspaper coverage that are, nonetheless, more frequently presented in semi and non-prominent ways.

The following section discusses the findings that emerged regarding the news-sourcing and news gathering strategies adopted by each sampled newspaper in relation to covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

### 3. News-Sourcing and News Gathering Strategies of the Sampled Newspapers

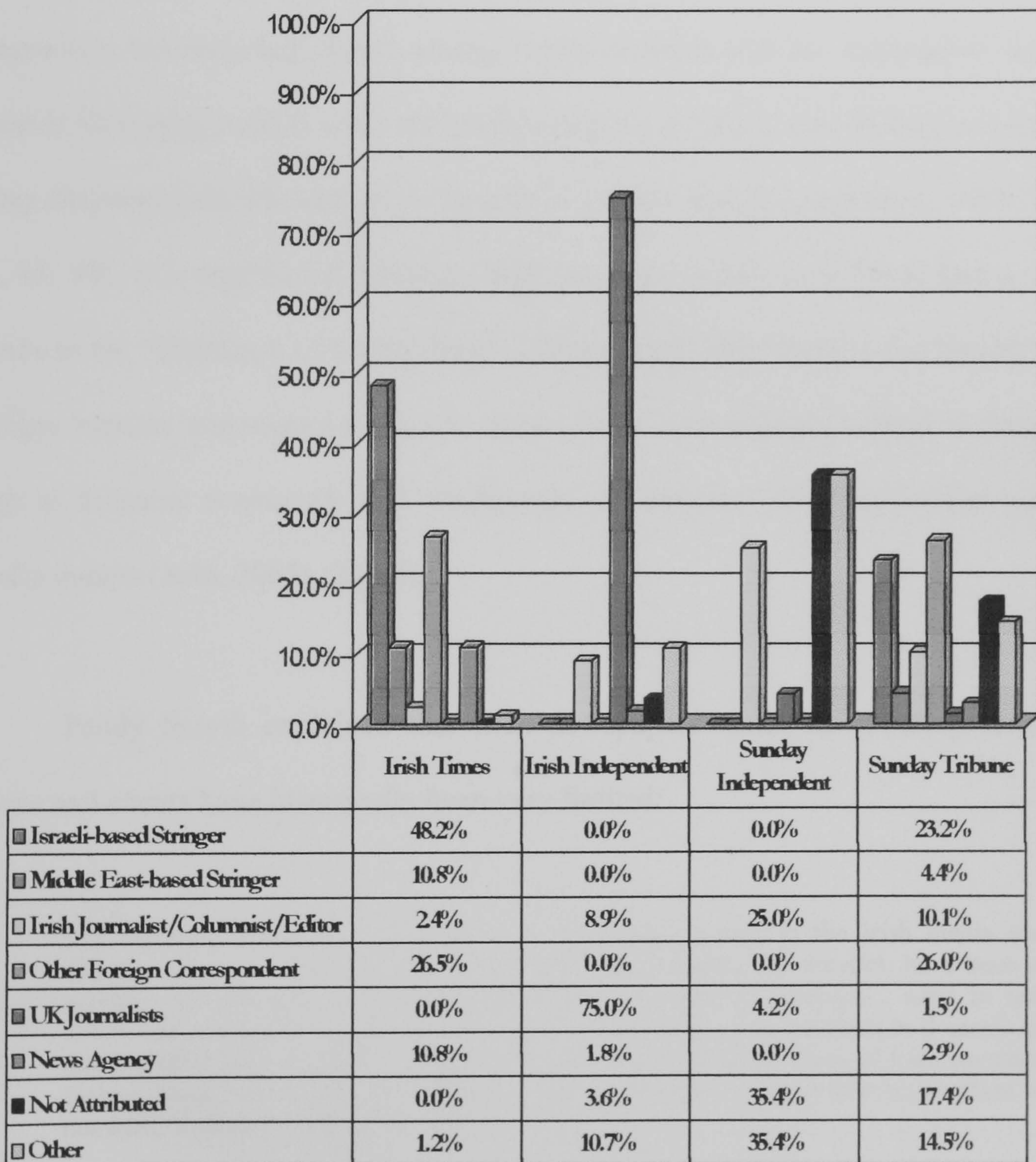
Figure 3 (below) illustrates the origin or source of the sampled news items (see: Appendix 3, 1- Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures, Variable 8; see also: Appendix 5, Table 5.1). The most interesting finding here is that the majority of news items are sourced from either foreign stringer correspondents, such as Israeli/Middle East stringer correspondents (see: figures for *The Irish Times* and the *Sunday Tribune*), from journalists affiliated with British newspaper titles (see: figures for the *Irish Independent*), or from other unattributed news sources (see: figures for the *Sunday Independent*).

As illustrated in Figure 3 (below) over 48% of *The Irish Times*' sample originated from Israeli stringer correspondents. On the other hand, however, the majority of items sampled from the *Irish Independent* (75%) were attributed to correspondents or journalists affiliated with British media. The majority of the *Sunday Independent* sample were not attributed to any source (35.4%), or were attributed to "other" sources (35.4%). An interesting trend was discerned in the finding that while one in four of the *Sunday Independent* sample were likely to have originated from Irish-based journalists, editors, or opinion writers, just 2% of *The Irish Times*' sample and between 9-10% of the *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* samples originated from Irish-based journalists, editors, or opinion columnists. The deputy foreign editor of the *Irish Independent*, Michael Wolsey perceived this divergence as being largely due to the fact that;



The *Sunday Independent* is a very unusual paper in that it is very, very opinionated... It is not like any paper I know... I think it is a marketing ploy... they decided some years ago that for a Sunday paper, regurgitating news was of no use to them... that opinion was a good idea and that it wouldn't take huge resources... the *Sunday Independent*... mixes its news and commentary to an appalling degree... We don't do that. Our columnists are quite clearly writing on opinion pages... The rest of it is news (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005).

**Figure 3: Originating Source of News Items by Newspaper  
(July 2000 to July 2004)**



This case study argues that the news-sourcing and news gathering trends displayed by the sampled newspapers, like the news attention patterns outlined above, are best explained in terms of a number of different influences, especially media institutional factors and news factors relevant to the Irish media context. For instance, the sampled newspapers' lack of commitment to the "idea of the specialist correspondent" is related to international trends in the "commercial realities of journalism" generally (McLaughlin, 2002: 17-9). Particularly, the increasingly competitive environment characterising media markets and the consequent drive towards increasing market share and profit margins, results in cost-cutting measures being disproportionately applied to the area of foreign reporting (Sparrow, 1999: 85, 88, 93, 99). It is significant, therefore, that previous studies have found that wider trends in the "shrinkage of international coverage" and reductions in the number of foreign bureaus maintained by media outlets have been strongly related to factors such as financial constraints and "intellectual isolationism" that characterise some media outlets (Seib, 2005a, 223-4).

Paddy Smyth explained that Irish newspapers' roles in covering foreign issues and events have historically been very limited:

The foreign correspondent is a relatively new phenomenon in the Irish media scene, although Brussels, since EU accession in 1973 and London, for decades, have been staff postings for the daily newspapers and RTE... But [these] postings... were in reality extensions of the domestic news gathering function... Irish correspondents in Brussels spent much of their time writing for home or business pages; while the focus of Irish coverage of Britain would reflect both the Anglo-Irish dimension and the sense that events there were not really foreign (Smyth, 2004: 82).

An Irish diplomat also argued that this lack of a "very strong tradition" of foreign news analysis within any of the sampled newspapers, in addition to the

financial constraints faced by Irish media, prevented their establishment of foreign bureaus in the Middle East. Specifically, he stated that the sampled newspapers face strong competition in the area of foreign news coverage both from the “enormously resourced” British media and from “specialist media” that are considerably more experienced in foreign news analysis (Interview with Author, 4 August 2004).

Similarly, Professor John Horgan stated that while,

You can always argue that to have an Irish pair of eyes doing foreign stuff is better than to have to rely on agency material... The pressures of competition make that less likely to happen nowadays... First of all, you are fighting much better resourced news organisations on their territory... Secondly, you are reducing the amount of resources you have for the other task, which is developing your domestic news and current affairs coverage. And the problematic there is that... the indigenous newspapers are best on their own turf, when they are doing the kind of things that the imported newspapers... can't do as well simply because their editorial centre of gravity is somewhere else (Interview with Author, 3 June 2005).

Michael Foley emphasised that commercial factors were likely to have influenced the *Irish Independent*'s decision to regularly publish Robert Fisk's writings, which “they got more of less by default” with no added financial cost, as a result of the buy-out of the London *Independent* by the Independent Newspaper Group (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005). On the other hand, however, *The Irish Times*' reliance on stringer correspondents from “both sides” is believed to result from a combination of editorial and reporting norms and political factors:

Well you see *The Irish Times* has always been very, very careful and tries to ensure that it is not perceived as biased... It is charged under the terms of the Trust... to be fair and impartial... so when it is accused of being biased, it does have to take it seriously... For instance, sometimes the editor would suggest not to use Michael Jansen for a while... I know that the Israeli ambassador and his staff have tried to influence *The Irish Times* quite a lot... It [*The Irish Times*] has always been very careful to have somebody that... might be viewed [as]... being on the other side... David Horowitz... clearly had a very good insight into Israeli politics, while Michael Jansen would see the other side. So, that was the strategy... And, that's more or less how *The Irish Times* has viewed the Middle East (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005).

Similarly, Michael Jansen argued that, in line with what she perceived to be *The Irish Times*' commitment to "quality reportage" and "reliable analysis", her journalism mostly attempts to "cover the events on the Palestinian side" in as "straightforward" and unbiased a way as is semantically possible (Interview with Author, 22 January 2006). Paddy Smyth also stated that a number of different factors influenced the news-sourcing policy adopted by *The Irish Times* in covering Israel and the Palestinian territories:

Primarily we rely on two stringers who are based in the region... It is a question of cost... it is a mid-way position between having a full-time staff person and just relying on Reuters and wire services... Peter Hirschberg provides us with most of our analysis and news from Israel... Much of the Palestinian politics... is written for us by Michael Jansen... we have a staff member, Nuala Haughey, who... has a roving brief and is on a retainer for us to do colour stories... We have felt for a long time that it was important to have two perspectives. It is very difficult to cover a conflict situation with one... I would say that we consciously try to balance it... we are trying to reflect both sides (Interview with Author, 16 June 2005).

According to Michael Wolsey, the financial cost involved in setting-up and maintaining foreign bureaus was the primary factor influencing the decision of the *Irish Independent* to limit its foreign bureaus to "just a couple of places, where there is obviously a very specific Irish interest", such as Brussels, London and Washington (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005). For this reason, the *Irish Independent* sourced its foreign copy mostly from international news agencies, such as Reuters and Associated Press and the "three heavies" of the British broadsheet market – the *London Times*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *London Independent* (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005).

The Irish Representative to the Palestinian Authority, Dr Niall Holohan argued that the sampled newspapers' tendency to rely on Israel-based stringer

correspondents, British syndicated newspaper services and/or international news agencies has important thematic implications for Irish newspaper coverage, as it tilts coverage towards Israeli perspectives and away from stories that have a “Palestinian angle.” Additionally, the fact that “there’s no great tradition of an Irish presence here... we tend to be very much dependent in Ireland on international media reports and these often tend to take a rather superficial attitude and don’t relate the Palestinian cause, to say, the Irish experience” (Interview with Author, 19 July 2004).

One Israeli diplomat also decried the sampled newspapers’ lack of investment in placing resident correspondents in Israel, arguing that “there is no substitute for a newspaper having its own staff based in a region on the ground” (Interview with Author, 20 July 2004). Another Israeli diplomat stated that Israeli stringer correspondents fail to “look at the particular Irish aspects of the relationship. They don’t look at the peculiarities, what’s interesting for Europe” (Interview with Author, 20 July 2004).

Thus, the dependence of the sampled Irish newspapers on foreign stringer correspondents, British syndicated newspaper services and international news agencies, emerged as a singularly significant factor for explaining the news-sourcing and news gathering strategies of each of the sampled newspapers. It was concluded that a combination of news factors and media institutional factors exerted considerable influences on the sampled newspapers’ sourcing strategies. Firstly, it was found that news values and editorial norms influenced the news-sourcing decisions undertaken by editorial departments. Secondly, the absence of a strong

tradition of foreign news coverage by Irish media, in general, affected the sampled newspapers' news-sourcing trends. Finally and most importantly, however, resource constraints and competitive market pressures were found to be the primary influences in causing the sampled newspapers' reliance on foreign stringer correspondents and international news agencies to cover Israel and the Palestinian territories in relatively partial and somewhat non-prominent ways.

In conclusion, it is reasonable to assume that the trends uncovered here regarding the sampled newspapers' news-sourcing strategies also have potentially significant constructivist influences on other features of the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These influences are addressed in the following analyses of the trends that emerged in other structural and presentational features of sampled news items.

#### **4. Mapping News Formats and Narrative Styles – The Pre-dominance of Inside/Back Page Coverage and “Episodic” Narrative Styles**

As already referred to above, this case study's descriptive analysis evaluated the trends that emerged in relation to a number of different structural and presentational features of the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The first of these features that was measured was the location of sampled news items (see: Appendix 3, 1- Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures, Variable 3). This was followed by descriptive analyses of the format and narrative styles adopted by the sampled news

items (see: Appendix 3, 1- Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures, Variable 4 and Variable 5). Moreover, these analyses are based on the assumption that the location, layout, format and narrative styles adopted by sampled news items have important thematic implications for coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Manoff, 1986: 217-8; Van Dijk, 1993: 123-4).

The first key finding to have emerged from this analysis was that each newspaper only devoted negligible amounts of front-page coverage to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is taken to negatively impact on the level of public visibility achieved by Israel and the Palestinian territories within these newspapers. For instance, the *Sunday Independent* carried just one item on its front page, while just 8.4% of *The Irish Times*' sample was located on its front page. None of the *Irish Independent* and *Sunday Tribune* news items were featured on the front-page (see: Appendix 5, Figure 5.1).

Approximately 83% of *The Irish Times* sample, 86% of the *Irish Independent* sample, 77% of the *Sunday Independent* sample and 93% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample were located on the inside or back “world news” pages (see: Appendix 5, Figure 5.1). This is a significant research finding because these pages are typically the reserve of “objective” or “hard news” formats (see: Appendix 3, 1- Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures, Variable 4). Hence, 85.5% of *The Irish Times* sample was coded as adopting “report” and “brief” formats and just 14.5% of that sample was coded as adopting an analysis/opinion/editorial/visual format. Within the *Irish Independent* sample, 82.1% of news items adopted “report” and “brief” formats, while the remaining

17.9% adopted an analysis/opinion/editorial/visual format (see: Appendix 5, Figure 5.2). With reference to the sampled Sunday newspapers, 77% of the *Sunday Independent* sample and 71% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample adopted “brief” and “report” formats (see: Appendix 5, Figure 5.2).

Moreover, the above-outlined figures reflect the findings of previous content analytic studies which concluded that the “report”, “brief”, or “round-up” formats were the most frequently used formats for foreign news reporting (Hafez, 2000b: 188; Minear, Scott and Weiss, 1996: 39). Although somewhat higher rates of coverage within analysis/opinion formats were recorded for the Sunday papers – 23% of the *Sunday Independent* sample and 27.5% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample adopted these formats – in relative terms, these percentages are also not appreciably high (see: Appendix 5, Figure 5.2).

In terms of stylistic trends, the “report” format is distinguished by its tendency to exclude or marginalize background, contextual information and evaluative “setting.” Typically, newspaper “reports” adopt a “dispassionate style” in “reporting hard news about political events”, especially “hot spot” events (Hafez, 2000b: 185-6, 188-9; Hallin, 1986b: 112, 125-6). This format may, therefore, encourage truncated, disconnected and fragmentary interpretations of foreign issues (Kosicki and McLeod, 1990: 71-2). Moreover, the “communicative purpose” of the report format, especially the “inverted pyramid” format, limits newspaper coverage to the “straightforward recounting of events, which is usually highly informational and non-persuasive” (O’Keefe, 2002: 256; Van Dijk, 1983). Like “hard news” generally, international news agency copy has also been found to approximate an



“extreme form of a ‘journalism of information’” (Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen, 1998a: 6).

It is also thought that “hard news” formats overly-adhere to “objective” reporting norms (McLaughlin, 2002: 161-81). The “objective” or “professional” model of journalism establishes “distance” between reporters and the events being reported on, thereby excluding individual journalists’ subjective or normative interpretations from news reports (Hallin, 1994: 6-7, 33, 47; Van Poecke, 1988: 24, 34-7). “Objectivity” precludes the emergence and development of a “journalism of explanation” (Carey, 1986: 166-8), or a “journalism of attachment” (Bell, 1998: 102-3). “Objective” journalism may also constrain full journalistic treatment of the contexts, causes and outcomes of foreign events and developments (Corera, 2003: 254-7; Entman, 2004: 65, 74; Tumber and Prentoulis, 2003: 215-6, 221). This journalism has also been found to be antithetical to “humanitarian” journalism, which encourages readers’ empathy with global suffering (Minear, Scott and Weiss, 1996: 93-4; Seib, 2002: 8-9, 29-32, 85, 121).

In contrast, a greater degree of thematic and ideological diversity is expected within analysis/opinion/commentary newspaper forums (Eilders, 2002: 26-33; Golan and Wanta, 2004). A defining function of these forums is the deliberative presentation of a “diversity of issue stands” on public issues (Day and Golan, 2005: 61-2, 68-9). Editorial formats also typically adopt an argumentative/evaluative/persuasive style of presentation (O’Keefe, 2002: 249-54, 257, 260; Schudson, 2003: 34).

Significantly, this case study's finding regarding the pre-dominance of the "news report" format within sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is also reflected by its findings regarding the narrative stylistic trends displayed by the sampled newspapers. News items were coded as adopting an "episodic" narrative style if their content focused mostly on specific events, rather than more general issues (see: Appendix 3, 1- Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures, Variable 5). Typically, episodic oriented news only marginally covers the historical background and political context surrounding issues (Iyengar, 1991: 14-5). On the other hand, news items were classified as "thematic" if their focus was on framing issues within a wider context (Iyengar, 1991: 2, 18; see also: Iyengar and Simon, 1993: 369-71).

It was found that coverage within *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Independent* was heavily skewed towards episodic/event oriented narrative styles (see: Appendix 5, Figure 5.3). Approximately 78% of both daily newspapers' coverage was coded as primarily "episodic." Approximately 14% of both daily newspapers' coverage was coded as thematic or issue-oriented. Slightly over 7% of both newspapers' coverage was coded as displaying a mix of episodic and thematic styles. Almost 69% of the *Sunday Independent's* coverage was coded as primarily "episodic" and almost 23% primarily "thematic" (see: Appendix 5, Figure 5.3). The *Sunday Tribune* displayed markedly more balanced stylistic trends. 39%% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample adopted an "episodic" style. Approximately 36% of its coverage adopted a "thematic" style, while nearly 25% adopted a mixture of both narrative styles (see: Appendix 5, Figure 5.3).

Another significant finding of this descriptive analysis was that each of the sampled newspapers devoted very little editorial attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (see: Appendix 5, Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2). This lack of editorialising was explained by an Irish diplomat as being influenced firstly, by the wider national political environment and secondly, by a range of media or news factors. He argued that because the “media here are broadly supportive of the line taken by the government”, which is also “shared by most of the chattering classes in Ireland”, this has diminished the sampled newspapers’ interest in editorialising or analysing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Interview with Author, 4 August 2004).

In relation to editorial decisions regarding the format and location of news coverage of Israel and the Palestinian territories within *The Irish Times*, Paddy Smyth argued that to “balance” the “mix on the foreign page of analysis, of news and of colour” was an important news criterion. He argued that, “if we lean too much in any direction, it is [regarded as] an over-zealous covering of this very small country, to the extent that South America hardly gets into the paper at all” (Interview with Author, 16 June 2005).

Likewise, the deputy foreign editor of the *Irish Independent*, Michael Wolsey outlined that the editorial imperatives to cover newsworthy topics and to “balance” competing views over time were primary factors guiding the editorial decisions taken by the *Irish Independent* regarding the layout of its foreign news pages. Particularly, editorial perceptions regarding the “superficial” levels of interest that Irish readers have in Israel and the Palestinian territories, in addition to presumptions regarding Irish readers’ preferences for reading a “balance” of

“celebrity” and “quirky stuff”, with the “biggest of the day” stories, influenced the *Irish Independent*’s editorial decisions (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005). Michael Wolsey also argued that Ireland’s lack of “background of being particularly interested in some part of the world” was an important contextual factor affecting national media’s lack of “deep” analysis and editorialising on foreign issues (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005).

In conclusion, therefore, while editorial norms and journalistic values played important roles in influencing newspaper formats and narrative styles, it is significant that this research also found that these norms and values did not function within a vacuum, but are instead *formed within* particular national politico-cultural and media institutional contexts. The following discussion of this case study’s findings regarding the factors that influenced the sampled newspapers’ topic/subject matter displays adopts a similar analytic framework.

##### **5. “If it Bleeds, it Leads” – The Influence of Conflict Biases on News Topic/Subject Matter Selections and Emphases**

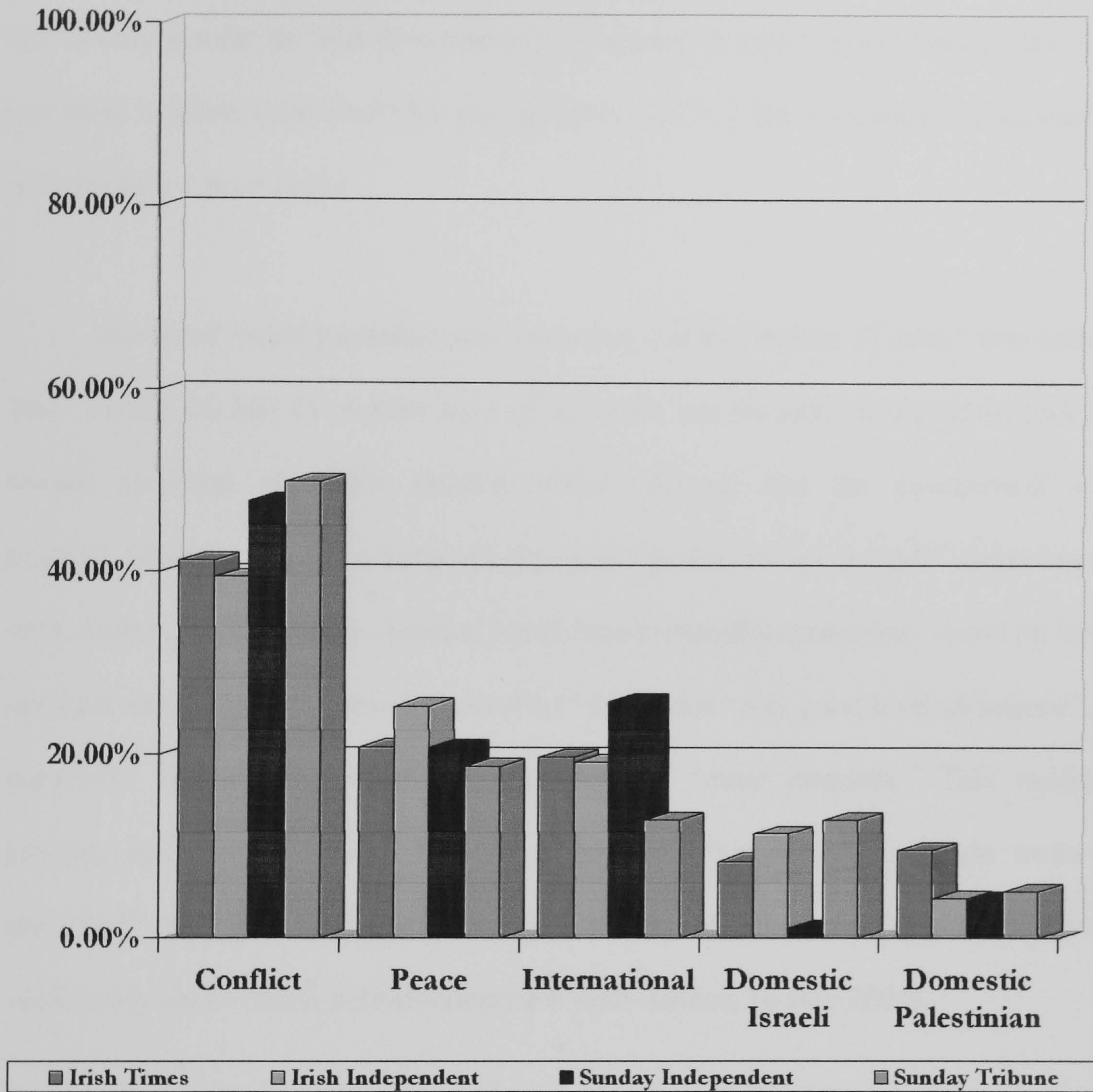
An inventory of the over time trends in the frequency and salience of different topics and subject matters was undertaken to assess the extent of topical diversity displayed by news items. Each item was individually coded for up to three different topics/subject matters (see: Appendix 3, 1- Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures, Variable 9). At the outset, a list of almost 150 possible topics/subject matters was created. This list was subsequently

condensed and re-ordered into forty-one topic/subject matter codes, each of which was classified under five generic headings (see: Appendix 3, 3 – Coding Topics/Subject Matters – Grouped Coding Categories).

Figure 4 (below) illustrates that the largest proportion of topic/subject matter displays were coded as “conflict”/“political violence” topics (see: Appendix 5. Table 5.2). As already outlined in chapter 4, increased levels of Israeli and Palestinian political violence during the period of July 2000 to July 2004, coupled with ongoing diplomatic failures, were likely to have enhanced the conflict bias or orientation of newspaper coverage. However, relatively lower rates of coverage were accorded to “peace” topics/subject matters, despite the fact that diplomatic developments (such as the Middle East “roadmap” and Quartet-led initiatives (2002 - 2004), the Israeli Gaza Disengagement Plan (2004) and ongoing “ceasefire”/“security” talks (October 2000 - July 2004)), might have been expected to achieve some visibility for “peace” topics/subject matters.

Another significant topical trend evident within each newspaper’s coverage was the concomitant and relative neglect of the international diplomatic-security context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Furthermore, the lowest absolute and proportionate amounts of newspaper attention were accorded to “domestic Israeli” topics/subject matters and “domestic Palestinian” topics/subject matters.

**Figure 4: Patterns of Topic/Subject Matter  
Displays within News Items (July 2000 to July 2004)**



Michael Wolsey explained that “a story about an Irish angle” would be most likely to achieve the greatest prominence within the *Irish Independent*’s coverage of Israel and the Palestinian territories. Otherwise, story selections were made on the basis of judgements regarding their “simple strength as a story”, rather than judgements based on the issue’s “international significance.” This meant that “huge

atrocities” and “quirky” stories were most frequently selected (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005). On the other hand, “peace is not very interesting [and] negotiations and talks are complex.” While the “outcome” of negotiations is “more interesting”, this is only insofar as “old foes embracing themselves make good pictures. But if you want to know more than that you probably will buy the *Economist*” (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005).

An Israel-based journalist also explained that the “nature of news” was such that, “during the last 45 months most of my work has focused on second *intifada*-related coverage, especially *intifada*-related violence and the government or political fall-outs that have occurred during the period of the *intifada*” (Interview with Author, 11 July 2004). Another Israel-based journalist stated that, based on his personal experience, “stories of the conflict” demand a “very good level of interest”, especially “suicide” bombings because they are “more dramatic.” This media interest, however, is limited because it produces “simplified... straight event-reporting” that fails to transmit the “complexity of this conflict” and fails to sufficiently cover Israeli politics (Interview with Author, 16 July 2004).

Michael Jansen, a Middle East stringer correspondent for *The Irish Times*, suggested that the media generally “like wars” and, therefore, the media display higher demands for conflict stories. Principally, such stories provide the media with a series of ready-made “running events” and “running stories”, which are more preferable to covering more complex and long-term issues and developments (Interview with Author, 22 January 2006).

An Irish journalist also stressed the role of the media's conflict bias in orienting news *away from* what are considered to be less newsworthy "peace" topics:

As they say, if it bleeds it leads... Peace conferences are much less sexy and newsworthy. If there is no deal, there is very little coverage. And, agreements themselves are often too complex and difficult to understand... Whether or not an issue is treated as newsworthy is down to human nature – decisions are made as to whether or not coverage of particular events can get through to audiences at a human level... Newspapers have to concentrate to an extent on newsworthy issues, on the issues that grab and grip. Maintaining the interest of the Irish public in its writings is its job (Interview with Author, 29 June 2004).

The findings outlined above concur substantially with the findings of previous analyses that foreign conflict events attain higher levels of newsworthiness by virtue of their "big news" or "infotainment" qualities, such as event-orientation, spectacular appeal, narrative simplicity and "deviance" (Diamond, 1978: 224-5; Golding and Elliott, 1979: 123, 148; Hafez, 2000b: 189, 196; Ignatieff, 1998: 28-9, 97; Johnson-Cartee, 2005: 139-44; Lederman, 1992: 12; Liebes, 1992b: 359; Liebes, 1997: 95-6; Minear, Scott and Weiss, 1996: 41; Mowlana, 1984b: 88; Seaton, 2003: 51; Thussu, 2003: 117-8; Traugott and Brader, 2003: 183-4, 187; Van Ginneken, 1998: 30-1; Wolfsfeld, 2004).

Previous studies have also found that while news commonly displays a generic orientation towards "conflict" frames (De Vreese, Peter and Semetko, 2001: 109, 117-8; Gerbner, 1992: 257-8, Johnson-Cartee, 2005: 126-7), or negative emphases (Bennett, 2004: 285-7, 299-300; Schudson, 2003: 48-55, 91-4, 98-9), foreign news tends to be even more biased towards negative storylines (Beaudoin and Thorson, 2002: 57; see also: Adoni, Bantz and Cohen, 1990: 26, 121-2; Gans, 1980: 52-3; Hackett, 1989: 14; Hackett, 1991; Peterson, 1981). Furthermore, several



related studies found that this negativity bias marginalizes, or excludes “pro-peace” storylines from media coverage (Shinar, 2002: 290–2; Tehranian, 1984: 43-4; Wolfsfeld, 1997b: 53-5, 67; Wolfsfeld, 2004: 194-6, 203; Wolfsfeld, Kouri and Peri, 2002: 3).

Many interview participants also argued that the sampled newspapers’ story selection norms and values have significant political implications. For instance, Senator David Norris suggested that media coverage of “suicide” attacks that occurred from 2000 to 2004 caused “enormous losses to the Palestinians in relation to their moral high ground... suicide attacks make it so difficult for me to object to Israeli human rights abuses, such as closures and movement restrictions” (Interview with Author, 20 October 2004). However, the Communications and Fund-Raising Manager with the British and Irish Sections of Amnesty International, Brian Dooley also argued that, although media coverage of “suicide” attacks has “definitely damaged sympathy for the Palestinians, I think that the Israeli response to the second *intifada* has been so much more brutal than the first and I think that, therefore, they have also damaged their case” (Interview with Author, 2 September 2004).

To summarise, the findings of this case study’s descriptive analysis and interview-based research (presented above) infer that factors, such as the political developments defining the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and a combination of foreign news values and reporting conventions, are highly significant factors influencing the topic/subject matter trends displayed by the

sampled newspapers within their coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004.

Moreover, in addition to the relationship that exists between the political context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and sampled Irish newspapers' topic/subject matter presentations of that conflict, it is expected that a similar relationship pertains between certain dimensions of the Irish politico-cultural environment and sampled newspapers' topic/subject matter presentations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For instance, the relative neglect by each sampled newspaper of the international diplomatic-security context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is indicative of the relative isolationism of Irish political culture and the dependency of Irish foreign policy on UN/EU perspectives.

Furthermore, the relatively low levels of media attention devoted to covering topics related to the internal political situations in Israel and the Palestinian territories might be taken as reflective of the lack of strong politico-cultural and personal ties between Ireland and Israel and the Palestinian territories, the relatively small sizes of the Jewish and Palestinian communities in Ireland, as well as the Irish state's lack of "vital" foreign policy and/or domestic interests in the conflict.

The analysis presented above, therefore, adopts a social constructivist perspective. This perspective analysed the constructivist influences exerted by different empirically relevant contexts on the topic/subject matter presentations displayed by the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. Moreover, this analysis arrived at

findings that are largely similar to the findings of analyses presented within earlier sections of this chapter; namely, that a range of politico-cultural and media factors influenced the attention trends, news-sourcing policies and format-presentational trends displayed by the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The following section addresses issues relevant to analysing the constructivist impact (if any) of newspaper editorial positions on the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

## **6. Exploring the Potential Constructivist Influences of the Sampled Newspapers' Editorial Positions**

In relation to identifying and interpreting the policy positions and political views of newspaper editorial departments, the best research method to employ is editorial content and frame analysis (Eilders, 2002: 33-4; Grosswiler, 1997: 198). However, because each of the sampled newspapers devoted very little editorial attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it has not been possible to systematically apply this research method (see: Appendix 5, Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2). Instead, this case study's analysis of the potential influences exerted by the sampled newspapers' editorial positions relies upon the explanations generated by the interview-based research.

One Israeli diplomat argued that *The Irish Times* and the *Sunday Independent* represented opposite ends of the political spectrum of partisan support for the Israeli perspective. He argued, therefore, that while *The Irish Times* adopted a “liberal approach” that is “critical of Israel”, but “not anti-Israel,” the *Sunday Independent* could be regarded as being more pro-Israel than any other newspaper, in every way” (Interview with Author, 20 July 2004). A second Israeli diplomat added that the “editorial position” of *The Irish Times* “mostly argues for and adopts the most current European Union foreign policy positions on the conflict... [and] usually calls for increased European influence and pressure” (Interview with Author, 20 July 2004).

On the other hand, however, a number of interview participants stressed the opinion that the sampled newspapers did not appreciably display any form of partisan editorial position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Thus, the government foreign policy adviser interviewed as part of this research suggested that:

I don't think that any Irish newspaper could safely or accurately be described as either 'pro' Israel or 'pro' Palestinian in its editorial lines. I don't even think they have a strong editorial bias in relation to the conflict. What I would say is that, from my readings of editorials, their political position appears to be that of supporting or advocating the EU and UN positions. While this is not explicitly partisan, it is a political line, nonetheless (Interview with Author, 19 October 2004).

Likewise, Michael Foley stated that the sampled newspapers' editorial positions generally “reflect the prevailing views, especially the primary political views”, which in the Irish case display a “wonderful ambivalence” by simultaneously adopting “more pro-Palestinian views of the conflict” as well as

“some sympathies with the Jewish position... The Irish approach is... not anti-Israeli per se, nor is it pro-Israeli” (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005).

An Irish journalist also stated that:

I believe that like most other media, *The Irish Times* has gone in pro-Palestinian, but it has come out more balanced... *The Irish Times* is not pro-Palestinian, or pro-Israeli in any sense or meaning of these terms. Its ideological position is that it pushes a viewpoint arguing for a peaceful solution to the conflict, an end to violence and a just settlement. Its editorial position is that it is in favour of the roadmap, but is sceptical about its implementation and the reasons behind it (Interview with Author, 29 June 2004).

Paddy Smyth argued that, although *The Irish Times* tends to be “very critical of the government” on several foreign policy issues, particularly the “Shannon stopover issue, or on relations with America”, its editorial positions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict tend to reflect the “fairly consistent line” from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs. Smyth defined this line as, “slightly out of sync” and “at one end of the extreme of the European Union position.” However, he also clarified that *The Irish Times*’ editorial position was informed by “our sympathy for the Palestinian position”, rather than the newspaper’s support of Irish government policy *per se*:

I think there has been a sense and editorially this is reflected that... until Israel faces up to the question of a Palestinian homeland and the final settlement issues... that violence was inevitable, that it was wrong of the US to take the view that... you could just approach it from a military point of view... we brought, if you like, a perspective from Northern Ireland to it, that you don’t solve peace problems by merely military means... We have been suspicious at the very least of Israel’s intentions in terms of the peace process... But, on the other hand, we have also been quite critical of Arafat and his coterie (Interview with Author, 16 June 2005).

Interestingly, Michael Wolsey described the editorial position of the *Irish Independent* in somewhat similar terms:

Broadly, the view is that it [the Israeli-Palestinian conflict] needs a lengthy ceasefire... with the onus to sustain a ceasefire placed primarily on Israel because they are a government and because it is easier for them to do it... it is much harder for the Palestinian Authority to impose it [a ceasefire]. We believe it needs an active peace process there. We think it has suffered unbiased involvement from the outside world, especially the Americans, who have a lot of axes to grind in this. We think it needs help from the outside. We would think that it should be steered towards a solution, which ultimately would involve a viable, independent Palestinian state (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005).

Michael Wolsey also argued that the editorial position adopted by the *Irish Independent* was intended to reflect the market-orientation of the newspaper:

We are the paper of the middle class, middle aged and I think that we think what the country thinks and, therefore... people expect to have rational thought from us, so we are not going to come up with some extraordinary solutions. We are not going to say that all the Jews should be thrown out of Israel and sent back to various ghettos in Europe. We are not going to say anything deadly or emotive like that. And we're not going to say either that Palestinians are a pack of wasters and should be left to their own devices (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005).

As already mentioned, it is difficult to measure the extent and nature of the social constructivist influences exerted by the sampled newspapers' editorial positions on coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, notwithstanding this limitation, this case study's interview-based exploration of newspaper editorial positions, presented above, has tentatively suggested that, although editorial positions do potentially exert some constructivist influences on the outcomes displayed by the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004, it is highly unlikely that these positions can be regarded as independent, singularly-determining variables of the sampled newspapers' outcomes.

Furthermore, it is also evident from the findings detailed in this chapter thus far, that the sampled newspapers' coverage of Israel and the Palestinian territories

cannot be analytically or theoretically reduced to the operation of editorial positions. Instead, news coverage trends need to be analysed and explained as outcomes of processes of social construction which are potentially influenced by a range of different contexts and factors.

As already outlined during earlier discussions within this thesis, potentially relevant contexts here include the historical and politico-cultural context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the national politico-cultural context supplied by the Irish public sphere and political domain, as well as the media institutional and journalistic context defining each of the sampled newspapers. The following section also applies this social constructivist perspective and presents the findings of this case study's exploration of the influences exerted by these different contexts on the sampled newspapers' patterns of selecting and presenting source assertions.

#### **7. Source Access Trends – The Sampled Newspapers as Sites of Contest Between Israeli and Palestinian Sources – The Under-Representation of International and Non-Institutional Sources**

In light of the fact that ongoing political constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are highly contested, a significant aspect of this case study's descriptive analysis explored the extent and ways in which sampled Irish newspapers included and presented Israeli and Palestinian sources' assertions, as well as sources of other competing perspectives.

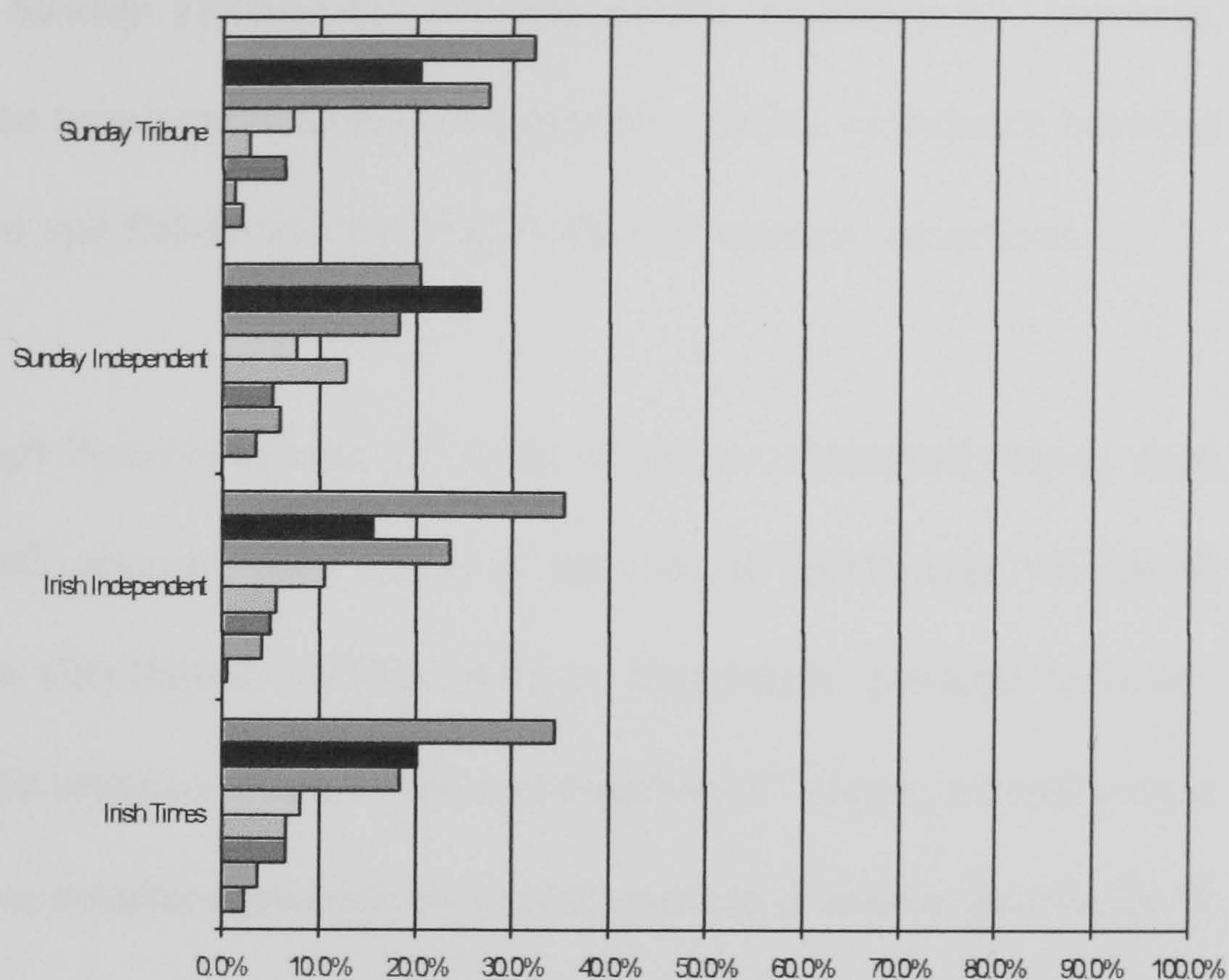
The source access and representation trends displayed by the sampled newspapers were analysed by undertaking a survey of the frequency of occurrence and presentation of sources within news texts. At the outset, each source assertion was nominally coded (see: Appendix 3, 1 – Manifest Content Analysis – Operational Definitions and Coding Procedures, Variable 10; Appendix 3, 2 - List of Variables Employed in Coding Analysis, Variable 10). The frequency of appearance of these categories of source assertions within the sampled news items was then tabulated (see: Appendix 5, Table 5.3). Thereafter, the least statistically significant categories were condensed and grouped into eight categories that reflect the complete range of identified source categories (see: Figure 5, below).

With particular reference to this case study, it is significant that the majority of its news samples adopted “hard” news formats, as these formats generally rely on a “judicious use of quotation marks” and, therefore, display more political and official sources’ interpretive commentary (Tuchman, 1972: 668; see also: Beckett, 1995: 169-74; Sigal, 1973: 69).

As illustrated by Figure 5 (below) the most frequently accessed sources tended to be Israeli political/“official” actors. The percentage displays of assertions from these sources were relatively high for *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* (34.4%, 35.3% and 32.2%, respectively). The *Sunday Independent*, however, recorded the lowest frequency of display of Israeli political/“official” source assertions; namely, 20.5%.



**Figure 5: Frequency of Source Assertions' Display by Grouped Source Categories (July 2000 to July 2004)**



	Irish Times	Irish Independent	Sunday Independent	Sunday Tribune
■ Israeli Political/'Official' Actors	34.4%	35.3%	20.5%	32.2%
■ Palestinian Political/'Official' Actors	20.2%	15.6%	26.6%	20.5%
■ NGO/Non-Political/Media Civilian Actors	18.4%	23.5%	18.2%	27.6%
□ United States Political Actors	8.0%	10.5%	7.7%	7.2%
□ Arab Political Actors	6.6%	5.5%	12.8%	2.8%
■ Palestinian Militant Sources	6.6%	5.0%	5.1%	6.4%
■ Quartet, EU, Other European Actors	3.7%	4.1%	6.0%	1.2%
■ Irish Political Actors, Israeli/Palestinian Embassy	2.3%	0.5%	3.4%	2.0%

As illustrated in Figure 5 (above) Palestinian political/"official" sources achieved lower rates of access than Israeli political/"official" sources within all of the newspapers, except the *Sunday Independent*, where they achieved 26.6% access. The lowest rate of access achieved by Palestinian political/"official" sources was

recorded for the *Irish Independent*; namely, 15.6%. The total percentage of source assertions coded as belonging to the Palestinian political/“official” category in *The Irish Times* and the *Sunday Tribune* (20.2% and 20.5%, respectively), however, demonstrates that these newspapers tended to establish a parity, or balance between their displays of Israeli and Palestinian political/“official” sources’ assertions.

Hence, although Palestinian sources’ level of access is generally lower than that achieved by Israeli sources, their status is not that of “challenger” to Israeli “authority” assertions (Wolfsfeld, 1997a). Rather, Palestinian political/“official” sources appear to have attained a more “balanced-authority” status, whereby their assertions amount to a counter-argument to Israeli-originated source assertions. It appears, therefore, that the sampled newspapers variously accorded a separate “story-telling right” to Palestinian political/“official” sources (Adebanwi, 2004: 768). This, in turn, enhanced these Palestinian sources’ media standing beyond what might be expected given the political marginality and economic deterioration of the PA vis-à-vis the Israeli government during this period, as well as the subordination of Palestinian political institutions and civil society to Israeli military rule.

This finding, in turn, strongly suggests that, despite the impact of structural-political factors in influencing Palestinian and Israeli protagonists’ levels of access to international media forums, “primary definitional” status could not be said to have pertained to either Israeli or Palestinian protagonists. Instead, “primary definition” success appears to be more of an achieved source outcome, rather than a structurally pre-determined outcome (Schlesinger, 1990: 77-9). Consequently, the

factors influencing media access are best treated as a matter for extensive empirical investigation and contextual explanation.

The above analysis, therefore, concluded that taken collectively, the sampled newspapers could be said to constitute sites of contest (albeit somewhat unequal sites), between the perspectives of Israeli political/“official” sources and Palestinian political/“official” sources. The second major finding of this analysis was that the rates of source access and representation achieved by Israeli and Palestinian political/“official” sources were disproportionately higher than the rates of access and representation achieved by other categories of international, regional and Irish political sources, as well as non-political and non-institutional sources (see: Appendix 5, Table 5.3 for a full tabulation of the findings regarding the frequency of appearance of sources’ assertions).

The sampled newspapers accorded very little representation to the source categories labelled “other Israeli political actors” and “other Palestinian political actors.” The Israeli category here included political opposition leaders, Knesset members and/or Israeli-Arab politicians and only accounted for between 2.2% and 4.8% of all newspapers’ source assertions. The Palestinian equivalent of this “other” political category also only accounted for between 0.9% and 2.6% of source assertions, across all newspapers (see: Appendix 5, Table 5.3). For this reason, the Israeli “other political” category and the Palestinian “other political” category were merged with their respective political/“official” categories (see: Figure 5, above). Palestinian militant group actors and Arab heads of state and political actors received both absolute and proportionately lower rates of representation than either

Israeli or Palestinian political sources. This indicates their “challenger” or “deviant” status within the sampled newspapers.

In terms of regional and international sources, it was found that while sources from the United States featured in between 7.2% and 10.5% of all the sampled newspapers’ source assertions, Quartet, EU and other European political actors’ combined numbers of assertions only accounted for between 1.2% and 6% of all sampled newspapers’ source assertions. Furthermore, except for the *Sunday Independent* sample, United States actors were also more likely to be sourced for their perspectives than Arab or other regional political and governmental actors (see: Appendix 5, Table 5.3). Significantly, Irish national or domestic political actors’ assertions accounted for only between 0.8% and 1.7% of source assertions across the sampled newspapers. Equally negligible rates of representation were achieved by Israeli envoy staff (ranging between 0.4% and 1.7%) and Palestinian envoy staff (ranging between 0% and 0.4%) (see: Appendix 5, Table 5.3).

Furthermore, media, academic or professional commentators, whether of Israeli, Arab/Palestinian or international extraction, achieved rates of less than 4% representation within each newspaper’s total sample of source assertions. Non-government organisations’ representatives and spokespersons (including Palestinian and Israeli human rights organisations and peace advocacy groups and Israeli settler organisations), also received only the most negligible forms of access (see: Appendix 5, Table 5.3).

This trend of negligible rates of sourcing NGO's also applied to Irish and international civil society, generally. For example, the combined number of assertions attributed to UN representatives and other international human rights organisations only accounted for between 2.9% and 4.4% of all the sampled newspapers' assertions (see: Appendix 5, Table 5.3). Moreover, less than 3% of each sampled newspaper's source assertions were coded as attributed to Israeli civilians. The rate at which Israeli-Arab and Palestinian civilians were sourced only varied slightly between newspapers and was similarly low, ranging between 3.3% and 7.6% of sampled newspapers' assertions (see: Appendix 5, Table 5.3). This trend of under-representing the above range of international and Irish NGO's and other non-institutional sources, therefore, reflects a notable official/politico-institutional bias, which characterised the sampled newspapers' sourcing strategies and outcomes.

As already discussed in chapter 1, several studies of the media, including those undertaken within propaganda, indexing and political communicative perspectives, argue that newspaper reliance on politico-institutional sources ensures greater levels of inclusion and favourable presentation to state-sponsored and other official perspectives, at the expense of alternative or oppositional perspectives (Berry and Philo, 2004; Donohue, Tichenor and Olien, 1995; Hallin, 1986a; Herman and Chomsky, 1988; Lee et al., 2001: 346, 362; Schudson, 2003: 54, 150-1, 211; Wittebols, 1996: 350-1). Thus, as is argued by Tuchman:

News both draws upon and reproduces institutional structures... By identifying centralized sources of information as legitimated social institutions, news organisations and newswriters wed themselves to specific beats and bureaus. Those sites are then objectified as the appropriate sites at which information should be gathered... Through naïve

empiricism, information is transformed into objective facts – facts as a normal, natural, taken-for-granted description and constitution of a state of affairs (Tuchman, 1978: 210-1).

Although theorists differ on the factors influencing this journalistic reliance on official or institution-based sources and the extent to which it results in “primary definer” status being acquired by these sources (Adoni, Bantz and Cohen, 1990: 129; Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1989; Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1991; Sigal, 1986), it is largely assumed that disparities in media access and representation reflect differential levels of economic resources, political power and/or cultural capital (Gans, 1980; Gitlin, 1980; Hallin, 1986a; Reese, 1990: 394-5; Schlesinger, 1990: 76; Schlesinger, Tumber and Murdock, 1991: 405; Schudson, 1991: 148; Sigal, 1973: 65-70, 115, 119, 129-30; Sigal, 1986: 29-30). Even the success of non-governmental groups’ media strategies is related to their “organizational strength” and their attainment of “established and dominant power positions” (Donohue, Tichenor and Olien, 1984: 203, 214; see also: Adoni, Bantz and Cohen, 1990: 117).

A number of interview participants expressed perceptions that a range of structural, politico-institutional, or resource factors operated to confer more favourable media access and representation to official Israeli perspectives. For instance, Raymond Deane, in his capacity as Chairman of the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign and based on his experience of interacting with the Irish media, stated that he believed that a significant disparity exists in media reporting of Israeli and Palestinian sources and their perspectives. He argued that this disparity is due to the “very close links between the mainstream media and the establishment”, as well as the fact that the “Israeli embassy is notoriously active in tormenting journalists and they [media] just want them off their backs.” Moreover, the

“extraordinary Israeli propaganda machine that is constantly focusing its attentions on international journalists who are based in the region” greatly restricts journalists’ access to Palestinian locations and sources (Interview with Author, 2 June 2005). On the other hand, Raymond Deane highlighted that, “the Palestinians have no resources. They have no money. They have no power.” Consequently, “some kind of Palestinian institutions that are well funded and well resourced and that aren’t subjected to bombardment by the Israelis would be a great help” in increasing their positive representation within international media, including Irish media (Interview with Author, 2 June 2005).

The Executive Director of the Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland, Dr Nooh al-Kaddoh argued that because of historical and structural factors European media generally favour the Israeli perspective:

For the Palestinians, they lived for years, for decades, with a total misrepresentation. Nobody hear their voice... Now, just recently, with the *intifada's*, they come to the attention of the media and the people worldwide. So, that the contacts, the background and the information, all came from the Israeli side, because of a long influence with the people of the West especially. And always, Israel presented itself as weak, as an unfortunate free people surrounded with (sic) terrorists... and you know, the background, of the Holocaust and things like that all come to mind... On the other side, the Palestinians also failed, in my opinion, to present their case (Interview with Author, 4 August 2004).

The Irish Representative to the Palestinian Authority, Dr Niall Holohan argued that an international perspective is required to understand why the Palestinian political leadership is consistently unable to compete with Israeli publicity networks:

The Israeli government has embassies in every country in the world, as well as and even more importantly, it has a Jewish community in every other country in the world... While the Palestinian position is much more just and much more logical than the Israeli position, it is very often the Israelis who win the media battle by presenting their case better... They

[the PA] don't even have a minister for the press, or any central press office... And, Yasser Arafat, in particular, gives a very negative image very often because he doesn't present the sort of message that the world is ready to receive and he speaks in terms of impressing his domestic audience... There is a lack of centralized control over their media message. Partly, they don't have the resources in manpower, or in material terms, to organise world campaigns on informational or media bases (Interview with Author, 19 July 2004).

From a public relations perspective, the Delegate General of Palestine to Ireland, Dr Ali Halimeh expressed the opinion that Israel's "powerful machinery" and the resources of the "Jewish lobby" out-compete any Palestinian political initiatives in securing international media advantages (Interview with Author, 5 August 2004). Within the Irish context, he argued that because his office has "zero" resources for "publicity", this is "wrong, wrong, wrong, because if we have to defeat the Israelis and to counter the Israelis we need the resources" (Interview with Author, 5 August 2004).

To summarise, the above-quoted interview participants' insights are based on an assumption that the sampled Irish newspapers' sourcing strategies operate according to an "elite model of source structure" (Reese, 1994: 94), that is based on a "hierarchy" of source access, which encourages media dependence on politically-powerful and resource-rich sources (Hackett, 1991: 270, 281; Hackett and Zhao, 1996: 6).

However, some interview participants adopted a wider perspective by explaining the sampled newspapers' sourcing strategies as the outcome of interactions between the relevant politico-cultural context and media factors (Hallin, 1994: 52-4; Lederman, 1992: 123, 211-3, 223-5, 227; Roach, 1997: 29; Sigal, 1973: 125, 187-8). Thus, Brian Dooley, the Communications and Fund-Raising Manager



with the British and Irish Sections of Amnesty International, argued that the sampled Irish newspapers' coverage of Israeli and Palestinian assertions does not display "any secret conspiracy to peddle one line over the other." Instead, these newspapers are operating according to the logics of efficient, newsworthy information gathering. Hence, newspapers' patterns of source representation "reflect... the ways in which the news is presented to them. So, for instance, I think that the Israeli government is marvellous and magnificent at press relations." In contrast, the PA "just doesn't have enough English speaking, media savvy, telegenic spokespeople" (Interview with Author, 2 September 2004). An Irish diplomat also argued that the "shortage of articulate, well-educated Palestinian representatives who can be called on ... for a telegenic analysis" means that international media, operating under "both time constraints and commercial constraints", rely more on Israeli official sources (Interview with Author, 4 August 2004).

Other interview participants argued that news factors, such as the norms associated with "balanced", "objective" and "accurate" reporting, as well as news gathering and reporting constraints, exert influences on journalists' sourcing strategies and outcomes. For example, one Irish journalist argued that;

I try to get both sides' views, but I don't rely on either... I don't think I can say that my reporting has ever been sympathetic to either side. It just reports what happens, what's news and what are the main issues and events that people should know about... One of my greatest difficulties, especially if one is trying to report both sides equally, is that I don't speak any Arabic. I don't speak Hebrew either... However, generally, most Israelis speak English, whereas most Palestinians do not speak it... I have never really reported from Gaza as safety is a really big problem there... When getting information and views on the events that I am reporting on, I always immediately telephone contacts that I have on both sides. Then I ring sources that are not on any side of the conflict as such, but are in the middle of it somewhere (Interview with Author, 29 June 2004).

An Israel-based journalist argued that journalistic values and norms influence the news-sourcing conventions employed by daily news report formats:

It [the media] should try to give a fair-minded sense of what's happening... I have always strived for honesty in my coverage... I have also deliberately tried to keep my voice out... We just give the facts and details on what's happening... but I do tend to focus more on political or official spokespeople... I try to present both sides' perspectives... this challenge is... to present as close an approximation to what you could call fair coverage as is possible (Interview with Author, 11 July 2004).

Another Israel-based journalist argued that;

My style of straight news reporting... relies on trying to get some balance between the two sides... [It] is straight day-to-day event reporting with very little of my positions stated within it... I think that the distinction between reporting and editorials is vital... coverage is usually confined to reporting diplomatic and security issues... You are allocated space for just one set piece. Within this space you seek to balance a Palestinian source with an Israeli source... I rely on a wide range of sources... [which] vary from public statements issued by political leaders and officials from both sides to background briefings that I get through my own channels... I mostly tend to rely on official sources... Within the Palestinian camp, I mostly rely on political spokespeople who have good English, as I do not speak or understand Arabic (Interview with Author, 16 July 2004).

Hence, these interview-derived insights concur with the findings of journalist-centred and news-production studies. These studies argue that the patterns of source representation displayed by news content are outcomes of news construction processes (Cottle, 2003a: 14-6; Ettema and Glasser, 1987: 344, 357). More specifically, several studies have found that norms of “objectivity”, “impartiality”, “balance” and “accuracy” exert significant influences on journalists’ sourcing strategies (Gamson, 1988b: 169; Gamson, 1998: 72; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 7-8; Hackett, 1991: 279; Hackett, 1997: 149; Potter, 1996: 133-7; Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 38).

However, news-production studies have generated divergent conclusions regarding the *nature* of the impact of reporting conventions and values on source access and representation trends. For instance, on the one hand, it has been concluded that journalists' routine use of the sourcing strategy of "issue dualism" enables journalists to present "both sides of the story" and its "conflicting possibilities", which militates against media over-reliance on powerful elite sources (Tuchman, 1972: 665; Tuchman, 1978: 90). However, on the other hand, it has also been argued that this strategy merely creates the perception of fair, balanced and even-handed coverage, as it imposes a "simple bipolar structure on complex, multidimensional issue debates that advocate a range of policy solutions" (Terkildsen, Schnell and Ling, 1998: 47, 50, 56, 59; see also: Johnson-Cartee, 2005: 130-1). Other studies have also concluded that "objective" reporting paradigms "reinforce[s] existing power relations" by limiting debate to a "simplistic for and against format", which "rarely challenges the image-making and agenda-setting power of elites" (Hackett and Zhao, 1996: 5-6; see also: Hackett, 1997: 144; Jensen, 1996: 22-3).

With particular reference to media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the *Report of the Independent Panel for the BBC Governors on Impartiality of BBC Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict*, which analysed BBC news output from August 2005 to January 2006 and BBC current affairs programmes from January 2005 to January 2006, concluded that:

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is of long standing, is deeply felt and bitterly contested. Almost every apparent fact is disputed and every event, past or present, is subject to polarised interpretations... As in other firmly established conflicts, there are, to simplify, two mindsets with rival versions of reality... and the media may need to present 'dual narratives'... There is another point about the nature of the conflict; namely that the two

sides are not on equal terms. Indeed, it is arguable that the most obvious and important feature of the present situation is its asymmetry... For one thing, the Israelis are necessarily in the position of authority, while the Palestinians are frequently in the position of challenger... given this asymmetry, the BBC's concern with balance gave an impression of equality between the two sides which was fundamentally, if unintentionally misleading (Thomas, 2006: 11, 13).

Thus, as outlined above, the field of news-production studies has generated divergent findings regarding the exact *nature* of the impacts exerted by news factors, such as “balance”, “objectivity” and “impartiality” norms. Significantly, however, these studies have concluded that news factors *do* exert some form of influence on source access and representation outcomes. Moreover, this conclusion confirms the major finding of this case study's analysis of the sampled newspapers' source access and representation trends; namely, that a number of news and politico-cultural contextual factors potentially influence the sourcing outcomes displayed by the sampled newspapers.

Firstly, it was found that news-sourcing conventions and norms limited news accounts to reporting assertions supplied by Israeli political/“official” sources and Palestinian political/“official” sources. Additionally, the requirement that journalists efficiently and reliably access both protagonists' perspectives, relying on the norms of “authoritative”, “objective” and “balanced” reporting, exerted an important influence in ensuring that Israeli and Palestinian political/“official” sources' assertions were presented within news reports, albeit in somewhat uneven ways. Thus, overall and taken collectively, the sampled newspapers tended to constitute contested sites that variously present the statements of competing Israeli and Palestinian political protagonists, rather than exclusively transmitting so-called consensual, hegemonic and elitist constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Secondly, it was found that the wider politico-cultural context surrounding the sampled newspapers potentially influenced the sourcing trends displayed by news content. For instance, the finding that the sampled newspapers rarely represented a more diverse range of international political sources is likely to be influenced by the fact that the wider Irish foreign policy context is formed by traditions of relative diplomatic isolationism and “small state” worldviews.

Thirdly, the Irish historical and contemporary foreign policy-making background also appeared to exert discernible influences on the sourcing patterns displayed by the sampled Irish newspapers. For instance, it was hypothesised that, Ireland’s relative lack of “vital” or “hard” foreign policy interests in Israel and the Palestinian territories and Ireland’s lack of direct cultural or personal ties with the Middle East region, are important contextual factors that influence the ways that sampled newspapers tend to accord minimalist and even negligible rates of coverage to a more diverse range of civil society, media, academic and civilian sources from the Middle East region and from Israel and the Palestinian territories.

Finally, the virtual absence of quotations or paraphrases of domestic (Irish) political sources’ statements within news content, *across* all sampled newspapers, appears to be strongly related to the fact that the Irish political domain lacks a strong tradition of domestic interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict generally and to the fact that, in a wider sense, the sampled newspapers have failed to develop an appreciable indigenous media discourse on the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Significantly, the above conclusions were generated within a constructivist and contextual approach that is applied throughout this case study. As already repeatedly highlighted, this approach is regarded as the most appropriate and useful approach for understanding the potential impacts that different politico-cultural and media contexts, as well as news factors, have on media-source relations and resultant news outcomes. This approach is also centrally relevant for the qualitative and interpretive analyses of news frames undertaken and presented within the following chapter.

## **8. Conclusions**

This chapter outlined the findings of this case study's descriptive analysis of several trends displayed by randomly sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict provided by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. The research implications of these findings were then analysed within a social constructivist perspective.

Significantly, it was found that each of the trends discussed in this chapter could not be explained as the outcomes of any single factor. Instead, it was argued that these trends are best explained as the outcomes of foreign news construction processes that are potentially influenced by a range of different media and politico-cultural contextual factors that require direct empirical investigation.

In relation to the sampled newspapers' issue-attention cycles, it was found that, while regular patterns of attention were accorded to covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this coverage was frequently of a semi- or non-prominent nature and mostly located within the inside or back "world news" pages. It was concluded that the historical and politico-cultural context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as foreign news values, influenced these issue-attention cycles. Firstly, the international resonance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its high potential to generate dramatic levels of violence and symbolically potent storylines were factors that ensured ongoing Irish newspaper attention. Secondly, it was concluded that the sampled Irish newspapers accorded levels of attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that were commensurate with Irish foreign policy interests – namely, ongoing and regular forms of attention that nonetheless, mostly produced semi- or non-prominent news coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In relation to this case study's findings regarding the news-sourcing trends characterising the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it was found that the majority of news items were sourced from foreign-based journalists and news agencies. It was also found that news factors such as editorial judgements and criteria, as well as reporting norms and values, exerted some influences on these sourcing trends. However, factors relating to the wider Irish media environment exerted the strongest impact. Particularly, the so-called "commercial realities of journalism" and the increasingly competitive environment characterising the Irish media market (particularly due to the strong presence of British newspaper titles in that market), reduced the proportion of resources that the sampled newspapers devoted to foreign coverage, generally. Especially with

reference to the influences exerted by the wider Irish media environment, the fact that Irish media have not been historically grounded within a “tradition” of foreign news analysis was also identified as an important factor that further constrained the sampled newspapers’ commitment to foreign news coverage.

In relation to the location, format and narrative styles displayed by the sampled newspapers, the key findings were that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict tended to be relegated to the inside or back “world news” pages and largely structured within “hard news” or “report” formats and “episodic” narrative styles. Overall, relatively little amounts of front-page, analytic, or editorial attention was devoted to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

News criteria governing the “balance” and “mix” of foreign news within newspapers and editorial perceptions regarding the levels of readership interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were found to have shaped each of these presentational trends. However, the Irish political and foreign policy context also influenced the ways in which sampled newspapers presented the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In particular, this context is significant because it supplied an overall discursive climate within which the sampled newspapers were discouraged from analysing or editorialising on the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Moreover, within the Irish political domain the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has not been a strong domestic or foreign policy interest, nor has it been a divisive or politically controversial issue.



In relation to the findings generated by this case study's topical analyses, it was concluded that news values and judgements, particularly the negativity and conflict biases characteristic of foreign news coverage, tilted editorial decisions *towards* selecting and emphasising "conflict"/"political violence" topics. These judgements also tended to concurrently minimise coverage of "peace" and other topics, which were regarded as less newsworthy.

It was also concluded that the Irish politico-cultural environment exerted important constructivist influences on the sampled newspapers' topical presentations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Particularly, the relative isolationist tilting of Irish foreign policy worldviews could be said to supply an important context within which each sampled newspaper mostly neglected to cover the international diplomatic-security context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Furthermore, the relatively low levels of media attention devoted to covering topics regarding the internal political situations in Israel and the Palestinian territories also reflected the Irish state's lack of "vital" foreign policy or domestic interests in the conflict and the relative weakness of the politico-cultural and personal ties between Ireland and Israel and between Ireland and the Palestinians.

Finally, in relation to the patterns of source access and representation displayed by the sampled news items, it was found that while Israeli political/"official" sources' perspectives achieved the highest level of representation within three of the sampled newspapers, this was not an exclusive or dominant representational trend. Instead, the sampled newspapers could be concluded to have.

more or less, constituted sites of contest (albeit somewhat unequal sites), between the perspectives of Israeli political/“official” sources and Palestinian political/“official” sources. Moreover, Palestinian political/“official” sources achieved greater and more consistent levels of access and representation than the other remaining source categories.

The second major trend uncovered by this analysis of source access and representation trends was that non-Israeli and non-Palestinian sources (including international, regional and Irish sources) and non-politico-institutional sources (including NGO, professional, academic and civilian sources) were disproportionately under-represented *across* all newspapers.

It was concluded that news factors, especially editorial and reporting criteria regarding the sourcing of “efficient”, “telegenic”, “authoritative”, “unbiased” and “balanced” sources, exerted some influences on these sourcing trends. However, it was also concluded that the wider media and politico-cultural context surrounding the sampled newspapers also exerted a number of important constructivist influences. For instance, the finding that Irish political sources’ statements were rarely quoted or paraphrased can be related to the fact that Irish-based media do not have access to a strong and consistent indigenous public or political discourse on the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Additionally, the finding that sampled newspapers only provided minimalist coverage of international or regional sources’ statements was related to Ireland’s “small state” status and the relative isolationist stance adopted by Ireland internationally.

Taken together, this chapter's discussions have sought to analyse several dimensions of the presentational trends that characterised the randomly sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. Significantly, the findings of these analyses highlight that newspaper foreign coverage trends cannot be reliably analysed as the exclusive outcome of singular or extrinsic structural factors, such as state propaganda, elite hegemony, or political control. Rather, it has been centrally argued throughout this chapter and within earlier chapters of this thesis that newspaper coverage trends are best analysed as the outcomes of news construction processes that are variously influenced by a range of different contexts and factors.

Finally, the findings presented in this chapter also act as a useful introduction to the following chapter, which extends this social constructivist analysis further. The following chapter presents the findings that emerged from this case study's more qualitative frame analysis. The most significant argument of this chapter is that frame analysis also forms an integral stage of social constructivist and contextual newspaper analysis. Particularly, it is argued that frame research circumvents and overcomes the methodological weaknesses and theoretical inadequacies displayed by propaganda, indexing, hegemonic and political control hypotheses.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **FRAMING PATTERNS AND DIVERSITIES WITHIN THE SAMPLED NEWSPAPERS' COVERAGE OF THE ISRAELI- PALESTINIAN CONFLICT (JULY 2000 TO JULY 2004)**

#### **1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses the findings of this case study's frame analysis of randomly sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* from July 2000 to July 2004. Firstly, an overview of patterns of frame occurrence throughout this time period and *across* each of the sampled newspapers is presented. Secondly, the findings of thematically organised analyses of different frames are presented. These analyses are intended to extend the research focus beyond the previous chapter's descriptive and somewhat quantitatively oriented content analysis.

#### **2. Overview of Patterns of Frame Displays within News Discourses**

All news items were firstly coded as "displaying" or "not displaying" frame(s)/frame component(s). Although opinion and editorial formats tend to display greater frame potentials than "report" formats (Gamson, 1992b: 198-200; Gamson and Stuart, 1992: 60), "reports" are included within the frame analysis

sample because this case study's descriptive analysis, in addition to wider newspaper readings (including several editions outside of the selected sample), revealed that regular coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the sampled newspapers occurred mostly within "report" formats.

Furthermore, because news frames frequently suggest "a range of positions rather than any single one, thus allowing for a degree of controversy among those who share the same package" (Gamson, 1981: 83), news items were coded for up to three different frames. Visual features accompanying news items that were coded as "displaying" frame(s)/frame component(s) were also selected for further frame analysis. However, manifest visual features such as "straight" photographs, maps, or "informative" graphs that did not display any thematic element were excluded from the frame analysis.

A total of 127 items, out of a sample of 256 items (almost 50%), were reliably coded as "displaying" an easily identifiable and discernible frame (see: Appendix 5, Table 5.4 for a tabulated list of all possible frame combinations and their rate of display within sampled news discourses). A cross-comparative breakdown of this statistic reveals that 60.8% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample and 56.6% of *The Irish Times* sample displayed an identifiable frame. The *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Independent* displayed a reversed trend, as 37.4% and 35.5% of their respective samples displayed an identifiable frame (see: Appendix 5, Table 5.4).

Further cross-comparisons of the rate of representation of different frames reveal interesting patterns of broad similarities and divergences (see: Figure 6, below). A substantially higher proportion of *The Irish Times* (28.9%) and the *Sunday Independent* samples (25%) displayed *law and order/terrorism* frames, both in singular and combined forms. In contrast, only 7.1% of the *Irish Independent* sample and 2.9% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample displayed *law and order/terrorism* frames in singular and combined forms. Very low percentages of display (ranging from 0% to 8.4%) were recorded across all newspapers for related *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames (see: Figure 6, below).

None of the *Sunday Independent* sample displayed *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames. *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames were displayed in singular and combined forms in just 13.3% of *The Irish Times* sample and 16% of the *Irish Independent* sample. This general trend of lower rates of representation accorded to *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames was, however, reversed within the *Sunday Tribune*, which displayed *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames in singular and combined forms within 34.7% of its sample. This trend is in keeping with the above finding that the *Sunday Tribune* sample rarely featured *law and order/terrorism* frames (see: Figure 6, below).

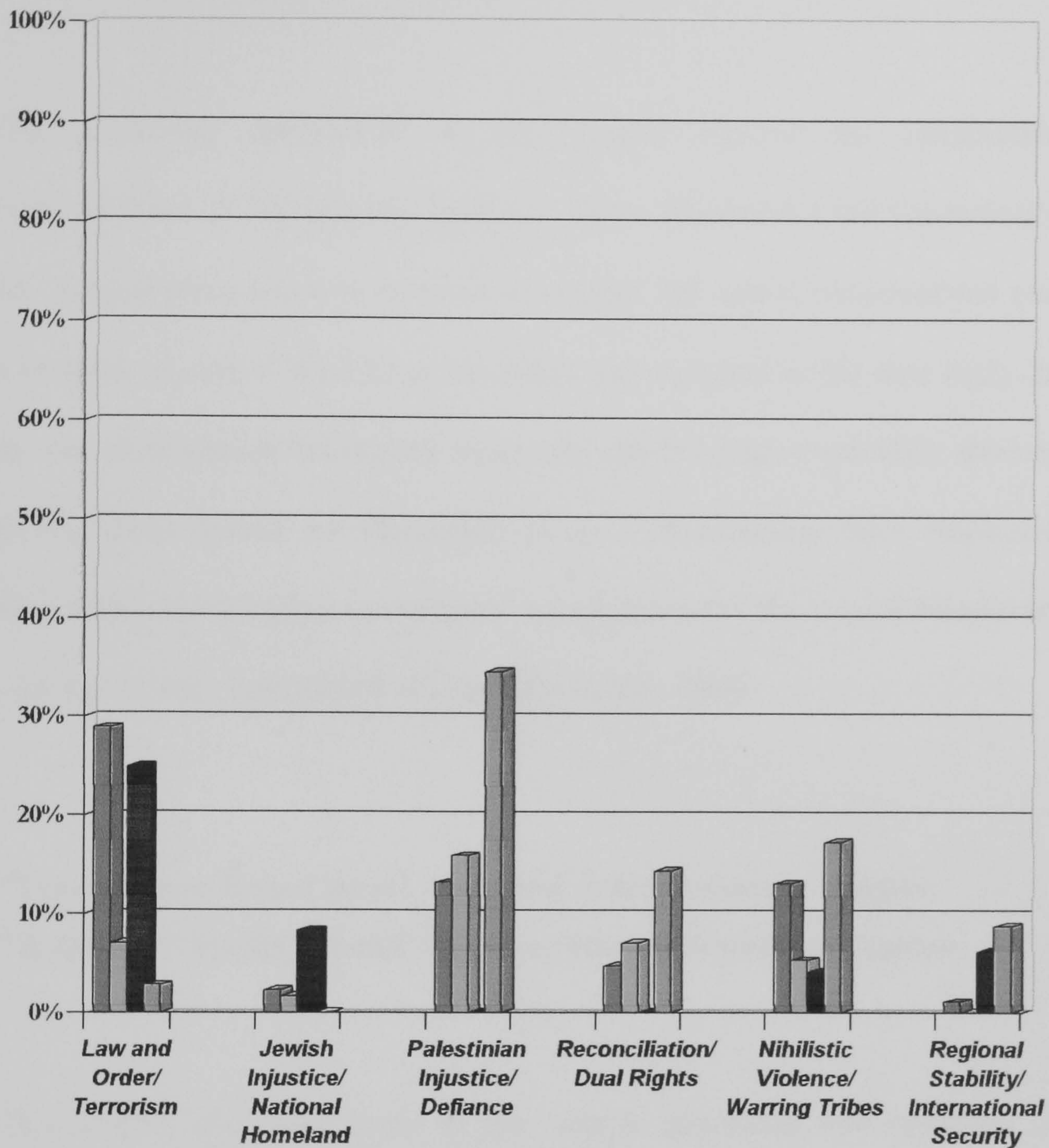
*Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames tended to be the least likely category of frames to feature within the overall newspaper sample. The second least likely category of frames to feature within this sample was *regional stability/international security* frames. The *Sunday Tribune* displayed *regional stability/international security* frames (in singular and combined forms) within

8.8% of its news sample. The *Sunday Independent* displayed *regional stability/international security* frames (in singular and combined forms) within 6.3% of its news sample. However, none of the *Irish Independent* sample displayed *regional stability/international security* frames. Only 1.2% of *The Irish Times* sample displayed *regional stability/international security* frames in singular and combined forms (see: Figure 6, below).

*Reconciliation/dual rights* frames were presented (in both singular and combined forms), within very small percentages of each newspaper's samples. There was no display of these frames within the *Sunday Independent* sample. Only 4.8% of *The Irish Times* sample and 7.1% of the *Irish Independent* sample displayed *reconciliation/dual rights* frames in singular and combined forms. However, a relatively higher rate of representation was achieved by *reconciliation/dual rights* frames within the *Sunday Tribune* sample – namely, 14.5%.

Similar low rates of inclusion and display were accorded by the sampled newspapers to *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames. Only 5.4% of the *Irish Independent* sample and 4.2% of the *Sunday Independent* sample displayed *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames in singular and combined forms. However, the *Sunday Tribune* and *The Irish Times* did record relatively higher rates of display for *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames – 17.4% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample and 13.2% of *The Irish Times* sample displayed *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames in singular and combined forms.

**Figure 6: Patterns of Frame Displays within News Discourses  
(July 2000 to July 2004)**



This graph's percentage totals were calculated by adding the percentage of frames displayed singularly in sampled news items with the percentage of frames displayed in combination with other frames.

■ Irish Times    □ Irish Independent    ■ Sunday Independent    □ Sunday Tribune

Broadly speaking, it is possible to conclude from the above findings that the sampled newspapers cannot be reliably regarded as performing monolithic or uni-dimensional roles in reporting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. Also, this overview highlights that these sampled newspapers tend to act as sites of contest between competing frames of the Israeli-



Palestinian conflict, rather than as conduits of state propaganda, or as partisan supporters of either of the conflict's protagonists.

The remaining discussions of this chapter explore the interpretive implications of these frame analytic findings. These discussions are thematically organised. A qualitative focus is adopted to explore the social constructivist and thematic features of each of the frames identified and analysed in this case study. In particular, key examples of the central arguments and framing or symbolic devices characterising these frames are illustrated, so as to demonstrate their discursive functioning within the sampled newspapers' constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the four-year period of July 2000 to July 2004.

### **3. "Terrorism-as-Root-Cause" - *Law and Order/Terrorism* Frames "Holocaust" Motifs - *Jewish Injustice/National Homeland* Frames**

This section illustrates some of the central arguments and symbolic or framing devices uncovered by this case study's analysis of *law and order/terrorism* frames and *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames. As already outlined in chapter 2, *law and order/terrorism* frames are defensive state-sponsored frames, that are intended to rationalise and justify Israeli occupation and military rule within official "anti-terrorist" and "national security" discourses (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.1; see also: Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 146; Wolfsfeld, 2004: 112, 223; Wolfsfeld, Avraham and Aburaiya, 2000: 116). Chapter 2 also defined *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames as separate, though similar "pro"-Israeli frames

which construct Jewish rights in more positive and affirmative ways (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.2).

This case study's qualitative analysis of *law and order/terrorism* frames found that one of the most central arguments employed by these frames was the argument that Palestinian "terrorism" is the "root-cause" of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Typically, these arguments constructed Palestinian violence as the "principal factor in derailing the peace process" (*Sunday Independent*, 28 March 2004). Hamas was depicted by *law and order/terrorism* frames as an "implacable opponent of peace with Israel" and as an advocate of a "holy war to reclaim Palestine for a religiously revived Islamic world" (*Sunday Independent*, 28 March 2004). A further "terrorist" depiction of Hamas defined it as "committed to war against Israel" (*Sunday Independent*, 7 January 2001). In another instance, Hamas was portrayed as a "militant movement" that "calls for the destruction of the Jewish state" (*Sunday Independent*, 18 April 2004). Hamas was also portrayed as an "Islamic fundamentalist movement", which is "evidently emboldened by the activities of Osama Bin Laden" (*The Irish Times*, 11 October 2001). Furthermore, *law and order/terrorism* frames depicted the "suicide" bomber as the "defining image of the Middle East conflict" and as "happily" taking his/her life in the process of destroying innocent Israeli lives (*Sunday Tribune*, 6 June 2004).

The "terrorist" motif emerged as one of the most explicit indicators of the operation of *law and order/terrorism* frames. This "terrorist" motif was uncovered within news samples that drew analogies between Yasser Arafat and Saddam Hussein, or between Yasser Arafat and Gerry Adams, the leader of Sinn Fein

(*Sunday Independent*, 9 December 2001; *The Irish Times*, 11 September 2002; *Sunday Independent*, 16 March 2003; *The Irish Times*, 26 March 2003). In other instances, Arafat was depicted as duplicitous, disingenuous and as deliberately engineering escalations in *intifada*-related violence in order “to draw a harsh Israeli response, so as to galvanise support and precipitate international pressure in the region” (*The Irish Times*, 28 March 2001).

During this period of analysis (July 2000 to July 2004), *law and order/terrorism* frames constructed the failures of peace talks, such as those held in Camp David (July 2000) and Paris/Taba (October 2000 – January 2001), as the sole responsibility of the Palestinian leadership and as suggestive of that leadership’s commitment to “terrorism.” On 22 October 2000 a *Sunday Independent* article explicitly attributed political responsibility for the origins of the *intifada* to Yasser Arafat by headlining the theme: “Arafat defiant as bloodbath rages on” and by leading the article with the assertion that, the “Palestinian leader takes tough stance on Israel as Arab Summit avoids war threat.” This article was accompanied by a picture of Palestinian emergency workers evacuating an injured Palestinian from a scene of conflict. This picture carried the caption: “Victim of intransigence” and, therefore, further enhanced the theme of Arafat’s rejection of peace (*Sunday Independent*, 22 October 2000). Other depictions of Yasser Arafat similarly constructed him as an obstacle to forging an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement (*The Irish Times*, 2 December 2000):

Arafat and his friends are even more dangerous than Hamas.... They claim to be opposed to violence yet they continually provide Hamas and other murderous organisations openly ‘at war’ with Israel with this protective screen. These organisations work from territory nominally controlled by Arafat and they do so with impunity... The fact is the wretched

Arafat is now thoroughly discredited. He has been so for a very long time in the territory which he is supposed to control. His government is known to be thoroughly corrupt and efficient only in enriching itself by looting the public coffers (*Irish Independent*, 8 December 2001).

Other examples of news discourses constructed within *law and order/terrorism* frames depicted Yasser Arafat and the PA as undemocratic, erratic and authoritarian. For instance, in one article sampled from *The Irish Times*, the PA was constructed as a “sprawling and bewildering array of security apparatuses” (*The Irish Times*, 17 May 2002). In a further article, Yasser Arafat’s corruption and misrule were cited as the causes of “economic collapse” and the theme of the dysfunctional nature of Palestinian violence was reinforced by an accompanying IDF-sourced photograph of a Palestinian baby brandishing weapons (*The Irish Times*, 15 July 2002). In yet another article, Arafat’s commitment to a comprehensive ceasefire was depicted as disingenuous and partial. The PA was also discredited as a “partner for peace” because it is rife with “confusions” and “deepening divisions” (*The Irish Times*, 11 September 2002).

In an article specifically devoted to the topic of Palestinian “reform”, Arafat was depicted as “evincing no such public desire... of ending the armed *intifada*.” The article explained that he was “deeply reluctant to give up control to Mr Abbas of the various Palestinian security apparatuses”, despite the fact that “reform of these dozen or so networks” and the disarming of “extremist groups” was a “condition for diplomatic progress” stipulated by Israel and the United States (*The Irish Times*, 26 August 2003).

*Law and order/terrorism* frames also constructed contrasts between the Israeli political leadership's "willingness" to negotiate "concessions" and reach peaceful resolutions and the Palestinian's response of "rejection." Consider the following two depictions of Ehud Barak's approach:

There was no questioning his [Barak's] tenacity in pursuing a peace agreement with the Palestinians that their leader Yasser Arafat was not ready to accept... His misfortune was to put these concessions to Mr Arafat when his Palestinian Authority was crumbling under the weight of corruption and incompetence... Mr Arafat's weakness led to the explosion of the *intifada* or uprising... Despite the violence and his own lack of majority in parliament, Mr Barak pressed on with his hopes of sealing a peace agreement right until the last moment when Mr Arafat rewarded him by calling the Israelis 'fascists' (*Irish Independent*, 6 February 2001).

Ehud Barak, the fallen Prime Minister of Israel, perished from the political equivalent of a self-inflicted wound. He thought that by offering larger concessions to the Palestinians than any Prime Minister of Israel had ever offered before, he would be able to conclude a peace deal with Arafat... He got nothing in return except renewed and accelerated attacks on Israeli troops, plus bomb attacks on Israel itself... Arab opinion, always dangerously volatile and often absurdly sanguine, had come to believe that Israel was crumbling and that with a few more shoves it would soon collapse altogether (*Sunday Independent*, 11 February 2001).

During later phases of the United States-brokered Israeli-Palestinian talks *law and order/terrorism* frames continued to accord centrality to the argument that the primary factor preventing "progress on the political negotiations front" was Palestinian violence and the Palestinians' failure to implement a "stable ceasefire" (*The Irish Times*, 20 March 2002). The United States and Israel were portrayed as having "offered" Arafat "incentives to conclude a ceasefire agreement," while a prominent photograph of General Anthony Zinni being received by Arafat in Ramallah reinforced the theme of American "offerings" (*The Irish Times*, 20 March 2002). Moreover, President George Bush was favourably constructed as a "convinced and dedicated enemy of terrorism" (*Irish Independent*, 14 June 2003).

The theme of Jewish suffering emerged as one of the most prominent themes of *law and order/terrorism* frames, especially within coverage of “suicide” attacks. The following excerpt from *The Irish Times*’ coverage of a “suicide” attack that killed at least seventeen people in Tel Aviv on 1 June 2001 is organised around this theme, as is its associated prominent photograph of the aftermath of the “suicide” bombing:

The blast at a club in a seaside complex along a beachfront promenade lined with palm trees, caused carnage. Women wept and young victims lay groaning on the ground being comforted by rescue workers. Pools of blood covered the pavement... Many of the victims had been enjoying a night out on the Jewish Sabbath... The scene at the nightclub was a sharp contrast to the events earlier in the day in Jerusalem when the funeral of a senior Palestinian official passed off without any major violence... [Yet] amid scenes that underlined Palestinian nationalist fervour and passion for control... Israel essentially relinquished control of parts... of the eastern half of the Holy City (*The Irish Times*, 2 June 2001).

The *Irish Independent*’s coverage of a double “suicide” attack on 5 January 2003, which killed over twenty people, amplified the theme of Jewish suffering by providing humanising accounts of the attack’s impact. This news item also stressed that this attack represented “a bloody start to the year” and that “last year suicide bombers killed more than 200 people in Israel” (*Irish Independent*, 6 January 2003). *The Irish Times*’ front-page coverage of this bombing prominently displayed a photograph of the resultant human suffering. An additional article in the inside “world news” pages argued that the most significant outcome of “suicide” attacks was that they lead to “hardening [Israeli] public opinion against compromise with the Palestinians.” This article also evoked the historical exemplar of Peres’ loss of the 1996 election to Netanyahu, in order to caution Sharon not to appear to be “soft on the Palestinians” (*The Irish Times*, 6 January 2003).

The theme of historical and contemporary anti-Semitism was most prominently displayed in the few excerpts of news discourses coded as displaying *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames. One particularly illustrative example of this theme was displayed within an article written by Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien, which drew parallels between the Holocaust and present-day worldwide anti-Semitism. This article's central argument was that "hostility to Jews in Europe is a grim constant" and "polymorphically versatile", thereby implicitly justifying Israeli "security" policies (*Sunday Independent*, 26 May 2002). In a further opinion piece written by Eoghan Harris, positive Jewish rights were constructed by reference to the historical exemplar of the Holocaust and the theme of Israel as the contemporary guarantor of Jewish rights. However, Israel was also chastised within this opinion piece for its use of "dirty deeds" against the Palestinians and its wider failure to build on the "massive moral surplus created by the sufferings of the six million who perished in the Holocaust" (*Sunday Independent*, 28 July 2002).

During this case study's frame analysis the theme of the reluctant, or stimulus-response nature of Israeli "get-tough-on-terror" policies emerged as a significant theme of *law and order/terrorism* frames (*The Irish Times*, 28 March 2001; *The Irish Times*, 6 February 2001; *The Irish Times*, 11 April 2002). It was argued in one news item that Israeli force was necessary for ensuring that Palestinians "could be weaned from support for terrorism" (*Irish Independent*, 14 June 2003). In another news item it was argued that Israeli force was required to suppress "terrorism", especially since Arab states turned a "blind eye to acts of anti-Israeli violence" (*Irish Independent*, 26 July 2004).

In another news item, the IDF's "doctrine of 'asymmetrical response'" was defined as requiring Israel to "reply with greater violence to each Arab attack on Israel", as a "one-to-one response would entail the destruction of Israel" (*Sunday Independent*, 26 May 2002). *Law and order/terrorism* frames also deployed the "different-in-kind" argument to construct a contrast between Palestinian and Israeli violence:

All the Palestinian attacks on Jewish targets were indiscriminate, or discriminating only in that they were primarily directed against Jews... because they were Jews and this was gleefully acknowledged by the perpetrators and joyously hailed by their many Arab friends and admirers. The Israeli responses were different in kind. They were all aimed at targets which the Israeli Defence Forces believed to be engaged in terrorist activities... and [the resultant] civilian casualties were few enough in comparison with the Jewish victims of the Arab terrorist attacks (*Irish Independent*, 14 June 2003).

Within *law and order/terrorism* frames the outcomes of Israeli violence were mostly discussed in terms of their implications for Israelis, rather than in terms of Palestinian suffering. For instance, a *Sunday Tribune* article framed Israel's assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin directly in terms of the theme of Israeli fears of a Palestinian "onslaught:"

Israel this weekend is on high security alert, as Israelis nervously await what many believe is the inevitable onslaught following the assassination of the Hamas spiritual leader in Gaza... The Israeli public, a public that has grown long hardened to the horror of suicide terror attacks, is equally in a state of shock that school children are being sent to the streets to blow themselves up (*Sunday Tribune*, 28 March 2004).

An accompanying picture of a "would-be 16 year-old suicide bomber" surrendering to the Israeli security forces also visually constructed this latter theme (*Sunday Tribune*, 28 March 2004).



*Law and order/terrorism* frames were also suggested by thematic positions and framing devices that justified Israeli violence and marginalized or negated critiques of the IDF. For instance, in one news item Israel's "two-week offensive in the West Bank" was depicted as an attempt to "wipe out militant networks responsible for a series of suicide bombings", especially since "two Palestinian suicide bombers... came from Jenin." Furthermore, the Israeli army statement which "flatly denied Palestinian allegations that its forces had killed hundreds of civilians in Jenin and were trying to hide the bodies," was presented as unproblematic, with no reference to any counter-argument (*Sunday Independent*, 14 April 2002). This article's accompanying photographs were of the "bomber and her victims" and the aftermath of a Palestinian "suicide" bombing. The latter photograph prominently foregrounded images of the Israeli rescue operation, the line-up of body bags, blood stained victims and surrounding debris (*Sunday Independent*, 14 April 2002).

This frame analysis also found that *law and order/terrorism* frames were likely to deploy euphemistic depictions of Israeli violence as part of a "continuing response" to Palestinian "terrorism", or "targeted killings" that would destroy the Palestinian "terrorist infrastructure" (*The Irish Times*, 21 January 2002; *The Irish Times*, 26 August 2003). Within *law and order/terrorism* frames Arafat's "house arrest" was depicted euphemistically as "limitations on his movement" (*The Irish Times*, 21 January 2002). Israeli military offensives were also euphemistically described as "operations", or amorphous war-like scenes of "intense battles" between two warring parties (*The Irish Times*, 11 April 2002). Such descriptions excised or minimised IDF responsibility for resultant Palestinian human losses.

Moreover, the use of passive language to construct Israeli violence also suggested the existence of *law and order/terrorism* frames. For instance, in one article Israeli military raids in Ramallah were constructed as merely part of a “break-out” of “shooting exchanges” that resulted after Israeli troops “entered” the area with the objective of preventing “suicide” attacks (*The Irish Times*, 17 May 2002).

This frame analysis also found that the theme of “threatened Israeli democracy” characterised *law and order/terrorism* frames. In one example, Israel was described as “a fellow democracy under pressure from surrounding dictatorships and oligarchies.” It was then argued that because of this trait, other democracies should assist Israel in its war on terror, which is related to the President Bush-sponsored “world offensive against terrorism” that “does not end with the overthrow of the Taliban” (*Irish Independent*, 8 December 2001).

A similar “international” focus was also uncovered within an article that compared Israel’s assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin to the United States’ response to 11 September 2001 and Europe’s response to the 11 March 2004 Madrid bombings. The symbolic potential of this frame was enhanced by an accompanying prominent photograph of an enraged Palestinian woman holding a poster of Sheikh Yassin upright during a protest against Yassin’s assassination (*Sunday Independent*, 28 March 2004):

The bin-Laden inspired terrorists, or the suicide bombers sent into Israel by the followers of Sheikh Yassin’s Hamas, have succeeded in dividing the western world and have set it against itself... the Bin Laden’s and the Yassin’s seek not to negotiate, but to obliterate... there is no point of negotiation... only containment... The Israeli conflict... which we like

to believe is a catalyst for all the West's ills – cannot be resolved by the west turning on Israel... Israel uniquely faces obliteration as a state and we cannot stand aside and allow that to happen. To condemn Israel for killing Sheikh Yassin without recognising the murderous campaign of terror that he orchestrated and inspired is to consciously ignore the realities of Palestinian terror and worse, create the impression that we condone it. Bin Laden, Yassin and whoever follows in their wake can only be contained, if not defeated, by a concerted global assault (*Sunday Independent*, 28 March 2004).

In relation to the issue of Ireland's relations with Israel and the Palestinians, it is expected that *Law and order/terrorism* frames would be highly critical of Irish "pro-Palestinian" political positions. One such illustration of a *law and order/terrorism* frame, for instance, depicted Irish support for the Palestinian cause as merely the misguided outcome of a leftist "pet-project", which occurred at the expense of the causes of "other alleged oppressed peoples." It was argued that this support displayed the "moral turpitude of taking the wrong side", which was not based on any sound political or economic "sense", especially since "America accounts for 77 per cent of foreign investment in Ireland" (*Sunday Independent*, 9 December 2001). Ireland's "contemptible" failures in "protecting Jews", especially from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to World War II, were also evoked as historical exemplars to buttress the theme that Ireland must display "some humility... before taking a hard line against Israel, home to many of the Jews who survived the Holocaust" (*Sunday Independent*, 15 June 2003).

*Law and order/terrorism* frames also displayed strong metaphorical and symbolic potentials. Examples included the metaphor of "the crash on the road to peace" and the metaphor of the "hornets' nest" (*Irish Independent*, 14 June 2003). Political actors who attempt to negotiate with the Palestinians are likened to "lame ducks" or "dead ducks" (*Sunday Independent*, 7 January 2001; *Sunday Independent*, 9 December 2001). The Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Barak's "concessions" were

metaphorically portrayed as amounting to a “Barakian appeasement” (*Sunday Independent*, 11 February 2001) and the capacity of the Palestinian leadership to halt “terrorism” was likened to a “busted flush” (*Irish Independent*, 14 June 2003). Metaphorically, political Islam was compared to “Inquisition Catholicism”, or the European “tradition of tyrannophilia”, because it “hates humanism, is an enemy of the emancipation and is no friend of human freedom” (*Sunday Independent*, 15 June 2003).

In conclusion, this section has presented an analysis of some thematically- and symbolically-significant frame component(s) characterising the display of *law and order/terrorism* frames and *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames within randomly sampled newspaper coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

It was outlined firstly, that one of the most central arguments characterising displays of *law and order/terrorism* frames was the argument that Palestinian “terrorism” is the “root cause” of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and an existential threat to Israeli security. Some of the most frequently occurring thematic positions associated with *law and order/terrorism* frames were then outlined. These thematic positions included positions that emphasised Jewish suffering, or emphasised that Israeli violence was a legitimate and/or reactive “response” to Palestinian “terrorism.” Moreover, contrasts between the “terrorist” Palestinian leadership and the “compromising” Israeli leadership, in addition to analogies between Yasser

Arafat and Saddam Hussein, emphasised Palestinian responsibility for escalations in “terrorism” and failures to secure “peace.”

This analysis also concluded that the theme of historic Jewish suffering and motifs of the Holocaust were prominent indicators of related *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames. The following section outlines how the themes of Palestinian suffering and Israeli aggression constituted two of the primary thematic indicators of the display of *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames.

#### **4. Depictions of Palestinian Suffering and Israeli Brutality - *Palestinian Injustice/Defiance* Frames**

As already outlined in chapter 2, *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames are typical “challenger” frames adopted by weaker protagonists engaged in popular insurgencies against established state powers (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.3; see also: Wolfsfeld, 1997a: 141; Wolfsfeld, Avraham and Aburaiya, 2000: 116). This case study’s frame analysis found that a central argument frequently displayed by *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames was that the Palestinian *intifada* was a popular “uprising”, or “war of independence”, as well as being *the* metaphor for Palestinian political aspirations (*Sunday Tribune*, 13 December 2000; *Sunday Tribune*, 28 March 2004). *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames also emphasised that Palestinian sufferings were the most unjust outcome of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These sufferings were often either juxtaposed with, or causally related to depictions of Israeli violence as aggressive, brutal and indiscriminate.

In the excerpt below the theme of Palestinian suffering was amplified by constructions of Israeli violence as “excessive.” An accompanying photograph of a Palestinian boy hiding under cover at Netzarim Junction further emphasised the brutal impact of Israeli violence on Palestinian children:

The bleeding corpse of yet another child was being borne away from the streets of the Gaza Strip as diplomatic efforts were still going on in Paris to end the violence convulsing the Middle East. [It] provided the world with another example of excessive force... wholly without regard to the children... Mohammed Abu Aasi will now become another martyr (*Irish Independent*, 5 October 2000).

The following excerpt also constructed the deteriorating rights of Palestinian children as the direct outcome of the Israeli occupation:

The three-year *intifada* is exacting a heavy toll on the welfare of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian children... The economic strangulation of the Israeli occupation is devastating. GDP per capita in Gaza is... below that of famine-stricken Ethiopia and war-ravaged Afghanistan... Two-thirds of Palestinian children live below the poverty line... 38% are anaemic and up to 23% are unable to get to school on any given day... In the absence of negotiations, the continuation of the barrier and the hundreds of roadblocks, few expect 2004 to be different (*Sunday Tribune*, 28 December 2003).

In the excerpt below an Israeli military raid in the Gaza Strip was depicted as disproportionate. Its accompanying photograph of two weeping Palestinian women at their “destroyed house” in Rafah refugee camp conferred literality on this depiction:

A fearsome procession of Israeli military vehicles moved through Rafah’s curiously named Brazil district... in an operation Israel says is designed to root out weapons-smuggling tunnels... [it] has left a trail of devastation and civilian victims in its wake... Israel has insisted that the demolition of homes is not an objective of its actions and has categorised such destruction as ‘infrastructure damage’... For those involved, the question over whether the Israeli action was accidental, deliberate, or simply reckless is academic.... After five days of raids that had cost at least 43 Palestinian lives – at least one third of them civilians – Israeli spokesmen were admitting that no new tunnels had been found... Local Palestinians... believe the Israeli army is driven by a desire to avenge the deaths of seven soldiers in Rafah the week before last... it appears that Israel’s prime minister has

concluded that in order to leave Gaza credibly he may have to destroy it (*Sunday Tribune*, 23 May 2004).

Other news accounts that also adopted *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames further emphasised the brutality of Israeli aggression:

The Arabs called it a ‘day of rage’ but it was the Israelis who were demonstrating their rage outside Orient House yesterday. The Palestinian youth who dared to hold up a Palestinian flag... was seized by six border guards and plain-clothes cops, kicked, beaten, punched... this was calculated, routine, organised cruelty. A lot of the border guards were grinning when the Palestinians screamed... After all the talk of Israel being a peace-loving state among the nations, founded upon the rule of law, the policy would suddenly prove that those constant Palestinian complaints of beatings and brutality were true (*Irish Independent*, 14 August 2001).

*Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames constructed Yasser Arafat as a nationalistic leader - the “Palestinian people’s one true friend”, an enduring symbol of “this nation of refugees which still dreams of a return to the homeland” (*The Irish Times*, 6 February 2001) and the “paradigm of liberation struggles, a twentieth century icon” (*The Irish Times*, 8 December 2001). Within *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames Yasser Arafat and other Palestinian political figures were also depicted as beleaguered leaders, constrained by Israeli military repression and the looming threats of “civil war” within the Palestinian territories. Mostly, these depictions were deployed to counter *law and order/terrorism* frames’ depictions of the Palestinian leadership as a “terrorist entity” (*The Irish Times*, 23 November 2001; *The Irish Times*, 2 May 2003). Furthermore, *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames tended to depict the role of the United States in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as an inherently negative and obstructionist role (*Sunday Tribune*, 18 April 2004). In the excerpt below the United States’ policies in relation to the Middle East and the Palestinian question were critiqued as historically duplicitous:

It isn't the first time that the Americans have threatened the Arabs with democracy... The Palestinians, Mr Bush has said, must have democracy. The Iraqis must have democracy. Iran must have democracy. But not, it seems, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Syria and the rest... Amid the rhetoric now coming out of Washington, it is becoming ever more difficult to believe that Mr Bush is planning any kind of democracy in Iraq, nor in 'Palestine'... Is this to be another exercise in colonial planning, akin to the one which the British and French wrought after the Great War? (*Irish Independent*, 11 September 2002).

Within *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames, the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was depicted as “psychologically incapable of taking the road to peace” and in danger of “tipping” Israel and the Palestinian territories “towards a situation from which there can be no return” (*Sunday Tribune*, 28 March 2004). Other depictions of Ariel Sharon emphasised that he was “itching for a full scale war” and that he was “bellicose in the extreme” (*Sunday Tribune*, 21 October 2001). It was also argued that his “strong-arm tactics” (*Sunday Tribune*, 9 December 2001), “uncompromising stance” (*Irish Independent*, 11 April 2002) and “hawkish” approach (*Sunday Tribune*, 28 March 2004), destroyed any prospects for peace by “burying the Oslo accords forever” (*Irish Independent*, 5 February 2002). Other negative constructions of Ariel Sharon depicted him as a “master tactician”, deliberately deploying “obstructionist tactics” that were intended to “frustrate the roadmap” and “avoid meaningful political negotiation” (*Sunday Tribune*, 16 March 2003; *Sunday Tribune*, 20 April 2004). One particularly evocative metaphorical construction depicted Sharon as “an old lion, languishing beneath the shady tree, one eye open and watching patiently for his wounded prey to limp by” (*Sunday Tribune*, 2 February 2003).

In another news item, “much of the past 50 years of Israel-Palestine relations” was constructed as the product of Sharon’s “sort of uncompromising posturing, combined with military muscle” (*Sunday Tribune*, 9 December 2001). It



was argued that Sharon “presided over a military occupation that was notoriously brutal”, that he was found responsible for “war crimes” and oversaw the massive settlement drive of the early 1990s, in addition to being “bitterly opposed” to the Oslo peace process (*Sunday Tribune*, 9 December 2001). Other negative depictions of Sharon’s leadership relied on the historical exemplar of his responsibility for the invasion of Lebanon and the Sabra and Shatila massacres in 1982 (*The Irish Times*, 8 December 2001; *Sunday Tribune*, 21 October 2001; *Sunday Tribune*, 14 April 2002).

Some historical narratives of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that were advanced within *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames constructed the origins of the conflict as residing within Israel’s original occupation and expropriation of Palestinian lands, especially during the Arab-Israeli War of 1947-1949 and the Arab-Israeli War in June 1967:

In 1967 Israel occupied the West Bank, which was Jordan’s; the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula, which were Egypt’s; and the Golan Heights, which was Syria’s. Sinai has since been returned, but Israel continues to occupy those other areas in breach of a series of UN Resolutions. About three million Palestinians still live in the West Bank and Gaza and do so under Israeli occupation, surrounded by Israeli settlements... that the occupation, which is illegal, might have something to do with the Arab-Israeli conflict is a truth (*Sunday Tribune*, 18 April 2004).

The other more frequently-occurring historical explanations proffered within *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames, however, tended to trace the conflict’s origins to more recent political developments, particularly the failure of the Oslo “peace process” to end Israel’s occupation of the Palestinian territories and Israeli policies that violated Palestinian human rights:

The failure of the peace process to end the Israeli occupation combined with long-term resentments, has fuelled the latest round of violence between Palestinians and Israelis. Many Palestinians feel they have been cheated by the Oslo process... and the only alternative is a new *intifada* or rising. Israel remains in control of 40 per cent of Gaza, 80 per cent of the West Bank and 100 per cent of East Jerusalem... It continues to expropriate Palestinian land... It also expands Jewish settlements while severely limiting permits for Palestinian construction... Today Jewish settlers in high-rise colonies equal the 180,000 Palestinian inhabitants of the city's modern neighbourhoods... Israel exerts ultimate control over the lives of Palestinians living in the tight self-rule enclaves in the West Bank and Gaza... With little stake in the status quo, some Palestinians obviously seem prepared to die to overturn it (*The Irish Times*, 5 October 2000).

Within *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames Palestinian violence is depicted as responsive to Israeli occupation. For instance, an article covering a “suicide” attack in Haifa argued that:

Force breeds only force. Every time a retaliatory strike on a bomb factory in Gaza, or a training centre in Nablus kills women and children in the ‘collateral damage’, angry and desperate men and women swear oaths of vengeance... As Palestinian men are handcuffed and made to bare their chests in public, even moderates cheer on the militants. As occupiers have found the world over, crushing local resistance tends only to intensify the hatred and encourage the desperate (*Irish Independent*, 11 April 2002).

A similar construction of a “suicide” bombing in Jerusalem also depicted Palestinian violence as the inevitable, albeit counter-productive outcome of Israel’s illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories:

One thing is clear: Ariel Sharon’s policy of hitting the Palestinians and hitting them hard, is not working. Since June, Israel has effectively reoccupied the West Bank... Trenches, fences and barbed wire circle many towns and villages. Month-long curfews have been imposed on the Palestinians... Some 50% of Palestinians are living below the poverty line and children are beginning to show signs of malnutrition. But the policy is not working... Clearly, there is no shortage of Palestinians willing to carry out attacks on Israelis (*Sunday Tribune*, 24 November 2002).

Another news item that covered the Israeli assassination of Sheikh Yassin, depicted Palestinian “suicide” attacks as the direct outcome of Israeli military

policies. This item's accompanying photograph of an anguished Palestinian father carrying his dead son also emphasised this depiction:

The wave of suicide bombers currently massacring civilians in Israel are the children of the first *intifada*. The formative experience of their lives was watching their parents stage a massive programme of peaceful resistance to occupation. Israel's response was clear... Sharon – by refusing to see the difference between moderates and extremists – is pushing Palestinians further away from secular moderation and towards fanaticism and a thirst to eradicate all Israel (*Sunday Tribune*, 28 March 2004).

The issue of Israel's construction of the West Bank Separation Barrier provided significant opportunities for the inclusion of *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames. The historical exemplars of the "Berlin Wall" and South African "apartheid" were relied upon to symbolise the devastating physical, geo-political and human rights implications of the Separation Barrier (*Sunday Tribune*, 5 January 2003; *Sunday Tribune*, 14 September 2003).

Within a historical perspective, *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames depicted the "wall" as the logical "continuation of a policy of land expropriation and population expulsion which started with Israel's establishment over 54 years ago" (*Sunday Tribune*, 5 January 2003). Metaphorically, the "wall" was described as "concrete evidence of annexation" and a "nightmare now engulfing Palestinians" (*Sunday Tribune*, 14 September 2003). Another metaphor compared the "wall" to "some alien construction that somehow has descended on the landscape" and this "alien" aspect was visually enhanced by an accompanying image of Palestinian children playing under the "shadow" of the wall (*Sunday Tribune*, 11 July 2004).

The following excerpt illustrates how biblical analogies strongly evoked the theme of the wall's infringement of Palestinian human rights. This excerpt's central argument was visually illustrated by a photograph of a Palestinian schoolgirl attempting to pass through the cement barricades of the wall:

If the wall had been built at the time of the birth of Jesus, his parents would never have reached Bethlehem for the nativity. If the wall had been in place at the time of the crucifixion, Jesus would never have reached the Holy City after the last supper... Upon the wall's completion, 55 per cent of the West Bank will *de facto* be annexed by Israel... peace-minded Palestinians and Israelis refer to the eight metre high concrete structure with electrified fences on either side as the apartheid wall (*The Irish Times*, 17 September 2003).

Within newspaper discourses devoted to the topic of the Separation Barrier, the "apartheid" metaphor was uncovered as one of the most symbolically potent metaphors. This metaphor was found to be especially adept at evoking the "racist" or "segregationist" dimensions of Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories (*The Irish Times*, 22 April 2004).

Within the entire newspaper sample other significant examples of metaphors deployed by *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames included those that constructed the Gaza Strip as an "open-air prison" (*Sunday Tribune*, 5 January 2003), as a "warehouse crammed with people", or as a "factory of grievances" (*The Irish Times*, 19 January 2004). Moreover, in one particular news item sampled from the *Sunday Tribune* the "divided city" of Hebron served as a metaphor for the "trials and tribulations" of the overall Palestinian population (*The Irish Times*, 11 April 2002). The Ibrahimi Mosque was depicted as "a microcosm of the entire Arab-Israeli conflict", while the historical exemplar of the Ibrahimi Mosque killings in

February 1994 was deployed to further enhance the theme of Palestinian “injustice” and sufferings (*Sunday Tribune*, 13 October 2002).

To summarise, the above analysis of sampled newspapers’ displays of *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames revealed that the theme of Palestinian suffering was one of the primary themes of these frames. Moreover, this theme of Palestinian suffering was often emphasised within prominent photographs of Palestinian grief and loss. Strong thematic linkages between the theme of Palestinian suffering and the theme of Israeli brutality also characterised *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames. Central arguments regarding the illegality of the Israeli occupation and the “failures” of the Oslo “peace process” to secure Palestinian human rights also relied strongly on the theme of Palestinian suffering. On the other hand, symbolic and metaphorical constructions of the “divided holy land” or the “apartheid wall” served to amplify this “suffering” theme.

Furthermore, within *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames Palestinian “suicide” attacks were most likely to be constructed as the inevitable consequence of Israel’s occupation and the desperate response of an aggrieved and oppressed population. Finally, it was also found that *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames heavily relied on positive depictions of Yasser Arafat as a nationalist leader, or a victim of Israeli policies, as well as negative depictions of Ariel Sharon as a “hawkish”, belligerent and uncompromising leader.

Thus far, this chapter’s analyses of partisan Israeli frames (*law and order/terrorism* frames and *Jewish injustice national homeland* frames) and partisan

*Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames have focused on illustrating the central arguments, thematic positions and framing, or symbolic devices that characterised these frames, as they were constructed within samples of Irish newspaper discourses. The remaining sections of this chapter aim to undertake a similar analysis of the three non-partisan frames identified by this case study – namely, *reconciliation/dual rights* frames, *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames and *regional stability/international security* frames.

#### **5. Motifs of Political-Diplomatic Reconciliation and the Theme of “Hope Amidst Despair” - *Reconciliation/Dual Rights* Frames**

This case study’s analysis of displays of *reconciliation/dual rights* frames found that these frames mostly occurred within news coverage of “peace” or “international political-diplomatic” topics (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.4). Moreover, the low rate of occurrence achieved by *reconciliation/dual rights* frames was also concluded to be related to the finding that “peace” and “international political-diplomatic” topics were relatively under-represented within the newspaper sample overall. It is important, therefore, that the frame analysis undertaken here found that topics such as the Camp David Summit (July 2000), the Paris/Taba talks (October 2000 - January 2001) and announcements regarding the “roadmap” (June - July 2003), provided the most frequent and significant openings for the promotion of *reconciliation/dual rights* frames.

In relation to newspaper coverage of the abortive Camp David Summit in July 2000, *reconciliation/dual rights* frames mostly focused on the political imperatives to defeat “extremism” and restore the “peace process”:

Israel’s right-wing leaders are working hard to sink his [Barak’s] peace process... Barak barely survived the no-confidence vote... Thirsty for more blood after their defeat of Peres, the right-wing vowed further efforts to bring down Barak’s government... While the right is stretching its limbs, focusing on the dangers of the peace process, the centre and left parties, on which Barak depends in his coalition, are losing ground (*Sunday Tribune*, 6 August 2000).

Because newspaper coverage of the Paris/Taba talks in early October 2000 occurred at a time when the *intifada* already witnessed its earliest beginnings, the key arguments of *reconciliation/dual rights* frames focused on the “risks for peace” taken by Israeli and Palestinian negotiators and the necessity for leaders to “quell escalating violence” and to take steps “toward dispelling mistrust that has imperilled already shaky peacemaking efforts.” It was also argued that, because Israel was on “the brink of chaos”, Ehud Barak was required to grasp “even the faintest hope” of peace “with both hands” (*Irish Independent*, 5 October 2000).

Similar themes of mutual compromise and reconciliation appeared in the following excerpt’s account of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations:

The Middle East peace process has entered yet another critical period... Thus, both the Palestinian and Israeli leaderships face into risky but potentially fruitful dialogues with one another and their supporters... The problem now is whether Mr Barak has sufficient support left to take the risks required to reach a settlement in coming weeks (*The Irish Times*, 13 September 2000).

In addition to the above set of themes, the theme of “hope amidst despair” was also found to be another significant theme of *reconciliation/dual rights* frames.

For instance, one article's coverage of "truce talks" in September 2001 stressed that these talks were significant because they produced "hopes in the region" that could "pave the way for a gradual end to the year of violence that has shattered peace hopes and killed more than 800 people, four-fifths of them Palestinian" (*Irish Independent*, 6 September 2001). During another period of negotiations, an editorial in the *Irish Independent* argued that, the "move-by-move progression of measures by both the Israelis and the Palestinians must encourage at least a retreat from pessimism, if not a tentative move to optimism... Peace can ultimately be forged only out of mutual trusts... [and] thanks to President Bush's determination to get the parties started on the road map, the peace car is on the move and so far, on track" (*Irish Independent*, 7 July 2003).

The *Sunday Tribune's* coverage and *The Irish Times's* coverage of the Irish Foreign Minister Brian Cowen's visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories during Ireland's presidency of the EU (during the first half of 2004), emphasised the theme of the "constructive" impact of European and Irish mediation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For instance, a news item in the *Sunday Tribune* stressed that, "Ireland as EU president, has considerable leverage to set the EU agenda, including any fresh diplomatic push or initiative on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." This news item also argued that Ireland's leverage was enhanced because of "Ireland's success in keeping the Good Friday peace process relatively on track" (*Sunday Tribune*, 18 January 2004). Similarly, *The Irish Times's* article stressed that the "EU could come to play a constructive role and help to ease tensions on such issues as the West Bank security fence... Something needs to be done to revive the peace process, because



the dominant leaders on both sides, Sharon and Arafat, seem to be running out of ideas” (*The Irish Times*, 19 January 2004).

Thus far, this section has argued that the vast majority of *reconciliation dual rights* frames emerged within newspaper coverage devoted to political-diplomatic topics. The following excerpt, therefore, appears to be somewhat anomalous, as it focuses on the role played by inter-communal sports activities in improving local Israeli-Palestinian relations. A photograph of jubilant football players accompanied this excerpt:

For on the very day back in May that the world’s headlines were dominated by the killing of 10 demonstrators in Rafah, 150 miles to the south the 35,000 residents of Sakhnin were celebrating the victory of their football team the previous night in Israel’s equivalent of the FA cup... Thirteen members of the full-squad... are Israeli Arabs... seven members of the squad are Israeli Jews... Football seems to cross what the world sees as its most intractable ethnic division with relative ease (*Sunday Tribune*, 11 July 2004).

While the above excerpt relied on the theme of “hope amidst despair” to construct its *reconciliation/dual rights* frame, this case study’s wider frame analysis concluded that other themes also strongly indicated the presence of *reconciliation/dual rights* frames. As illustrated above, these themes included the theme of “peace in the face of adversity and extremism”, the theme of Israeli political “peacemakers” overcoming domestic constraints and the theme of positive international mediation of Israeli-Palestinian relations.

This analysis also concluded that most displays of *reconciliation/dual rights* frames tended to focus exclusively on the political-diplomatic arena. Hence, “reconciliation” was constructed mostly as an outcome of macro-level diplomatic

relations. This framing trend meant that inter-communal manifestations of “reconciliation”, “peace” and the fulfilment of “dual rights” were virtually excluded from the sampled newspapers’ coverage.

The following section extends this chapter’s qualitative frame analysis by illustrating the central arguments, symbolic devices and framing devices displayed by key examples of the sampled newspapers’ constructions of *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames.

## **6. Perpetual Cycles of Violence and Despair – The Senseless Suffering of Innocents - *Nihilistic Violence/Warring Tribes* Frames**

This case study’s analysis of *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames revealed that the occurrence of these frames was suggested by thematic positions and depictions that constructed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as an inherently destructive, senseless and intractable “cycle of violence” (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.5). The political motivation and grievances of Israeli and Palestinian protagonists, as well as the wider historical and political contexts surrounding the conflict, were mostly downplayed or excluded from coverage. Instead, “both sides” were portrayed as *equally* culpable and responsible for the conflict’s continuation.

The mammoth human sufferings that emanated from the violence of “both sides”, therefore, emerged as a central organising idea of *nihilistic violence/warring*

*tribes* frames. The excerpt below constructed the theme of senseless Israeli suffering by depicting the destructive impact of a double “suicide” bomb attack in Tel Aviv:

A colourful market mall in Tel Aviv became a scene out of hell yesterday when Palestinian suicide bombs killed at least 22 people... The blasts just two minutes apart, tore through the bus station and nearby pedestrian mall in Israel’s biggest city, leaving bodies strewn about, shops in ruins and people fleeing in panic (*Irish Independent*, 6 January 2003).

The theme of the futility and irrationality of violence was also conveyed by the following excerpt:

Israel yesterday continued its policy of targeting Hamas militants... The strike came on the eve of the arrival of a new US envoy, who is expected this weekend in a bid to dampen the violence... [and] end the bloodbath of the last few days, in which over 50 Israelis and Palestinians have been killed... Israelis and Palestinians yesterday continued to bury their dead from the bloodletting of the last few days (*The Irish Times*, 14 June 2003).

Metaphorical constructions of *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames included the “war” metaphor, the “day of rage” metaphor (*Sunday Tribune*, 27 May 2001) and “game” metaphors (*Sunday Tribune*, 22 October 2000; *Sunday Tribune*, 7 January 2001). Metaphors of “storms”, “explosions” and “time-bombs” were also displayed within newspaper coverage constructed by *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames (*The Irish Times*, 6 February 2001; *Sunday Tribune*, 15 June 2003). Moreover, metaphorical constructions of clashes between Palestinian *shebab* and the IDF as endless games of “cat and mouse” that descend into a “ritual of attack and counterattack, anarchy and respite”, where “no one plays the grown up”, symbolised the day-to-day futility of the conflict (*Sunday Tribune*, 22 October 2000; *Sunday Tribune*, 7 January 2001):

Metaphors of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a “spectacular show” (*Sunday Tribune*, 28 July 2002), a “black comedy” (*Sunday Tribune*, 27 May 2001), or a “grim dance of stop, start, attack, reprisal” (*Sunday Tribune*, 24 March 2002), highlighted the absurd, illegitimate and propagandist dimensions of the conflict. Metaphors of “emptiness” (*Sunday Tribune*, 15 April 2001; *The Irish Times*, 21 December 2002), “waste ground” (*Sunday Tribune*, 27 May 2001), “wasteland” (*Sunday Tribune*, 23 May 2004), or “no-man’s-land” (*The Irish Times*, 19 January 2004), also evoked the devastating impact of the conflict on Palestinian lives. The metaphors of Israel as standing at the “gates of hell” (*Sunday Tribune*, 28 March 2004), or metaphors of the conflict as a “vortex that has sucked in the Bush administration’s global war on terrorism” (*Sunday Tribune*, 14 April 2002), or as a ticking clock (*Sunday Tribune*, 24 March 2002), were also used to depict the apocalyptic face of the conflict. Furthermore, metaphorical constructions of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations as amounting to a “stillborn” peace (*The Irish Times*, 14 August 2001), or “limbo” (*Sunday Tribune*, 24 March 2002), emphasised the volatility of any “peace” agreement.

This case study’s analysis also revealed that the “cycle of violence” depiction was routinely deployed by *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames. The following excerpt relies on this depiction, which was also visually emphasised by an accompanying picture of a Palestinian boy firing a catapult at Israeli troops and another boy running for cover in Bethlehem:

Just as with the stones and bullets, so it is with the recriminations and the frustrations and the professed bafflement – flying back and forth, destructive exchanges with no victors in these latest outbursts of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict... this is a battle in which each side is utterly convinced of the rightness of its grievances and the viciousness of its enemy’s conduct – and makes precious little effort to find a deeper, perhaps more painful,

understanding... Both sides profess a readiness to stop the shooting – provided that the other side stops first (*The Irish Times*, 5 October 2000).

“Cycles of violence” were depicted as producing “endless bloodletting on both sides”, whereby “one bloody deed gives rise to another” (*The Irish Times*, 19 January 2004). “Cycles of violence” were also framed as inherent within situations where, “for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. No sooner does each side seem to have found its threshold of acceptable violence and suffering than it hardens into another bloody phase” (*Sunday Tribune*, 27 May 2001). Likewise, it was argued that the violence associated with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict escalated merely because, “the Palestinians threw stones, the Israelis hit back with bullets, then the Palestinians produced guns and there were bombs inside the Israeli border” (*The Irish Times*, 6 February 2001).

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was also depicted in another article as a “bloody cycle of attacks and reprisals”, fuelled by “those who are opposed to any compromise on either side that might lead to peace. One side attacks. The other responds. The problem appears more intractable than ever... the Middle East has its own rhythm, its own way of lurching from crisis to calm” (*Sunday Tribune*, 15 June 2003). Themes of hatred and nemesis were also emphasised within this article’s accompanying picture of Palestinians protesting in Nablus. This picture foregrounds a masked Palestinian holding a rifle aimed at a poster of Ehud Barak and Ariel Sharon, bearing the slogan – “refugees will burn your life... killers” (*The Irish Times*, 6 February 2001).

In an article entitled “Deaths of Old and Young prove the Depths of Hatred”, the *Sunday Independent* metaphorically constructed the funerals of assassinated Israeli Tourism Minister, Rehav’am Ze’evi and a Palestinian child as symbols of the moral reprehensibility of Israeli *and* Palestinian violence. This article outlined that “the corpses were paraded as the evils of each other’s enemies” and that their deaths will “hasten the onset of an even nastier war and maybe a wider one... That is what the old cliché the ‘cycle of violence’ means... [while] the outside world can only stand back and despair” (*Sunday Independent*, 21 October 2001).

A *Sunday Tribune* article entitled, “After the First Death There Will be Many Others”, depicted the conflict as innately nihilistic. It argued that the conflict is only kept “alive” by breaches of “natural law”, by “unimaginable depths of hatred” and by “a wish to visit the same pain on those who inflicted it upon you” (*Sunday Tribune*, 28 July 2002). This theme of nihilism was enhanced by the accompanying visual image of a two-month old Palestinian infant victim’s body being held aloft by a relative.

Within other sampled news items this “cycle of violence” depiction was also deployed to amplify the theme of the “peace process in tatters” (*Sunday Tribune*, 15 June 2003) and the theme of the “irreconcilable clash of opposing religious ideologies” (*Sunday Tribune*, 28 March 2004).

In relation to “peace” or “international political-diplomatic” topics, *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames tended to emphasise themes of despair, disorder and disagreement. Thus, the Paris/Taba talks in October 2000 were framed in terms of

the central argument that “confusion”, “disorder” and mutual recriminations led to the failure of these talks (*Irish Independent*, 5 October 2000). Similarly, the prospect of successfully renewing Israeli-Palestinian talks in late September 2001 was downplayed in *The Irish Times* which asserted that, “Israeli and Palestinian leaders spent all of yesterday in a frenzy of confusion and outrage over cancelled trips and infuriating comments”, while “the behaviour of Hamas and other Palestinian rejectionist groups... could prove deeply damaging to the fragile *intifada* ceasefire” (*The Irish Times*, 26 September 2001).

Within the excerpt quoted below, a *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frame depicted the impact of the assassination of the Israeli Tourism Minister, Rehav’am Ze’evi, as “calamitous.” An accompanying photograph of Ze’evi, showing him standing alongside the former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, which was dated to 1995, magnified this depiction, as its caption stated that Rabin was “another victim of assassins”:

The bullets that assassinated one of Israel’s most controversial politicians [Tourism Minister Ze’evi] quickly threatened to claim a second victim: the already fragile Middle East ceasefire... The killing undermined weeks of US diplomacy aimed at cooling off the conflict... By Friday, Israeli tanks were rolling into Palestinian territory... The events of the past few days returned Israel and the Palestinians to the calamitous situation of the *intifada*’s early days. The past year of fighting has taken the lives of at least 689 Palestinians and 186 Israelis (*Sunday Tribune*, 21 October 2001).

Similarly, the *Sunday Tribune*’s coverage of the United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell’s visit to the Middle East in April 2002 constructed this visit as “doomed.” Principally, it was argued that Israeli and Palestinian violence had “blasted away any remaining hopes of securing a ceasefire” and therefore, “appeared to represent the final nail in the coffin” (*Sunday Tribune*, 14 April 2002).

The “despair” theme, which is highly indicative of *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames, was also strongly evoked in an article adopting a semantic ironic reversal of the biblical theme of “no room at the inn.” This article argued that even at Christmas time there is “plenty of room” in Bethlehem’s hotels and that the “absence of any palpable sign of Christmas festivity is evident throughout the city, considered the cradle of Christianity.” This “despair” theme was visually constructed by a large photograph of a mostly empty and poorly lit Church of the Nativity (*The Irish Times*, 21 December 2002).

The “despair” theme was also constructed within an Easter-pegged story that centred on the religious motif of an “empty” Holy Land. This story argued that, “over the past six months the blood that has flowed in the same narrow alleyways has caused flocks of pilgrims to stay away from the Holy Land this year” (*Sunday Tribune*, 15 April 2001).

In an article devoted to the topic of the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, placed underneath juxtaposed photographs of an enraged President Robert Mugabe and weeping Zimbabweans, the theme of “despair” is constructed by drawing analogies between the “dark side” and “limping peace process” in Northern Ireland, the Middle East and Zimbabwe (*Sunday Independent*, 2 September 2001).

Another article comparing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Northern Ireland conflict drew parallels between the sufferings of the peoples caught up in both conflicts. It argued that, “We know too well from Northern Ireland how bodies



become broken and disintegrated in the blast. It must add immeasurably to the grief of the bereaved relatives” (*The Irish Times*, 19 January 2004). Another article offered a similarly bleak picture of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by arguing that,

If there is one basic difference between the Northern Ireland and Arab-Israeli conflicts, it could be that in the North, no matter how much relations deteriorate between unionists and nationalists, there is still a fairly substantial comfort zone of mutual respect and even personal regard that facilitates the solution of even the worst crises. That comfort zone, if it exists at all, is much narrower between Israelis and Palestinians (*The Irish Times*, 6 February 2001).

In conclusion, some of the key themes explicated by the above analysis of examples of *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames include the themes of despair, disorder and desolation. Depictions of the self-perpetuating, cyclical and senseless nature of *both* Israeli and Palestinian violence also emerged as important components of *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames. Finally, arguments that stressed the futility and counter-productivity of brokering peace between the “warring tribes”, as well as thematic positions regarding the excessive and unjustifiable suffering of innocents, constituted central organising ideas of *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames. The next section presents the findings of this case study’s analysis of sampled newspaper discourses that displayed *regional stability/international security* frames. It will be outlined how these frames shifted the thematic focus away from the national level of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and instead, incorporated an inherently regional and international focus. Thus, the semantic implications of this shift are a primary consideration of these analyses.

## 7. The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict as an Arena of European and United States' Foreign Policies - *Regional Stability/International Security* Frames

This case study's analysis of *regional stability/international security* frames found that these frames were mostly suggested by arguments and symbolic or framing devices that emphasised the geo-political and strategic significance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in regional and/or international terms (see: Appendix 4, Table 4.6). Two distinct variants of these frames were uncovered during this analysis. These variants were defined in terms of whether they adopted *European* or *United States* angles.

*European* variants of *regional stability/international security* frames framed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the "core" problem of the Middle East, primarily because of its "spill-over" effects and its impact on political and economic interests in Europe. *European* variants were also likely to emphasise the political responsibilities that the EU has in mediating and/or resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Hence, it was argued that:

There is a huge responsibility also on the international community to facilitate and assist dialogue, negotiation and agreement. Hence, Brian Cowen's presence in the region last week on behalf of Ireland's EU presidency. The EU's interest is not purely altruistic... once Turkey joins, the EU will have a border with Syria and Iraq. The EU's contribution to resolving the conflict has been mainly financial: it provides substantial sums to shore up the Palestinian Authority. On the diplomatic level, its role has been more modest, but this is starting to change (*The Irish Times*, 19 January 2004).

On the other hand, *United States* variants of *regional stability/international security* frames were distinguished by their construction of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict directly in terms of United States foreign policy perspectives:

Anything that gets in the way of talks between Sharon and Arafat is bad news for Washington. The peace process has become a priority for Bush because of the political needs of the anti-terrorism coalition. Washington's Arab allies must be able to show their people that progress is being made in resolving the 53-year old conflict (*Sunday Tribune*, 21 October 2001).

Likewise, the following excerpt framed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict directly in terms of its impact on United States foreign policies, rather than in terms of the issues and events directly pertaining to the conflict itself:

From the US point of view, the timing couldn't have been worse, but then suicide bombers rarely think about inconveniencing American diplomats when they choose to blast themselves and as many Israeli civilians as possible into oblivion... The latest attack has left a lot of people looking very impotent: the Bush Administration, American Vice President, Dick Cheney... and US Special envoy, Anthony Zinni, for starters... What is clear is that America's policy of neglect has failed to bring peace to the region... But sceptics on both sides believe that the Bush administration is only interested in dousing the flames for long enough to allow a strike against Saddam Hussein. Certainly, there is a worrying absence of a long-term plan (*Sunday Tribune*, 24 March 2002).

Similarly, the key argument of the following excerpt was that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict impacted negatively on the domestic politico-economic arena within the United States:

The US' authority in the region was further eroded by another disastrous week for the Bush administration's inchoate Middle Eastern policy... There are concerns that the volatility in the region could cause oil prices to shoot up... there is a real fear that instability in the region may spread... his floundering over the Middle East has gone some way towards eroding Bush's image nationally and internationally as a decisive, plain spoken leader untroubled by the dithering or hand-wringing that plagued his predecessor (*Sunday Tribune*, 14 April 2002).

Other thematic positions associated with *regional stability/international security* frames were those that focused on the role of the United States in using its “influence on Israel to stop it from escalating the war” and to convince Israel to end its “oppressive regime” in the West Bank (*Sunday Tribune*, 21 October 2001). Moreover, because of the Bush administration’s sponsorship of the so-called “roadmap”, *regional stability/international security* frames that adopted a *United States* angle also tended to focus on the theme of the United States’ diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict:

With the official declaration that the war in Iraq is over, the region has been subject to a flurry of diplomatic activity... The region is gearing up for the long-awaited publication of the US sponsored political initiative commonly known as the Bush ‘roadmap’... In the post-Iraq conflict era Bush and Blair will be under enormous pressure from moderate Arab states to turn their attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Both have repeatedly reiterated their commitment to giving priority to the Middle East peace process (*Sunday Tribune*, 20 April 2003).

Thus, *regional stability/international security* frames were found to have relied on constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the broader geopolitical context of regional/international relations and United States/European foreign policy perspectives and interests. It is this wider regional/international frame of reference that distinguishes *regional stability/international security* frames from the other news frames analysed in this chapter.

However, as already discussed, *regional stability/international security* frames, like the other non-partisan frames analysed above - *reconciliation/dual rights* frames and *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames - achieved relatively lower rates of display within the sampled newspapers overall. Each of the above qualitative analyses of *reconciliation/dual rights* frames, *nihilistic violence/warring*

*tribes* frames and *regional stability/international security* frames, therefore, concluded that the relatively low levels of display of these non-partisan frames within the sampled newspapers had important thematic implications for how they framed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

## 8. Conclusions

As outlined in this chapter, the newspaper frame analysis undertaken by this case study assumed two different forms. Firstly, this analysis consisted of an overview analysis of the rate of display of different news frames of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within randomly sampled coverage by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. Secondly, news items that were coded as displaying readily identifiable frames of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were qualitatively analysed.

The overview frame analysis found that approximately 50% of this case study's sampled news items were coded as "displaying" one or other of the frame indices listed in this case study's *signature matrix*. *The Irish Times* sample (28.9%) and the *Sunday Independent* sample (25%) displayed higher rates of display for *law and order/terrorism* frames, in singular and combined forms. In contrast, only 7.1% of the *Irish Independent* sample and 2.9% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample displayed *law and order/terrorism* frames in singular and combined forms.

Overall, *Palestinian injustice/defiance frames* achieved lower rates of occurrence and representation. None of the *Sunday Independent* sample displayed *Palestinian injustice/defiance frames*. Just 13.3% of *The Irish Times* sample and 16% of the *Irish Independent* sample displayed *Palestinian injustice/defiance frames* in singular and combined forms. However, the *Sunday Tribune* emerged as an exception in this regard, as 34.7% of its sample displayed *Palestinian injustice/defiance frames* in singular and combined forms.

The above findings then led to the conclusion that, generally speaking, the sampled newspapers could not be concluded to have displayed monolithic or uniform perspectives on the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Instead, these newspapers collectively acted as sites of political contest, rather than conduits for the promotion of state propaganda, or the interests of the politically powerful.

Another significant trend that emerged from this overview frame analysis was that non-partisan frames were both absolutely and relatively under-represented within each sampled newspaper. For instance, *Jewish injustice/national homeland frames* tended to be the least likely category of frames to feature within the overall newspaper sample. The second least likely category of frames to feature was *regional stability/international security frames*. The *Sunday Tribune* displayed *regional stability/international security frames* (in singular and combined forms) within 8.8% of its news sample. The *Sunday Independent* displayed *regional stability/international security frames* (in singular and combined forms) within 6.3% of its news sample. However, none of the *Irish Independent* sample displayed *regional stability/international security frames*. Only 1.2% of *The Irish Times*

sample displayed *regional stability/international security* frames in singular and combined forms.

Likewise, *reconciliation/dual rights* frames were presented (in both singular and combined forms), within very small percentages of each newspaper's samples. There was no display of these frames within the *Sunday Independent* sample. Only 4.8% of *The Irish Times* sample and 7.1% of the *Irish Independent* sample displayed *reconciliation/dual rights* frames. However, a relatively higher rate of representation was achieved by *reconciliation/dual rights* frames within the *Sunday Tribune* sample – namely, 14.5%. Similar low rates of inclusion and display were accorded by the sampled newspapers to *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames. Only 5.4% of the *Irish Independent* sample and 4.2% of the *Sunday Independent* sample displayed *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames in singular and combined forms. However, the *Sunday Tribune* and *The Irish Times* did record relatively higher rates of display for *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames – 17.4% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample and 13.2% of *The Irish Times* sample displayed *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames in singular and combined forms.

In order to outline the interpretive implications of the framing choices and emphases defining the above frame-occurrence trends, separate qualitative analyses were undertaken of the thematic positions, symbolic devices and framing devices characterising each of the frames identified by this case study. Firstly, it was found that *law and order/terrorism* frames were typified by their espousal of the central argument of “terrorism-as-root-cause” of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These frames tended to rely on exaggerated or demonised depictions of the threat of

Palestinian violence to innocent Israeli civilians. High levels of prominence were also accorded to themes of Jewish suffering. Israeli violence was constructed euphemistically as a necessary and legitimate “response” to Palestinian “terrorism.” Furthermore, *law and order/terrorism* frames heavily relied on depictions of Yasser Arafat as a “rejecter” of “generous” Israeli offers of peace, or as an arch “terrorist”, analogous to Saddam Hussein.

This case study’s qualitative frame analysis found that the virtual exclusion of *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames from the sampled news items had significant thematic implications. This chapter’s qualitative analysis of those few sampled news items that displayed *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames concluded that firstly, these frames were typified by positive constructions of the contemporary Israeli state as a “Jewish state.” Secondly, thematic positions that argued that Israeli civilian suffering is a historical continuation of global Jewish persecution strongly suggested the presence of *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames. Thirdly, *Jewish injustice/national homeland* frames also provided space for representing the Holocaust as *the* historical exemplar of global Jewish persecution.

In relation to analyses of *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames, it was found that these frames accorded centrality to the themes of Palestinian suffering and Israeli aggression. The Israeli occupation was thematically constructed as brutal, unjust and illegal. Furthermore, these frames argued that Palestinian violence was a legitimate “resistance” to the illegal Israeli occupation, or desperate, yet inevitable “responses” from an oppressed population. *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames promoted positive depictions of Yasser Arafat as the legitimate national leader of



the Palestinians, or a beleaguered freedom fighter victimised by Israeli political repressions. *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames also negatively depicted Ariel Sharon as a war-mongering belligerent and a major obstacle to peace.

In relation to the analysis of *reconciliation/dual rights* frames, it was found that the sampled newspapers only provided minimal levels of inclusion to these frames. This meant that positive constructions of mediation efforts by Ireland, Europe and/or the United States rarely featured within sampled newspaper coverage. The presence of *reconciliation/dual rights* frames was indicated mostly by thematic positions that focused on Israeli-Palestinian political-diplomatic developments and inter-communal relations and by the themes of “conflict resolution”, “reconciliation” and “hope amidst despair.”

The analysis of *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames found that these frames were mostly typified by depictions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a senseless and vicious cycle of violence and by the themes of despair, disorder and unjustifiable suffering of innocents. Finally, it was illustrated that *regional stability/international security* frames focused mostly on regional or international perspectives regarding the causes and consequences of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as perspectives that emphasised the role played by Europe and/or the United States in the conflict’s dynamics.

Therefore, taken together, this chapter’s frame analysis of randomly sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* from July 2000 to

July 2004, concluded that these newspapers displayed divergent patterns of frame occurrences and emphases. This conclusion, in turn, strongly infers that the sampled newspapers' frames of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be reliably regarded as the outcomes of the exclusive influence of any singular structural variable.

Significantly, this latter conclusion strongly challenges hypotheses that have dominated media research in this area to date. These hypotheses mostly explain news outcomes as the products of state propaganda, elite hegemony, or political control. However, this is not to argue that the counter-hypothesis - that news is produced exclusively by intrinsic media factors, such as editorial bias, or partisan newspaper-based ideologies – holds any more empirical applicability or theoretical validity.

In contrast, this case study's findings strongly suggest that a range of *both* extrinsic and intrinsic factors potentially *interact* to exert varying influences on the framing trends displayed by sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This finding was also a key finding of the previous chapter's analysis of the presentational trends displayed by the sampled newspapers. Specifically, chapter 6 concluded that the sampled newspapers' presentational trends are best analysed as socially constructed outcomes that are potentially influenced by *both* extrinsic and intrinsic factors. This chapter also argued that the relationship between newspaper presentational trends and relevant historical, politico-cultural, media and news factors requires a multi-staged form of empirical and contextual analysis.

The next chapter, which is the concluding chapter of this thesis, summarises the key findings of each stage of this case study's research. It also analyses the implications that these findings have for the objectives of this research. This chapter then assesses the advantages that this case study has over previous research in this area, as well as outlining the contributions that this case study hopes to make towards the conduct of similar research in the future.

# **CONCLUSIONS**

## **CASE STUDY FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

### **1. Introduction**

As outlined in the literature review presented in Chapter 1, several studies have analysed different dimensions of the roles adopted by media in reporting foreign conflicts. Many studies have also focused specifically on the factors influencing media coverage of the Middle East, Israeli-Arab relations and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as the political implications of that coverage. This thesis has focused on undertaking a case-study analysis of how four Irish national “opinion leader” newspapers covered one particular foreign conflict – the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – during the four-year time period of July 2000 to July 2004.

The aim of this final chapter is to summarise the research objectives, theoretical arguments and key findings underpinning this case study. The objectives of this research were firstly, to uncover and analyse the ways in which four Irish national newspapers presented and framed the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004 and secondly, to undertake a social constructivist analysis of the ways in which these news presentations and

frames are related to the wider politico-cultural and media contexts within which they emerge.

This concluding chapter also addresses the implications that this case study's findings have for the existing research agenda. This case study focused on overcoming an important limitation of existing media research; namely, the failure of this research to undertake sufficient analyses of the roles adopted by different national media institutions, including Irish national media, in covering foreign conflicts. It has been argued that previous research on media coverage of foreign political-military conflicts has focused mostly on the context in the United States, although some research has also focused to a lesser extent, on the British context and a few other European media contexts.

This thesis also highlighted the theoretical inadequacies of existing research, which has mostly been undertaken within propaganda, indexing, hegemonic and political control models of media analysis. It was concluded that these models assume that foreign conflict coverage is mostly influenced by extrinsic structural factors and that, therefore, the media adopt somewhat monolithic and uniform roles in covering foreign conflicts, acting as conduits for government propaganda and elite perspectives. Consequently, research undertaken by these models tends to neglect to investigate fully the influences exerted by the surrounding politico-cultural and media contexts on the different roles adopted by the media when reporting foreign conflicts. Finally, it was argued that many propaganda, indexing, hegemonic and political control hypotheses have not been tested within a more diverse range of national media environments.

Chapter 1 concluded that Gamson and his colleagues' model of social constructivist media analysis constitutes an appropriate model for fulfilling the objectives of this research. Particularly, their model's conceptualisation of the media as consisting of diverse and contested public sites, that frame reality through discursive competitions between "central organizing ideas" is highly useful. Furthermore, this case study relied upon a triangulated methodological framework that incorporated different research methodologies and conceptual tools. The research methodologies adopted included historical, discursive forms of contextual analysis, descriptive content analysis, frame analysis and exploratory interviews with media, political/diplomatic and NGO actors.

The key findings of each of these stages of research will be highlighted in this chapter. Firstly, this thesis' analyses of the media impacts exerted by the historical and politico-cultural contexts supplied by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (presented in chapter 3 and chapter 5) and by the Irish historical, politico-cultural and media contexts (presented in chapter 2, chapter 4 and chapter 6), will be summarised. The most significant finding here is that these wider contexts had discernible influences on the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. An equally significant finding of this case study was that a range of more intrinsic media factors (such as news values, editorial criteria, reporting norms and constraints) and the more general resource and commercial constraints faced by the sampled newspapers, also influenced the ways in which those newspapers covered the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

Secondly, this case study's descriptive newspaper analysis and frame analysis (presented in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7), generated key findings regarding the roles displayed by the sampled newspapers. For instance, it was found that important divergences characterised the sampled newspapers' framing of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and that these newspapers are, therefore, most appropriately analysed as variously contested public sites, rather than sites for the transmission of state propaganda, or hegemonic perspectives. A related finding was that newspaper frames could not be reliably explained as the exclusive outcomes of any extrinsic structural context, or set of factors. Instead, it was found that a range of *both* extrinsic and intrinsic factors influenced the ways in which the sampled newspapers framed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The above discussion in this section has sought to summarise the research objectives and methodological approaches underpinning this case-study analysis of sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the four-year time period of July 2000 to July 2004.

The remainder of this chapter discusses each of the key findings that emerged from this case study. The first section below begins this discussion by presenting this case study's findings regarding the media impacts exerted by the historical background and political environment characterising the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

## **2. Research Findings (1) – The Impact of the Israeli-Palestinian Historical and Politico-Cultural Context on the Sampled Newspapers’ Coverage (July 2000 to July 2004)**

As already indicated in the introduction above, this case study’s historical and contextual analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict generated important insights regarding the potential media impacts exerted by this background and context. Particularly, this case study’s interview-based research found that, generally speaking, factors such as the geographic proximity of Israel and the Palestinian territories to Europe, the historical associations of many EU member states with Israel, the wider implications of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for European and United States’ foreign policies and politico-economic interests, are factors that ensure regular and relatively high international media attention. For instance, the foreign editor of *The Irish Times*, Paddy Smyth argued that,

For as long as... I’ve been involved on the foreign desk, it has been the region which has dominated and had more coverage than any other region... it seems to be the cockpit of an incredibly dangerous, explosive world situation... this is an incredibly important region because of the interface between Islam and the West, because of oil, the economy and because of the whole history of the Jewish state and its relationship to Europe and Germany. It is a very powerful issue, even within the European Union (Interview with Author, 16 June 2005).

Similarly, the deputy foreign editor of the *Irish Independent*, Michael Wolsey outlined that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict’s status as an “important flashpoint in international affairs” and “East/West” relations, in addition to its “capacity to produce a range of violence” and to “explode into a wider war”, sustain the Irish media’s attention (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005). Furthermore, according to one Irish journalist, factors such as the conflict’s status as a “pivotal



conflict for the peace of the world”, its “central role in American politics” and location within a “region which contains the oil reserves required by the economies of the West”, ensure that it is widely covered by “western” media (Interview with Author, 29 June 2004).

The conflict’s historical longevity and relative intractability, its resonance with biblical Judeo-Christian traditions, as well as its symbolic “David vs. Goliath” connotations, were also found to enhance its newsworthiness. For instance, Michael Jansen, a Middle East stringer correspondent for *The Irish Times*, expressed the view that one of the reasons why Irish media maintain their levels of interest in covering Israel and the Palestinian territories is “because of the connection with the Holy Land” (Interview with Author, 22 January 2006). Likewise, an Israel-based journalist argued that the “epic” historical religious dimensions of the conflict “sharpen interest in it” and guarantee regular media attention (Interview with Author, 16 July 2004).

The interview-based research conducted by this case study also concluded that political factors, such as the existence of a constitutional democratic model of politics in Israel and technological factors, such as the communicative efficacy and economic development of Israeli society, sustain relatively high levels of foreign media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Thus, Michael Wolsey argued that, because “Israel is essentially an English-speaking country” and “because they are good communicators” international news access is not as inhibited as it would be in other conflict situations (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005). An Israel-based journalist similarly argued that the conflict’s newsworthiness is enhanced by the

fact that it is “an easy one to cover, especially when you look at simultaneous conflicts in other parts of the world” (Interview with Author, 11 July 2004). Michael Foley also argued that because Israeli politics is based on the democratic constitutional model that “journalists are at home” with, this encourages national media from liberal democratic societies to consistently focus on the conflict (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005).

The above interview-derived findings were substantiated by this case study’s finding that during the period of July 2000 to July 2004 each sampled newspaper covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in a regular and ongoing way. It was also found that during the specific time-period analysed by this case study, events such as the “collapse” of the Oslo “peace process” during the Camp David Summit in July 2000, as well as the conflict’s descent into ongoing episodes of intense violence from late September 2000 onwards, sustained and increased that conflict’s newsworthiness. This finding was further validated by the related finding that each sampled newspaper covered “conflict”/“political violence” topics much more frequently than “peace” topics, or “international political-diplomatic” topics.

For instance, Michael Jansen suggested that because a war-like situation has characterised the arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from late-2000 onwards, this arena supplies endless “running events” that the media typically select as their “running stories” (Interview with Author, 22 January 2006). Likewise, an Israel-based journalist explained that, the “nature of news” was such that “during the last 45 months, most of my work has focused on second *intifada*-related coverage, especially *intifada*-related violence and the government or political fall-outs that

have occurred during the period of the *intifada*” (Interview with Author, 11 July 2004). Dr Conor Cruise O’Brien, a columnist with the *Irish Independent* and *Sunday Independent* and former editor of *The Observer*, also argued that because the “nature of news” was to focus mostly on the “politics of the last atrocity”, this explained why the Israeli-Palestinian conflict received regular media attention during the period of this case study’s analysis (Interview with Author, 30 June 2004).

In conclusion, the above discussion has highlighted the ways in which the historical background and political context surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict exerted important constructivist impacts on the sampled newspapers’ coverage of that conflict. The following discussion extends this constructivist and contextual focus further. It summarises the primary findings of this case study’s analysis of the impacts exerted by the Irish historical and politico-cultural contexts on the sampled Irish newspapers’ coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004.

### **3. Research Findings (2) – The Impact of the Irish National Politico-Cultural Context on the Sampled Newspapers’ Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (July 2000 to July 2004)**

Chapter 4 analysed the ways that key features of Irish political history, political culture and foreign policy-making traditions in relation to Israel and the Palestinian question exerted potentially significant contextual influences on the sampled newspapers’ coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to

July 2004. This analysis was implemented by relying on a combination of literature-based research and interview-based research. The key findings of this analysis are summarised here under two separate thematic headings.

**(i) The Contextual Influences of Ireland's Post-Colonial and "Small State" Status on the Sampled Newspapers' Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (July 2000 to July 2004)**

Broadly speaking and in line with the objectives of this research, it was argued that Irish foreign policy is best understood in terms of two major historical influences. The first set of historical influences constituted Ireland's international status as that of a "small state." Secondly, Ireland's post-colonial status, particularly its lack of any strong historical tradition of autonomous domestic-led foreign policy-making, led to Irish official dependency on a combination of British foreign policy perspectives (since the state's foundation in the early 1920s), UN worldviews (since 1955) and ECC (later, EU) foreign policies (since 1973).

With specific reference to this case study's topic, it was considered to be contextually significant that successive Irish governments constructed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the limits of UN and EEC (later, EU) discourses. Thus, the Irish Representative to the Palestinian Authority, Dr Niall Holohan argued that the "framework of European Union policy" and the "broader context, which is the United Nations" were the two most important foreign policy contexts for "small countries" such as Ireland (Interview with Author, 19 July 2004). An Irish diplomat, interviewed as part of this research, also argued that successive Irish governments'

policies on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were mostly shaped in conformity with “principles”, such as the “central role of the United Nations, our own role within the European Union and our commitment to international development”, rather than by the operation of “specific Irish interests” (Interview with Author, 4 August 2004). An Israeli diplomat extended this argument further by suggesting that, “Ireland basically toes the line of the European Union, rather than its own foreign policy line” (Interview with Author, 20 July 2004).

Ireland’s colonial history and “small state” status also exerted other important influences on the nature of official foreign policy worldviews. Firstly, Ireland’s primary foreign concerns have tended to be relatively provincial, concentrated mostly on the Northern Ireland question and on Anglo-Irish relations. Secondly, in comparison with other European countries, Ireland has had less “vital” interests, or “hard” foreign policy roles in international affairs.

Consequently, Irish foreign policy discourses have tended to rely on a combination of relatively isolationist worldviews and official constructions of foreign policies as “multilateral”, “principled”, “neutral” and “soft” policies, rather than domestically-driven “hard” or “vital” policies. Thirdly and also as a consequence of its “small state” status, Irish foreign policy arenas have been seriously under-resourced and marginalized within domestic politics, while political constructions of international issues tend to be limited to narrow strata of political figures and opinion-makers and do not ordinarily achieve high levels of prominence within the public sphere.

With particular reference to the question of Ireland's relationship to Israel and the Palestinian territories, two foreign policy contextual factors were considered to have an impact. Firstly, Ireland does not have the capacity to play "hard" roles in Middle Eastern politics, or in the arena of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Secondly, Ireland does not have any "vital" national or domestic interests at stake in Israel and the Palestinian territories. Instead, Irish interests in the region have mostly been confined to "soft" interests, including trade and economic interests, as well as UN-led peacekeeping interests, particularly in relation to its contributions to the UNIFIL peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon from 1978 onwards.

A number of interview participants did highlight the fact that the Irish army's experiences of Israel, while serving with UNIFIL, was an important context for understanding why the Irish political-military establishment and public opinion generally adopted more negative perceptions of Israel than other EU states. For instance, Michael Foley argued that, "Irish peacekeepers have propounded the view that it is Israel that is the biggest military threat within the region" (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005). Paddy Smyth suggested that publicity surrounding the "atrocious behaviour of the Israelis in supporting militias in southern Lebanon which attacked Irish troops" was "part of the galvanizing effect of opinion in favour of the Palestinian people" (Interview with Author, 16 June 2005). However, despite the apparent validity that these perspectives have for the interview participants quoted above, it was not possible to draw any definitive conclusions regarding the extent to which this context had an independent, direct influence on Irish media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Instead, this case study's analysis found that although Ireland did have peacekeeping interests in southern Lebanon, as well as important general economic and trade interests in the Middle East region, including its role as a financial donor to UNRWA and the PA, these interests did not have any permanent "vital" domestic relevance. Moreover, it was argued that the overall context supplied by the Irish state's relatively low level of direct involvement in Israel and the Palestinian territories influenced key coverage trends displayed by the sampled newspapers, such as the trend of according very little prominent front-page coverage to the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Significantly, it was found that the lack of an appreciable indigenous public and political discourse surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within Ireland supplied an important context wherein the sampled newspapers devoted little commentary and editorial space to covering this conflict. Furthermore, this deficit in Irish political discourse on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was also found to have influenced the research finding that the sampled newspapers rarely accessed Irish political or official sources to represent their views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Additionally, the finding that the sampled newspapers devoted relatively little attention to covering the "international political-diplomatic" topics generated by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or to quoting the assertions of diverse international sources, was taken as reflective of the relative international isolationism and "small state" worldviews characterising Irish political culture.

In relation to the impact that Irish official adherence to UN and EU perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had on Irish public and media constructions of that conflict, it was concluded that the so-called “even-handed” nature of UN and EU discourses had important effects in “balancing” Irish official discourses on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is especially the case in relation to discourses calling for a resolution of the conflict on the basis of a “just”, “lasting” and “comprehensive” peace settlement, as well as discourses calling for the securing of *both* Palestinian and Israeli rights and the resolution of the conflict through international diplomacy under UN auspices. These discourses were, in turn, found to have supplied an important wider context within which the sampled newspapers’ editorial positions tended to adopt non-partisan slants that were broadly consistent with prevailing UN and/or EU positions.

For instance, Michael Foley argued that the sampled newspapers’ editorial positions generally “reflect the prevailing views, especially the primary political views”, that simultaneously adopt “more pro-Palestinian views of the conflict” as well as “some sympathies with the Jewish position” (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005). The government foreign policy adviser interviewed as part of this research also suggested that, the “political position” of Irish media generally appears to be “broadly that of supporting or advocating the EU and UN positions. While this is not explicitly partisan, it is a political line, nonetheless” (Interview with Author, 19 October 2004). Paddy Smyth argued that, while *The Irish Times*’ editorials tended to be “very critical of the government” on several foreign policy issues, its editorial positions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict tended to reflect the “fairly consistent line” from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs. Smyth defined



this line as, “slightly out of sync” and “at one end of the extreme of the European Union position” and informed by “our sympathy for the Palestinian position”, rather than the newspaper’s support of Irish government policy *per se* (Interview with Author, 16 June 2005).

Michael Wolsey stated that the *Irish Independent*’s editorial position was based on “what the country thinks” because “we are the paper of the middle class, middle aged and, therefore... people expect to have rational thought from us.” So, the *Irish Independent*’s “view is that it [the Israeli-Palestinian conflict] needs a lengthy ceasefire... an active peace process [and] help from the outside. We would think that it should be steered towards a solution, which ultimately would involve a viable, independent Palestinian state” (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005).

Moreover, this perspective that the sampled newspapers’ editorial positions are more influenced by broad “consensus”-based UN and EU discourses on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, rather than explicitly partisan “pro-Israeli” and/or “pro-Palestinian” perspectives, is also consistent with this case study’s findings regarding the source access and framing trends displayed by the sampled newspapers. The primary finding here was that the sampled newspapers’ sourcing and framing outcomes confirmed the hypothesis that these newspapers are most appropriately theorised as sites of political contest between competing perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, rather than transmitters of state propaganda, or partisan reportage.

Thus far, the above discussion has summarised this case study's findings regarding the influences exerted by the Irish national political context on the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. Firstly, it was concluded that Ireland's "small state" status and its lack of any appreciable "vital" or "hard" foreign policy interests in the Middle East, Israel, or the Palestinian territories, supplied the wider context wherein the sampled newspapers covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Particularly, this context was considered important in influencing the sampled newspapers' trend of mostly covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in semi- or non-prominent ways and according to this conflict relatively low rates of front-page, thematic, analytic and editorial forms of coverage. It was also concluded that the sampled newspapers' trend of only rarely accessing Irish political or official views and assertions was influenced by the fact that issues relevant to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict do not feature prominently within national indigenous political and media discourse arenas.

Secondly and also as a consequence of its "small state" status, Irish official positions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have tended to be mostly constructed within the terms of reference set by UN and EU discourses. This has resulted in successive Irish governments and opposition parties alike adhering to discursive constructions that are based on UN and EU "consensus" discourses on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This politico-cultural and foreign policy context, in turn, meant that the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has only infrequently been the subject of political discursive contests, or media analysis and editorialisation.

This context also appeared to influence the editorial positions and overall framing patterns displayed by the sampled newspapers. Specifically, this thesis found that, while the presentations and frames of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict provided by the sampled newspapers did display discernible thematic effects and constructivist implications, they could not be concluded to constitute a strong or monolithic adherence to supporting partisan “pro-Israeli” or “pro-Palestinian” positions.

The following section summarises the findings of this case study’s analysis of the potential influences exerted by defining aspects of Irish-Jewish/Israeli relations and Irish-Arab/Palestinian relations on the sampled newspapers’ coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

**(ii) The Contextual Influences Exerted by the Arenas of Irish-Jewish/Israeli Relations and Irish-Arab/Palestinian Relations on the Sampled Newspapers’ Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (July 2000 to July 2004)**

This case study concluded that it was important to analyse the development of Irish public, political and media discourses on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the wider context supplied by the history of Irish-Jewish/Israeli relations on the one hand and the history of Irish-Arab/Palestinian relations on the other hand. Particularly, its literature-based and interview-based research on the historical trajectory of Irish-Jewish and Irish-Israeli relations found that Ireland did not have any strong historical, or contemporary political-diplomatic, cultural, or personal ties

with either the Jewish people, or Israel. Rates of Jewish immigration to Ireland and Irish-Jewish emigration to Israel have been miniscule. Particularly, the Irish-Jewish community has remained a relatively tiny community. An Israeli diplomat (Interview with Author, 20 July 2004) and an Irish foreign policy adviser (Interview with Author, 19 October 2004), identified this context as an important one for understanding why Israeli protagonists' positions do not have a strong historical, or politico-cultural resonance in Ireland.

Some of the other dimensions of Irish-Jewish and Irish-Israeli relations that influenced the wider context surrounding the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004, included the following dimensions: Ireland's neutrality during World War II and its lack of direct witnessing of the Holocaust, Ireland's construction of itself as a "Catholic nation", Ireland's official refusal to grant Israel full diplomatic recognition and to establish formal ambassadorial links with Israel until the 1990s. In fact, Michael Foley stressed that because of wartime censorship and official latent anti-Semitism, "the whole question of Jews in Europe and the Holocaust was very late in coming to Ireland" (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005). Similarly, an Irish journalist argued that Irish public attitudes to Israel have been historically "different to attitudes in countries such as Germany and Holland, which were implicated in anti-Semitism and the Holocaust" (Interview with Author, 29 June 2004). Given this historical political context, therefore, it might be expected that Jewish victimisation and/or liberation narratives would not be as readily evoked within Ireland as within other European countries.

One of the major perspectives to have emerged from this case study's interview-based research was the perspective that Irish political sentiment and public sympathies generally adopt more of a "pro-Palestinian" slant than other European countries. For instance, an Irish diplomat argued that Ireland primarily views the conflict in terms of its "own historical experience", particularly its "struggle for national independence" (Interview with Author, 4 August 2004). Likewise, an Irish journalist argued that historical similarities between Irish and Palestinian history means that, "We remember that Irish people were told 'to hell or to Connaught' and that Palestinians are now being told 'to hell or to Gaza'" (Interview with Author, 29 June 2004). The Delegate General of Palestine to Ireland, Dr Ali Halimeh stated that he believed that the Irish people's experience of "British colonial power" and the Northern Ireland conflict enhanced their "general sympathy" for the Palestinians (Interview with Author, 5 August 2004). However, the Chairman of the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity campaign, Raymond Deane stated that, while "I do think that the sentimental attachment of the Irish to the Palestinians does have links to Irish history... Unfortunately, that does not translate into political realities" (Interview with Author, 2 June 2005).

In fact, the "political realities" characterising the arena of Irish-Palestinian relations are defined less by general public views and latent political sentiments, than by the following political contextual factors. Firstly, the lack of any "vital" Irish domestic interest, or "hard" foreign policy interest in the resolution of the Palestinians' situation, or even in the outcomes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is a highly significant factor characterising Irish-Palestinian relations. Secondly, the lack of any autonomous Irish-led political support for the Palestinian position has

also ensured that Irish-Palestinian relations have been mostly defined and shaped within the confines of UN and EU discourse forums. Thirdly, Irish mainstream political support for the Palestinian cause has been mostly implicit, declaratory and non-prominent. This latter factor is also strongly related to the fact that, in terms of its percentage of the population of Ireland, the Irish Palestinian diaspora is politically insignificant. Finally, while Irish left-wing parties, the Republican movement, Sinn Fein and the Trade Union Movement, as well as NGOs such as the IPSC and Christian Aid, define the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within nationalist and human rights discourses, this definition has, for the most part, remained confined to the periphery of mainstream Irish politics.

Therefore, the historical and literature-based research undertaken by this case study found that, as a consequence of each of these contextual factors and contrary to the interview-based perspectives outlined above, the arena of Irish-Arab/Palestinian relations has not been characterised by any appreciably strong historical relationships or national-based politico-cultural associations.

The context supplied by the history of Irish-Palestinian relations, as well as the context supplied by Irish-Jewish/Israeli relations, are significant precisely because they have had discernible impacts on the coverage trends that were displayed by the sampled newspapers and analysed by this case study. Thus, it was found that the lack of strong Irish-Israeli and Irish-Palestinian ties, including the relative lack of an “Irish presence” within Israel and the Palestinian territories, as well as the weak rooting of Jewish/Israeli perspectives within Irish public discourses, limited the development of strong public interest in the internal

dynamics of *either* the Israeli *or* the Palestinian situations. This factor, in turn, restricted the national “relevance” of media coverage of many dimensions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and minimised the sampled newspapers’ interest in prominently covering and analysing/editorialising on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It also meant that the sampled newspapers tended mostly to focus their coverage on “conflict”/“political violence” topics and relatively neglected to cover topics associated with domestic Israeli and Palestinian politics, or international dimensions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

To conclude, the above summary of this case study’s findings regarding the media influences exerted by Irish-Jewish/Israeli and Irish-Arab/Palestinian relations further emphasised that these influences supplied an important context wherein the sampled newspapers covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. The following discussion outlines the major findings that emerged from this case study’s concomitant analysis of the influences exerted by empirically relevant media and news factors on various dimensions of the sampled newspapers’ coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

#### **4. Research Findings (3) – The Impact of Media Environmental Factors and News Factors on the Sampled Newspapers’ Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (July 2000 to July 2004)**

It has been argued within several stages of this thesis that the wider national media context occupied by the sampled newspapers exerted potentially significant constructivist influences on their roles in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004. Significant characteristics of the Irish media market are that it is a small, English language-based market and that its domestic media players have very little international reach and influence outside of the borders of the Irish state. The national newspapers analysed by this case study are “opinion leader” newspapers that have well-established positions within the Irish media market and within Irish political history. Furthermore, these sampled newspapers, like most other national-based media outlets in Ireland, broadly adhere to the precepts of the so-called Anglo-American model of journalism.

It was also argued that the other major set of influences impacting on the Irish national media context is the high level of openness of that market to imported media products. Thus, Irish media players consistently face competitive pressures from British newspaper titles and Anglo-American television products. Furthermore, Irish media players tend to be highly dependent on copy generated by non-Irish media outlets, including international news agencies, British syndicated services and/or foreign stringer correspondents. This latter trend was largely confirmed by findings presented in chapter 6 regarding the sampled newspapers’ tendency to rely on non-indigenous sources of news copy. Thus, the majority of *The*



*Irish Times* sample and the *Sunday Tribune* sample were sourced from foreign stringer correspondents, particularly Israeli or Middle East stringer correspondents. The majority of the *Irish Independent* sample was sourced from British news sources, while the majority of the *Sunday Independent* sample was derived from “other” and unattributed sources. One notable exception to this trend was the finding that almost one in four of the *Sunday Independent* sample was sourced from Irish-based opinion writers, or commentators.

Chapter 6 concluded that a combination of different media institutional and intrinsic news factors were the most influential factors affecting these news-sourcing trends. Particularly commercial factors, including resource constraints and competitive market pressures from better-resourced British and other international media, were significant factors affecting the sampled newspapers’ decision not to establish a permanent foreign bureau in Israel, the Palestinian territories, or the Middle East. Moreover, the sampled newspapers’ trend of relying on international agency-derived news copy and stringer, or other non-resident correspondents, in reporting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, also appears to be part of the wider and more long-standing dependence of these media on foreign-sourced news copy, generally.

According to Michael Wolsey the financial cost involved in establishing and maintaining foreign bureaus was the primary factor influencing the decision of the *Irish Independent* to source its foreign copy mostly from international news agencies, such as Reuters and Associated Press and the syndicated services supplied by the *London Times*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *London Independent* (Interview

with Author, 1 June 2005). Paddy Smyth also stated that the cost factor, as well as editorial criteria, influenced the news-sourcing policy adopted by *The Irish Times* in covering Israel and the Palestinian territories. Additionally, he argued that the news-sourcing decisions by *The Irish Times* were further influenced by editorial norms, particularly the requirement that newspapers “consciously try to balance” competing Israeli and Palestinian perspectives by sourcing news copy from stringer correspondents that “reflect both sides” and writers known to adhere to different viewpoints (Interview with Author, 16 June 2005). Michael Jansen also stated that she believed that *The Irish Times*’ commitment to “quality reportage” and “reliable analysis” was the primary factor behind its decisions to source copy with long-standing stringer correspondents in the region (Interview with Author, 22 January 2006). Michael Foley similarly argued that it is because *The Irish Times* “tries to ensure that it is not perceived as biased”, that it “has always been very careful to have somebody that... might be viewed [as]... being on the other side... David Horovitz clearly had a very good insight into Israeli politics, while Michael Jansen would see the other side. So, that was the strategy” (Interview with Author, 15 June 2005).

It was then argued that important thematic implications resulted from these news-sourcing policies. For instance, the *Sunday Independent*’s strategy of sourcing relatively more of its material from Irish-based opinion writers, or commentators with known “pro-Israeli” viewpoints, might explain why relatively more of its sampled news items displayed *law and order/terrorism* frames than the *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune*. Likewise, the finding that *The Irish Times* sourced almost half of its sampled news items from Israel-based stringer

correspondents might be correlated to the finding that a relatively higher number of its sampled news items also displayed *law and order/terrorism* frames.

On the other hand, it was concluded that the *Sunday Tribune's* choice to source news copy from a greater variety of foreign sources, including different foreign stringer correspondents, other foreign correspondents, international news agencies and/or a range of unattributed sources, potentially influenced the substantively higher rate of display achieved by *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames within its newspaper sample. Similarly, it could also be argued that the *Irish Independent's* strategy of sourcing news copy from different British newspaper sources, including syndicated newspaper services and journalists affiliated with British newspaper titles, influenced the relatively higher rates of appearance achieved by *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames within its sample, in comparison with the rates of display achieved by other identified frames.

Other significant media or news factors also exerted important constructivist influences on the layout, format and narrative features displayed by the sampled newspapers. This case study's interviews with editorial personnel, for instance, found that editorial judgements regarding the newsworthiness and level of readership interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict influenced the sampled newspapers' choices regarding format, layout and topic features. Paddy Smyth argued that to "balance" the "mix on the foreign page of analysis, of news and of colour" was an important news criterion (Interview with Author, 16 June 2005). Likewise, Michael Wolsey outlined that news choices were guided by the editorial imperatives to "balance" competing views over time and to provide a mix of

“celebrity”, “quirky stuff”, with the “biggest of the day” stories, so as to appeal to “superficial” levels of readership interest (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005).

The interaction of news factors with politico-cultural contextual factors also ensured that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict rarely featured on the front page or editorial pages of the sampled newspapers. For instance, Michael Wolsey argued that Ireland’s lack of “background of being particularly interested in some part of the world” was an important factor affecting national media’s lack of “deep” analysis and editorialising on foreign issues (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005).

Furthermore, it was concluded that the sampled newspapers’ devotion of relatively higher levels of attention to covering “conflict”/“political violence” topics partially resulted from the operation of negativity, “drama” and conflict biases within their respective news selection processes. For instance, Michael Wolsey argued that, aside from judgements regarding the domestic or national relevance of a story from Israel or the Palestinian territories, judgements regarding a development’s “simple strength as a story, such as whether it constitutes an “atrocious” or “quirky” story, decided the topic selection process within the editorial department of the *Irish Independent*. On the other hand, “peace” topics are less frequently chosen for inclusion within the newspaper because these topics are regarded as less interesting and more complex than conflict topics (Interview with Author, 1 June 2005). Similarly, one Irish journalist argued that “peace” topics do not feature as frequently in media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, because they do not “grab and grip”, “get through to audiences at a human level”, nor do they fit with the media’s conflict bias – namely, that “if it bleeds, it leads”

(Interview with Author, 29 June 2004). Furthermore, an Israel-based journalist argued that conflict topics fit with the news values of drama, simplicity and “straight event-reporting” and that this is why there is a “very good level of interest” in conflict topics, especially vis-à-vis other topic categories (Interview with Author, 16 July 2004).

Thus, the above discussion concluded that the wider national media environment and a range of newspaper institutional factors and editorial or journalistic criteria had important influences on the news selection and format trends displayed by the sampled newspapers’ coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period from July 2000 to July 2004.

In terms of the impact of the wider national media environment on the sampled newspapers’ coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it was concluded that the fact that Irish-owned media operate within a relatively small media market that is highly exposed to competition from imported British newspaper titles and Anglo-American television programmes, has important implications for how the Irish media generally cover foreign issues and events. Principally, this thesis found that each of the sampled newspapers’ coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict displayed a strong dependency on foreign-sourced news copy, particularly Israel-based and Middle East-based stringer correspondents, syndicated services supplied by British newspapers and international news agencies. This dependency was, in turn, found to be clearly related to the finding that the sampled newspapers did not establish a foreign bureau in Israel, the Palestinian territories and/or the Middle East because of the cost factor involved and because of the perception that they would

not be able to compete with better resourced international media in the area of foreign news coverage.

The above discussion also concluded that, apart from the influences exerted by the national media environment, a range of more intrinsic news factors also exerted important impacts on the format trends displayed by the sampled newspapers. For instance, news values, such as drama, conflict, negativity and narrative simplicity, affected the level and nature of newspaper coverage devoted to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Specifically, the operation of these values within journalists' and editors' news selection decisions was evident in the trend whereby each of the sampled newspapers devoted relatively greater attention to covering "conflict"/"political violence" topics, as opposed to "peace" topics, "international political-diplomatic" topics and "domestic Israeli", or "domestic Palestinian" topics.

Editorial norms, such as the requirement that newspapers "balance" Israeli and Palestinian perspectives, influenced the newspapers' choices regarding patterns of sourcing and presenting news stories. Editorial judgements regarding the newsworthiness and level of readership interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were also found to have potentially influenced the newspapers' topic selections and emphases and the frequency of appearance of stories on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The following discussion also adopts this social constructivist perspective and focuses on summarising the findings that emerged from this case study's analysis of the constructivist roles displayed by the sampled newspapers, especially

in relation to the source access and representation trends and the patterns of frame inclusions and emphases displayed by the sampled newspapers' discourses.

#### **5. Research Findings (4) - Explaining Patterns in the Sampled Newspapers' Framing of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (July 2000 to July 2004) – Towards a View of Media as Contested Sites of Foreign News Construction**

This section summarises the findings generated by this case study's analysis of the source-representation and frame-representation trends displayed by randomly sampled coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* during the period of July 2000 to July 2004. One of the key objectives of this concluding analysis is to relate the findings of these analyses to already existing theoretical models of the role of the media in covering foreign conflicts.

The social constructivist framework applied within this case study hypothesised that media coverage trends are outcomes of news construction processes that are potentially influenced by a range of different contexts and factors. Thus, this theoretical framework amounts to a substantial critique of the more prominent perspectives that have already been applied to analyses of the role of the media in covering foreign conflicts. These perspectives are the propaganda, indexing, hegemonic and political control perspectives. For the purposes of this case study, these perspectives' assumptions regarding the structural and extrinsic determination of media foreign coverage and the monolithic functioning of media as

conduits for state propaganda, or elite hegemony, are over-simplistic and reductionist assumptions.

In contrast, within this case study, explorations of the influences exerted by a range of extrinsic environmental factors and intrinsic media or news factors are regarded as essential for undertaking a more sociological analysis of the media as sites for the social construction of foreign conflicts. Moreover, the media frame research tradition offers highly useful conceptual tools for this type of social constructivist media analysis.

As outlined in chapter 6, this case study's analysis of the rate of appearance of source assertions concluded that there was an appreciable degree of contest between Israeli and Palestinian sources' assertions within newspaper coverage overall, although Israeli assertions did feature more often in absolute terms. The percentage displays of assertions from Israeli sources were relatively high for *The Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* (34.4%, 35.3% and 32.2%, respectively). Palestinian political/"official" sources achieved lower rates of access than Israeli political/"official" sources within all of the newspapers, except the *Sunday Independent*, where they achieved 26.6% access, in comparison with the 20.5% rate of access achieved by Israeli political/"official" source assertions. The total percentage of source assertions coded as belonging to the Palestinian political/"official" category in *The Irish Times* and the *Sunday Tribune* (20.2% and 20.5%, respectively), however, tended to achieve parity with the percentage of assertions coded as belonging to the Israeli political/"official" source category. The lowest rate of access achieved by Palestinian political/"official" sources was



recorded for the *Irish Independent*, namely, a 15.6% rate of access. Another key finding of this case study's analysis of source assertions was the finding that the sampled newspapers greatly under-represented all categories of international, regional, Irish and non-politico-institutional sources.

Taken together, the above findings infer that, despite the impact of structural-political factors in influencing Israeli and Palestinian protagonists' levels of access to Irish newspaper spaces, "primary definitional" status was not accorded to *either* Israeli *or* Palestinian sources within any of the sampled newspapers. In fact, the strongest conclusion to have emerged from this case study's analysis of source access and representation trends was that the sampled newspapers tended to operate as sites that provide for some measure of contest between competing Israeli and Palestinian political/"official" sources.

These findings, therefore, contradict the viewpoints offered by a number of interview participants who argued that political, structural and/or resource factors conferred greater levels of media access to official Israeli sources. Such a viewpoint was proffered by the Irish Representative to the Palestinian Authority, Dr Niall Holohan, who argued that Israel's sources tend to "win the media battle by presenting their case better." Holohan also argued that Israel's level of media access was greatly enhanced by the development of its highly-resourced international embassy network and the existence of influential Jewish diaspora communities in the United States and Europe. In contrast, the Palestinians "don't have the resources in manpower, or in material terms, to organise world campaigns on informational or media bases" (Interview with Author. 19 July 2004).

The Delegate General of Palestine to Ireland, Dr Ali Halimeh also argued that Israel's "powerful machinery" and the resources of the "Jewish lobby" confer international media advantages to the Israeli government, especially vis-à-vis Palestinian leaders (Interview with Author, 5 August 2004). Raymond Deane, the Chairman of the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign, argued that the enormous power disparities between Israel and the Palestinians, the "very close links between the mainstream media and the establishment", the media activities of the Israeli Embassy and the "extraordinary Israeli propaganda machine" were all factors that greatly restrict the sampled newspapers' reporting of Palestinian sources (Interview with Author, 2 June 2005).

However, in contrast to the perspectives presented by the interview participants quoted above, other interview participants, such as Brian Dooley, the Communications and Fund-Raising Manager with the British and Irish Sections of Amnesty International, argued that the sampled newspapers' sourcing strategies mostly operated according to the logics of efficient, newsworthy information gathering, rather than in accordance with the dictates of state or political power (Interview with Author, 2 September 2004).

Journalist interview participants also stressed that a combination of reporting norms and contingent factors encouraged them to limit their sourcing possibilities to quoting Israeli and Palestinian political/"official" sources. For instance, an Irish journalist argued that geographic, security and linguistic constraints affected journalists' capacity to access different Palestinian and Israeli sources (Interview with Author, 29 June 2004). Furthermore, an Israel-based journalist stated that he

tended to “focus more on political or official spokespeople”, mostly because it was a means of presenting “both sides’ perspectives”, so as to “present as close an approximation to what you could call fair coverage as is possible” (Interview with Author, 11 July 2004). Another Israel-based journalist also argued that:

My style of straight news reporting... relies on trying to get some balance between the two sides... coverage is usually confined to reporting diplomatic and security issues... You are allocated space for just one set piece. Within this space you seek to balance a Palestinian source with an Israeli source... I mostly tend to rely on official sources... Within the Palestinian camp, I mostly rely on political spokespeople who have good English, as I do not speak or understand Arabic (Interview with Author, 16 July 2004).

Therefore, these viewpoints are consistent with this case study’s conclusion that news-sourcing strategies are most appropriately analysed as the outcomes of interactions between relevant politico-cultural contexts and media factors, which do not necessarily or singularly confer advantages to any one particular source category. This conclusion is also compatible with this case study’s overall conclusion that, generally speaking and taken collectively, the sampled newspapers tended to constitute contested sites that variously present the statements of competing Israeli and Palestinian political protagonists, rather than exclusively transmitting so-called consensual, hegemonic and elitist constructions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It is also important to highlight that, given the constructivist implications that politico-cultural and media factors have on news-sourcing outcomes, any changes in the extrinsic political or media environments and/or changes in the operation of intrinsic news factors, such as news-sourcing conventions, news values and editorial criteria, exert important semantic and ideational influences on sourcing

outcomes. Therefore, one of the inherent theoretical advantages of adopting this type of social constructivist and contextual model of media analysis is that it enables research to focus specifically on the *extent* and *range* of impacts that *different* politico-cultural, media and news factors have on media-source relations and resultant news outcomes over time.

This thesis also concluded that a social constructivist model is centrally relevant for the qualitative and interpretive frame analysis of newspaper discourses undertaken by this case study. This case study's frame analysis of newspaper discourses concluded that divergent patterns of frame inclusions and prominences differentiated each of the sampled newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the period of July 2000 to July 2004.

Firstly, divergent trends characterised the extent and rate at which each of the sampled newspapers displayed partisan Israeli *law and order/terrorism* frames and partisan *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames. The rate of display of *law and order/terrorism* frames within *The Irish Times* sample (28.9%) and the *Sunday Independent* sample (25%) demonstrated that these newspapers tended to be more favourable towards including these frames, whether singularly or in combined forms. In contrast, just 7.1% of the *Irish Independent* sample and 2.9% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample displayed these partisan Israeli frames in both singular and combined forms.

However, 34.7% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample and 16% of the *Irish Independent* sample featured *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames in singular and

combined forms. On the other hand, *The Irish Times* sample displayed *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames less frequently than *law and order/terrorism* frames (13.3% of sample), while *Palestinian injustice/defiance* frames were entirely absent within the *Sunday Independent* sample.

The second divergent trend that characterised the sampled newspapers' framing of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from July 2000 to July 2004 related to the rates of display accorded by these newspapers to the non-partisan frames listed in this case study's *signature matrix* - *reconciliation/dual rights* frames, *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames and *regional stability/international security* frames.

It was concluded that these non-partisan frames appeared in relatively infrequent ways within the sampled newspapers overall. In relation to *reconciliation/dual rights* frames, it was found that none of the *Sunday Independent* sample featured these frames, while just 4.8% of *The Irish Times* sample featured these frames, both singularly and in combined forms. On the other hand, 7.1% of the *Irish Independent* sample and 14.5% of the *Sunday Tribune* sample displayed *reconciliation/dual rights* frames in singular and combined forms.

Furthermore, while the *Sunday Tribune* also recorded relatively higher displays of *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames (17.4%), as did *The Irish Times* (13.2%), only 5.4% of the *Irish Independent* and 4.2% of the *Sunday Independent* samples, respectively, displayed *nihilistic violence/warring tribes* frames in singular and combined forms. A divergent trend also characterised the sampled newspapers' rate of display of *regional stability/international security* frames. Thus, 8.8% of the

*Sunday Tribune* sample and 6.3% of the *Sunday Independent* sample displayed *regional stability/international security* frames in singular and combined forms. None of the *Irish Independent* sample displayed such frames, while only 1.2% of *The Irish Times* sample displayed *regional stability/international security* frames in singular and combined forms.

This finding that divergent and competing frames of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict characterised the sampled newspapers' coverage analysed by this case study, particularly the finding that *neither* Israeli frames *nor* Palestinian frames dominated the sampled newspapers' coverage, is in line with the critique advanced by this thesis of existing research in this area. Particularly, this critique refers to research that hypothesises that external political and structural factors, such as state propaganda, elite hegemony and/or, political information controls, determine foreign news coverage. However, this case study's findings also challenge hypotheses that regard media or news factors, such as editorial biases, or newspaper-based partisan ideologies, as singularly determining foreign newspaper coverage.

Instead, the primary theoretical argument advanced by this thesis is that a social constructivist and multi-variable perspective is inherently more appropriate for undertaking the type of research presented here. Specifically, this perspective argues that foreign newspaper presentational and framing trends are outcomes of *interactions* between a range of different *extrinsic* contexts, such as national politico-cultural and media contexts and *intrinsic* factors, such as editorial values and reporting norms. Therefore, this perspective facilitates a strong theoretical focus

on the differential media impacts that are potentially exerted by changes in the politico-cultural or media environment over time. A social constructivist perspective also sensitises the researcher to consider the ongoing and often varied roles played by shifts, or changes in the balance of influences exerted by different politico-cultural and media factors over time.

This overarching argument, in conjunction with the findings of this case study, has important theoretical implications for existing research in this area. Particularly, it challenges propaganda, indexing, hegemonic and political control perspectives. It also encourages the researcher to explore the potential constructivist influences that are exerted on media outcomes by different empirically-relevant contextual and intrinsic factors, rather than assuming, a priori, that external, or structural factors pre-determine those outcomes.

While it is theoretically significant that this thesis was generated within an in-depth, contextual, case-study analysis, which focused mostly on how Irish “opinion leader” newspapers presented and framed the single foreign issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the researcher was, nonetheless, also aware throughout the conduct of this research, that additional research would be required to extend this research agenda even further. Thus, it is recommended here that the following theoretical and methodological limitations of this case study be addressed by further case studies and/or cross-comparative forms of research.

Firstly, if it had been efficient and feasible to do so, it would have been very worthwhile to have undertaken a comparative analysis of how a more extensive

range of Irish media – especially, television channels and radio stations – presented and framed the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during this time-period. This analysis would then have enabled the researcher to further explore the impact of different media and news-making contexts on these media's roles.

An additional and equally useful exploration of media roles would have been one that combined an analysis of longitudinally-sampled newspaper discourses with a more indepth analysis of pre-selected and purposively-sampled periods of concentrated media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In particular, it would have been interesting to have compared the ways in which different Irish newspapers and broadcasting stations presented and framed events such as the collapse of the Camp David Summit in July 2000, the origins of the *Al Aqsa Intifada* in late September 2000, Hamas-perpetrated “suicide” attacks, such as the attacks that occurred in Netanya on 27 March 2002 and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem on 31 July 2002, Israel's perpetration of “Operation Defensive Shield” in late March 2002, the origins of Israel's policy of unilaterally constructing a Separation Barrier in the West Bank during April-June 2002, the Israeli government's approval of the Gaza Disengagement Plan in June 2004 and the International Court of Justice's issuance of its ruling regarding the illegality of the Separation Barrier in July 2004.

It is also assumed that additional significant insights would have been generated by comparing the media frames of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that emerged during the time-period of July 2000 to July 2004 with the potentially different media frames that occurred after this time-period. Specifially, it would



have been interesting to have investigated the patterns of framing that characterised media coverage of events such as Israel's withdrawal of its illegal settlements from the Gaza Strip during August-September 2005, Yasser Arafat's death in November 2005, the election of the Hamas Government in February 2006, Israel's invasion of the Gaza Strip in June 2006 and the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict in 2006.

Secondly, although outside the remit of this case-study, it would have been of considerable theoretical and analytical value to have undertaken a cross-comparative analysis of how Irish "opinion leader" newspapers' coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict resembled, or diverged from, their coverage of wars such as the US-led invasion and subsequent occupation of Afghanistan from October 2001 onwards, the US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq from March 2003 onwards, or the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict in 2006. Particularly, this analysis would have enabled the researcher to undertake a more thorough investigation of the impact of different politico-military contexts on media presentational and framing trends.

Thirdly, in light of the fact that this case study was limited to the Irish context, it is recommended here that future research be undertaken on the different foreign reporting roles adopted by various media outlets within a range of other national contexts. Particularly, given this thesis's findings regarding the differential impacts exerted by historical, politico-cultural and news factors on media foreign conflict coverage, the completion of a series of cross-comparative analyses of media roles would represent considerable advances on this research. In relation to the topic of this thesis, it would appear that the most appropriate media contexts for these

comparative analyses would be other English-language media operating within the type of political contexts supplied by countries such as the United States and Britain and/or Australia and New Zealand.

## APPENDIX 1

### **TIME-LINE – JULY 2000 to JULY 2004**

#### **2000**

11 July - The Camp David negotiations began, involving the participation of President Yasser Arafat, Prime Minister Ehud Barak and President Bill Clinton.

25 July - The Camp David negotiations ended without agreement.

10 September - The PLO Central Committee voted to postpone its plan to declare the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

13 September - The Israeli and Palestinian leaderships failed to meet the deadline that was set for reaching a peace agreement.

25 September - Negotiations between Yasser Arafat and Ehud Barak and their respective negotiating teams were held at Kochav Yair. The two leaders announced the resumption of a new round of talks in Washington.

28 September - The then Likud opposition leader, Ariel Sharon, visited Haram al-Sharif, precipitating the violence associated with the Palestinian *Al Aqsa intifada*.

29 September - Palestinian protests occurred in East Jerusalem, signalling the beginning of the *Al Aqsa intifada*. The IDF responded using live ammunition, which resulted in several Palestinian fatalities and casualties. During the first ten days of the clashes seventy-four Palestinians were killed in demonstrations in the Palestinian territories (Milne, 2004; Shay and Schweitzer, 2001: 3).

1 October - The serious clashes that had spread throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip also spread to some Israeli cities. Thirteen Arab Israelis were killed and several hundred wounded by the IDF during demonstrations in northern Israeli towns.

3 October - The death of the 12-year old Palestinian boy, Mohammed al-Durrah, allegedly by Israeli fire, is shown on television broadcasts across the world. Thereafter, he became an iconic symbol of Israeli military transgressions (Enderlin, 2003: 20-1).

4 October - A summit was held in Paris, called by the United States Secretary of State, Madeline Albright and hosted by the French President, Jacques Chirac. The aim of the summit was to negotiate an Israeli-Palestinian ceasefire agreement. However, the talks collapsed and the Paris summit ended without agreement.

7 October - UNSCR 1322 condemned Israeli violence against Palestinians as serious breaches of international humanitarian law. UNSCR 1322 also reaffirmed the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the Palestinian territories.

12 October - Two Israeli reserve soldiers were beaten to death in a Palestinian police station in Ramallah. Purportedly in response to these deaths, Ehud Barak ordered a helicopter attack to be launched against Palestinian “targets.”

12 October - IDF helicopter raids were launched against “targets” in Gaza and Ramallah, including Arafat’s *Muqata* in Ramallah.

16-17 October - An emergency summit called by President Clinton is held at Sharm el-Sheikh. Yasser Arafat and Ehud Barak were invited, in addition to President Husni Mubarak, King Abdullah II, UN General Secretary, Kofi Annan and the Representative of the EU, Javier Solana. The summit agreed to establish a United States-led Fact-Finding Commission into the causes of the violence. During the summit, both Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat declared their commitment to take immediate action to end the ongoing violence. However, this ceasefire was not actualised as the violence continued unabated.

20 October - Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat’s declarations of a ceasefire at the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit were rendered null and void by the eruption of further violent clashes.

21-22 October - President Mubarak hosted the Extraordinary Arab League Summit that offered rhetorical support for the Palestinian *intifada*.

22 October - Ehud Barak announced that he was suspending the “peace process.”

26 October - The UNGA condemned the “excessive use of force” by the IDF against Palestinian protestors and called for the prevention of “illegal acts of violence by Israeli settlers” (Cited in: Reinhart, 2002: 98).

2 November - A meeting between the Israeli Regional Cooperation Minister, Shimon Peres and Yasser Arafat at Erez Crossing agreed a ceasefire plan whereby both Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat would broadcast simultaneous calls for a halt to the violence. However, this broadcast was not made.

2 November - A car bomb explosion occurred in an outdoor market in central Jerusalem, killing two and wounding eleven people.

9 November - Israeli forces killed Fatah’s Tanzim Commander, Hussein Abayat, in Beit Sahour. This was Israel’s first “targeted assassination” of this period and “opened up a new chapter in the confrontation between Palestinians and Israeli security forces” (PHRMG, 2001: 1).

12 November - Ehud Barak met with President Clinton in Washington to discuss the ongoing situation in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

19 November - The UN High Commission adopted a resolution condemning Israel’s “disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force.” and calling for the establishment of a Human Rights Commission of Inquiry. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, also condemned the “bleak human rights situation in the Occupied Territories.”

22 November - Israeli forces assassinated four members of Tanzim (Usher, 2000).

23 November - The UN Committee Against Torture categorised Israel's incarceration of Palestinian prisoners as amounting to cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment.

10 December - Ehud Barak announced his decision to resign and called for a general election to be held in February 2001.

15 December - Israeli forces killed a member of Hamas, Hani Abu Bakr, at a military checkpoint.

23 December - The "Clinton Parameters" were presented to Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat.

28 December - The Israeli government officially accepted the "Clinton Parameters" as the foundation agreement for a cessation of violence.

30 December - Israel closed off the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. A shell attack in the Gaza Strip killed one Palestinian. Fifteen Palestinians were injured when the IDF fired at a rally in Ramallah.

## **2001**

1 January - The first “suicide” bombing by *Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades* (the military wing of Hamas), occurred in Netanya, wounding twenty people. This was followed by further “suicide” bombings in March, May and June 2001.

1 January - Ehud Barak contacted President Clinton to inform him that his government no longer supported the “Clinton Parameters.”

2 January - Yasser Arafat was received at the White House for further talks. Although Arafat declared that he accepted the “Clinton Parameters” as the basis for future negotiations, he expressed “reservations” regarding some aspects of those “parameters.”

1-3 January - Talks between President Clinton, Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat were held at Taba.

6 January - Security talks, organised by the CIA Director, George Tenet, were held between Israeli and Palestinian officials.

20 January - George W. Bush was elected President of the United States.

21-27 January - Further talks were held at Taba, but ended without agreement.



29 January - Ehud Barak ruled out any further contacts with Yasser Arafat ahead of the Israeli general election in February. He also accused Arafat of unleashing an “attack of lies” against Israel.

6 February - Ariel Sharon was elected Prime Minister of Israel and head of the new coalition government, after a landslide election victory.

8 February - A car bomb explosion in Jerusalem killed four Israeli civilians.

13 February - An Israeli gunship killed Colonel Masoud Ayad, a member of Yasser Arafat’s “Force-17” personal security force.

14 February - Eight Israelis were killed and twenty-five injured in Tel Aviv by a bus driven by a Palestinian bus driver.

19 February - Mahmoud el-Madani, a Hamas militant, was killed near Nablus by the IDF.

20 February - The United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, declared the Bush administration’s intention to adopt a minimalist stance in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the logic that Israelis and Palestinians were themselves responsible for resolving their conflict.

1 March - One person was killed and nine were injured in a car bomb explosion in northern Israel.

4 March - A “suicide” bombing in Netanya resulted in three Israeli deaths and sixty casualties. Hamas claimed responsibility for the bombing.

7 March - Ariel Sharon was sworn in as Prime Minister of Israel.

20 March - Ariel Sharon was received at the White House for his first meeting with President Bush in his capacity as Israeli Prime Minister.

20 March - The United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, visited the Middle East where he called for an end to violence.

27 March - Two Jerusalem bus bombings resulted in one Israeli death and twenty-eight casualties.

27-28 March - The Thirteenth Arab League Summit was held in Beirut and called for a renewed Arab League boycott against Israel.

28 March - A “suicide” bomb near Qalqilya killed two Israeli teenagers. Hamas claimed responsibility for the bombing. Ariel Sharon ordered a helicopter gunship attack on PA military bases, killing three Palestinians.

Late March - early April - The *intifada* entered a heightened phase of conflict spirals and Israeli-Palestinian confrontations escalated throughout the Palestinian territories.

2 April - Israeli forces assassinated an Islamic Jihad activist, Mohammed Abdel Al, in Gaza.

5 April - Israeli forces assassinated the Islamic Jihad leader, Iyyad Hardan, in Jenin. Helicopter rocket attacks were also launched against police stations in Gaza, purportedly in response to Palestinian mortar attacks at Netiv Haasara, near Gaza.

10 April - Fighting continued in the Gaza Strip, involving Israeli military attacks and Palestinian mortar attacks. An extensive Israeli ground offensive was launched in Khan Younis refugee camp, which resulted in the demolition of several buildings. Following this offensive, fighting between the IDF and Palestinian militants resulted in two Palestinian deaths and twenty-four injuries.

16 April - The Jordanian Prime Minister, Abdullah Khatib, presented Israel with an Egyptian-sponsored peace proposal aimed at ending Israeli-Palestinian violence and renewing negotiations. The proposal called for Israel to end its illegal settlements and closures in the West Bank and to withdraw its forces from the Palestinian territories. It called for a Palestinian ceasefire to be implemented in return for Israeli adherence to these measures.

17 April - For the first time since control of the Gaza Strip passed to the PA under the terms of the Oslo Accords, Israel reoccupied territory in the Gaza Strip. The United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, denounced the occupation as “excessive and disproportionate” and called for Israeli withdrawal.

22 April - A “suicide” bombing in Kfar-Saba perpetrated by Hamas killed one Israeli and wounded sixty.

10 May - Two Romanian workmen were killed by a bomb attack in Gaza.

17 May - A UNCHR resolution expressed “deep consternation” at the numbers of civilian deaths and casualties incurred in Israel and the Palestinian territories and called for the establishment of a UN observer mission in the Palestinian territories.

17 May - Israel “indefinitely” established military outposts in the Palestinian territories after several weeks of military raids against Palestinian “targets” and the re-occupation of many Palestinian areas.

18 May - A Hamas-perpetrated bombing in Netanya killed five and wounded over one hundred people.

19 May - Israel launched a series of lethal “reprisals” for the Netanya “suicide” bombing. These “reprisals” consisted of attacks by F-16 warplanes on Palestinian “targets” in Nablus and Ramallah, killing nine Palestinians.

21 May - The Mitchell Commission issued its report.

25 May - Islamic Jihad carried out a “suicide” bombing in Hadera, which injured at least forty-five people. A second “suicide” bomb at a security outpost in the Gaza Strip injured approximately twenty people.

1 June - A Hamas-perpetrated “suicide” bombing outside the Dolphinarium Disco in Tel Aviv killed twenty-one people and injured over 120 people. During a cabinet meeting, Ariel Sharon called for government approval to “remove” Yasser Arafat.

12 June - George Tenet negotiated a ceasefire under the terms of the so-called Tenet Security Plan. This plan stipulated that Israel would withdraw from territories it seized since the *intifada*'s beginning and that the PA would implement a ceasefire, as well as imprisoning “wanted” militants. However, the ceasefire was not maintained.

22 June - A “suicide” bombing in Gaza killed two Israeli soldiers.

26 June - Ariel Sharon met with President Bush at the White House.

17 July - An Israeli missile attack near Bethlehem killed two senior Hamas activists - Omar Saadeh and Taha Aruj.

19 July - Two Israeli soldiers were killed and approximately thirty civilians were injured in a “suicide” bombing in a civilian train station. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the bombing.

23 July - Israel approved the construction of the so-called Separation Barrier between Israel and the West Bank.

25 July - An Israeli missile attack killed Saleh Darwazeh, a Hamas activist from Nablus.

30 July - Israeli forces assassinated six Palestinian militant activists, including the Nablus-based Hamas Commanders, Gamal Mansur and Gamal Salim.

9 August - Fifteen people were killed and over 130 people were injured by the “suicide” bombing of the Sbarro pizzeria in Jerusalem. Hamas and Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility. They argued that this bombing was in “retaliation” for Israel’s assassinations of Hamas activists in Nablus (Bregman, 2005: 308).

12 August - Hamas perpetrated a “suicide” attack in Haifa that injured fifteen people.

27 August – An Israeli missile attack killed the Secretary General of the PFLP, Abu Ali Mustapha, in his office in Ramallah. Israeli military sources claimed that the assassination was in “response” to the Sbarro Pizzeria bombing and PFLP-orchestrated shooting attacks.

9 September - A “suicide” attack in Nahariya killed three and injured thirty-one people. Hamas and Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.

11 September - Al Qaeda perpetrated one of the worst terror attacks in American history, by exploding hijacked aeroplanes that destroyed the World Trade Centre in

New York and part of the Pentagon in Washington. Almost 3,000 people were killed.

18 September - Yasser Arafat declared a ceasefire, following pressure from the United States. Israel withdrew its forces from the areas that it had most recently re-occupied.

26 September - A meeting took place between Shimon Peres and Yasser Arafat in Rafah airport. It was agreed that security cooperation would be resumed between the Israeli security forces and the PA and that “maximum effort” would be made by both sides to enforce a ceasefire. Peres agreed to lift Israeli-imposed curfews and re-deploy Israeli forces away from re-occupied areas. Arafat agreed to arrest “wanted” militants and carry out seizures of illegal weapons. However, the Peres-Arafat ceasefire agreement was rendered futile when immediately after their meeting the Israeli army destroyed the runway in Rafah airport.

2 October - President Bush declared during a meeting with congressional leaders that he supported the “idea of a Palestinian state”, which “has always been part of a vision so long as the right of Israel to exist is respected.” This declaration was interpreted as an attempt by President Bush to garner the support of Muslim countries for the so-called “war on terror” in the aftermath of the attacks on 11 September (Cited in: Bregman, 2005: 162).

4 October - Three people were killed and thirteen people were injured when a gunman opened fire in the central bus station in Afula. Fatah claimed responsibility for the attack.

5 October - In response to President Bush's 2 October announcement, Ariel Sharon called on "Western democracies and primarily the leader of the free world, the United States" not to "repeat the dreadful mistake of 1938 when enlightened European democracies decided to sacrifice Czechoslovakia for a convenient temporary solution... Do not try to appease the Arabs at our expense... Israel will not be Czechoslovakia. Israel will fight" (Cited in: Bregman, 2005: 163)

17 October - The PFLP assassinated the Israeli Tourism Minister, Rehav'am Ze'evi. The Israeli authorities responded to the assassination by denouncing the PA as an "entity that supports terror" and denouncing Yasser Arafat as "someone who has carried out and is carrying out acts of terrorism and never took steps against it" (Cited in: Bregman, 2005: 165-6).

28 October - Four people were killed and forty people were wounded when Palestinian militants attacked a bus stop in Hadera. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attack.

4 November - Two Israeli teenagers were killed and forty-five people were injured during a Palestinian shooting attack in Jerusalem.



10 November - President Bush reiterated his commitment at the UNGA to work “toward a day when two states, Israel and Palestine, live peacefully together within secure and recognised borders as called for by the Security Council Resolutions.”

16 November - Yasser Arafat condemned “suicide” attacks and called for the “complete cessation” of all military activities.

23 November - Israel assassinated the Hamas militant leader, Mahmoud Abu Hanoud.

26 November - President Bush sent the United States Special Envoy, General Anthony Zinni, to Israel and the Palestinian territories to attempt to mediate a ceasefire.

27 November - Three people were killed and approximately thirty people were wounded during a joint Islamic Jihad and Fatah-perpetrated shooting attack in Afula.

29 November - A bus “suicide” bombing, perpetrated by Islamic Jihad, killed three people and injured six people in Hadera.

1 December - Two Hamas-perpetrated “suicide” bombings in West Jerusalem killed eleven people and wounded one 180 people.

2 December - Fifteen people were killed and over forty people were injured by a bus “suicide” attack in Haifa.

2 December - Ariel Sharon held talks with President Bush at the White House.

3 December - The Israeli government held a special cabinet meeting. The official bulletin of the meeting stated that: “... the cabinet has determined that the Palestinian Authority is an entity that supports terrorism and must be dealt with accordingly... [through] operational steps (military, diplomatic, informational and economic)... The Israeli information campaign will focus on Arafat’s responsibility for the terrorism emanating from the areas under his control” (Cited in: Reinhart, 2002: 129-30).

4 December - Israeli military attacks and wholesale arrests within Palestinian areas intensified, signalling an increased resort to deeper military “incursions.” The Israeli military also launched “strikes” against Arafat’s headquarters and re-occupied six of the West Bank cities, imposing extensive curfews and roadblocks throughout the Palestinian territories (Reinhart, 2002: 130-1). The air strikes that accompanied these attacks resulted in over 100 Palestinian casualties and two deaths. These strikes also continued throughout 2002 (Human Rights Watch, 2003c: 1-2; La Guardia, 2003: 265). Ariel Sharon justified these military actions directly in terms of the “international terrorism” frame. Furthermore, President Bush tacitly accepted this justification (Hammami, 2002: 2).

9 December - Thirty people were wounded by a “suicide” attack carried out by Hamas at a hitch hiking post in Haifa.

12 December - Ten people were killed and over thirty people were wounded as a result of a Palestinian gunfire attack on a civilian bus near the Emmanuel settlement.

12 December - Israeli missile attacks were launched against Yasser Arafat’s headquarters in Gaza and other PA infrastructure. An Israeli cabinet meeting declared that, “Chairman Arafat has made himself irrelevant... no contacts will be maintained with him” (Cited in: Bregman, 2005: 168).

15 December - The United States vetoed a UNSC draft resolution that proposed establishing an international monitoring force in the Palestinian territories.

16 December - Yasser Arafat called for an end to attacks against Israel and reiterated his opposition to such attacks. The Spiritual Leader of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, also called for a ceasefire. However, Israel’s chief of staff, Shaul Mofaz, dismissed Arafat’s ceasefire call and argued instead that the PA is “infected by terror from head to toe and does everything to disrupt our lives and to bring terrorism to our doorsteps” (AP, 28 December 2001. cited in: Reinhart, 2002: 131-2).

22 December - Israeli troops surrounded Yasser Arafat's headquarters and, despite international calls for restraint, Israel announced that Arafat would be confined there indefinitely and by military force.

27 December - The Israeli navy captured the *Karine A*, a ship that was allegedly shipping a consignment of fifty tonnes of weapons to the PA from Iran.

## 2002

January - Israel undertook consistent and repeated military raids of several Palestinian cities and towns including Gaza, Ramallah, Nablus, Qalqilya, Jenin and Tulkarem. These “incursions” were accompanied by extensive curfews, closures, mass arrests and home demolitions. Several “targeted assassinations” killed at least eight members of the Nablus division of Hamas, including its leader, Yosef Soragji and the Hamas commander in Gaza’s Khan Younis refugee camp, Bakar Hamdam.

3 January - General Anthony Zinni arrived in Israel and was informed about the *Karine A* weapons seizure. Zinni’s visit was part of a wider mission begun in November 2001, which was attempting to forge an Israeli-Palestinian ceasefire agreement.

4 January - Anthony Zinni met Yasser Arafat in Ramallah. During this meeting, Arafat denied all knowledge of the *Karine A* arms shipment.

7 January - Ariel Sharon met with President Bush at the White House.

10-11 January - The IDF demolished fifty-nine Palestinian homes in Rafah refugee camp leaving hundreds of Palestinian people homeless.

14 January - Israeli forces killed the West Bank leader of the Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades, Ra’id al-Karmi, ending the ceasefire called by Yasser Arafat on 16 December 2001.

17 January - The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades' "reprisal" attack occurred when six Israelis were killed and over thirty wounded during a shooting attack at a bat mitzvah celebration in Hadera.

18 January - An Israeli F-16 jet fighter destroyed the PA's main police headquarters in Tulkarem. The attack killed one policeman and wounded forty people.

22 January - An Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades' shooting attack in Jerusalem killed two people.

25 January - An Islamic Jihad "suicide" bomb injured twenty-four people in the old bus station in Tel Aviv.

27 January - The first Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades' "suicide" attack occurred in Jerusalem, killing one person and wounding over 170 people. This bombing was also the first bombing to be carried out by a female perpetrator (Human Rights Watch, 2002b: Appendix 1, 4).

16 February - A "suicide" bombing perpetrated by the PFLP at a pizzeria in the northern West Bank killed three people and wounded more than thirty people.

19 February - Six Israeli soldiers were killed by a joint Hamas and Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades shooting attack at an army checkpoint in Ein Ariq near Ramallah.

20 February - Israeli warplanes and helicopter gunships attacked several PA infrastructural “targets.” Four Palestinians were killed in a missile attack launched on the PA’s headquarters in Gaza City. Seven Palestinians were killed during the Israeli shelling of two Palestinian police checkpoints near Nablus. Three Palestinians were killed during a firefight outside Balata refugee camp. One Palestinian was killed by an air strike on Ramallah and one Palestinian was killed during a firefight near Ramallah.

23-24 February - Israel launched further military strikes in Ramallah and the eastern and southern regions of the Gaza Strip. These strikes killed five and wounded over fifty Palestinians.

26 February - Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia announced the terms of the so-called Saudi Peace Proposal, which called for Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian territories in return for Israeli security and the recognition of Arab states.

27 February - 18 March - The first full-scale Israeli military incursion into Palestinian residential areas was enforced to “destroy the terror infrastructure.”

28 February – Over 100 Palestinians were wounded and two Palestinians were killed as a result of an Israeli military raid on the Balata refugee camp in Nablus. Six Palestinian policemen were killed by Israeli forces raiding Jenin refugee camp.

28 February - President Bush indicated his tacit approval of the Saudi Peace Proposal. However, it was rejected by Israel.

March - The Israeli army stepped up its military strikes and raids in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, killing several Palestinians in the Balata, Jabalya and Jenin refugee camps, as well as civilians in towns, such as Ramallah and Khan Younis.

2 March - Eleven people were killed in a “suicide” bombing in central Jerusalem.

3 March - Ten Israelis were killed by Palestinian gunfire on an IDF road block near Ofra in the northern West Bank.

4 March - Six Palestinians, five of whom were children, were killed in Ramallah by an Israeli missile attack on vehicles suspected of belonging to a Hamas militant. In Jenin, six Palestinians were killed during a fire exchange with Israeli soldiers. In Rafah refugee camp, two Palestinian gunmen and one Palestinian civilian were killed and three buildings were demolished.

5 March - A “suicide” bombing in Afula central bus station killed one person and injured eleven people.

7 March - President Bush announced his continued commitment to a future Palestinian state. He also announced that Anthony Zinni would return to Israel and the Palestinian territories to implement a ceasefire based on Israeli and Palestinian acceptance of George Tenet’s June 2001 Plan. He called on Israel to recognise that, by “allowing violence to escalate or causing violence to escalate” could not achieve peace. He also called on Yasser Arafat “to make maximum effort to end terrorism against Israel”



(Cited in: <http://www.usinfo.state.gov/regional/nea/summit/text/0307chbshpwl.htm>

(Accessed on 4 October 2005)).

7 March - Five Israeli teenagers were killed and twenty-three were injured when a Palestinian gunman opened fire on a pre-military training academy in the Gush Katif settlement of Atzmona.

9 March - A “suicide” bombing in Café Moment in Jerusalem killed eleven and injured approximately fifty-four people.

12 March - UNSCR 1397 was passed, endorsing a “vision of a region where two states, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognised borders” (Cited in: Human Rights Watch, 2003c: 10).

14 March - The Trilateral Committee established by Anthony Zinni, which involved the participation of security experts from Israel, the Palestinian territories and the United States, began its work on achieving Israeli-Palestinian security coordination.

19 March - The Vice President of the United States, Dick Cheney, visited the Middle East, including Israel.

20 March - A bus “suicide” bombing near Afula killed seven people and wounded twenty-nine people.

21 March - Three people were killed and eighty-six people were injured by a “suicide” bomb in central Jerusalem.

26 March - Ariel Sharon indicated his acceptance of Anthony Zinni’s so-called “Bridging Proposal.” However, by 27 March the Palestinian leadership still expressed reservations over the terms of the proposal.

27 March - A Hamas-perpetrated “suicide” bomb during a Seder Passover celebration at the Netanya Seaside Park Hotel killed twenty-nine people and wounded almost 150 people. This attack was one of a total of thirteen “suicide” attacks, which occurred throughout March, killing more than eighty people and wounding over 430 people (Human Rights Watch, 2002b: Appendix 1).

27-28 March - The Arab League Summit endorsed the Saudi Peace Proposal. However, the Egyptian and Jordanian leaders did not attend and Yasser Arafat was prevented by Israel from travelling to the summit.

29 March - Purportedly in response to the rising spiral of “suicide” attacks, “Operation Defensive Shield” was launched. This was the single largest Israeli military operation in the West Bank and it involved the re-occupation of primary West Bank towns and enormous property destruction, including over 2,000 home demolitions. For almost one month, curfews, blockades and mass searches/arrests were imposed in these towns, with the exception of Hebron and East Jerusalem (Amnesty International, 2003a; Hammami, 2002: 2; Reinhart, 2002: 148-52, 160-70). The military strikes and fighting resulted in over 500 Palestinian deaths and

1,500 injuries (Amnesty International, 2002a: 3, 6). At least 4,500 Palestinians were arrested (Human Rights Watch, 2003c: 2) and many more Palestinians were subjected to ill treatment (Amnesty International, 2003a: 1).

Some of the most intense fighting occurred during the Israeli military raid of the Jenin refugee camp from 5 to 15 April. This raid totally destroyed some areas of the refugee camp, killed over fifty Palestinians and rendered 4,000 Palestinians homeless (Bregman, 2005: 203-5). Iconic status was also attributed to the “Jenin massacre” because of the relatively more intense media coverage devoted to it. Two other prominently covered dimensions of “Operation Defensive Shield” were the “siege” of Yasser Arafat’s *Muqata* in Ramallah and the siege at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

30 March - UNSCR 1402 was passed which called for a cessation of “Operation Defensive Shield” and for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian cities, while also expressing “grave concern” over the rate of Palestinian “suicide” attacks. However, the resolution was ignored by Israel.

30 March - Two people were killed when a female “suicide” bomber blew herself up in the Kiryat Yovel supermarket in Jerusalem. Another “suicide” bomb that exploded in a café in southern Tel Aviv killed one person and injured approximately thirty people.

31 March - A “suicide” bomb in Haifa killed at least fifteen people and wounded more than thirty-five people. Hamas and Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the bomb.

2 April - The standoff began between the IDF and Palestinian militants avoiding capture by the IDF in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The resultant siege lasted for a period of 38 days.

4 April - President Bush announced that he would be sending Colin Powell (Secretary of State) to the Middle East. He also called on Israel to halt “incursions” and withdraw from re-occupied Palestinian areas (Bregman, 2005: 192). President Bush also reiterated his administration’s support for the “legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people.” However, he denounced Arafat’s failure to halt “terrorism”, stating that he “missed his opportunities and thereby betrayed the hopes of the people he is supposed to lead” (Cited in: *The Guardian*, 5 April 2002).

4 April - President Bush’s call for Israel’s withdrawal “without delay” was ignored by Israel (see:

[http://www.nmhschool.org/tthorton/mehistorydatabase/intifada\\_2000.htm](http://www.nmhschool.org/tthorton/mehistorydatabase/intifada_2000.htm)

(Accessed on 17 June 2004)).

5 April - Anthony Zinni visited Yasser Arafat in the besieged *Muqata* in Ramallah, ahead of Colin Powell’s visit.

10 April - The UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan publicly denounced “Operation Defensive Shield” as a contravention of international law.

10 April - A Hamas-perpetrated bomb in Haifa killed eight and wounded twenty-two people.

12 April - Seven people were killed by a “suicide” bombing in central Jerusalem, which was perpetrated by a Palestinian woman linked to the Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades. Some 104 people were injured in the blast, including nine Arab-Israelis.

12-15 April - Colin Powell held talks with Ariel Sharon and Yasser Arafat. At the conclusion of his visit, Powell announced that the cessation of the Israeli military blockade and reoccupation, as well as a Palestinian ceasefire, were the primary preconditions for the intervention of the United States. However, Powell stopped short of committing the United States to any future political process, or endorsing any future plans for the holding of an international conference on the Middle East (Bregman, 2005: 195-202).

14 April - The Israeli cabinet announced that a “security fence” would be constructed to reduce the risk of “terrorism” within Israel (Human Rights Watch, 2003d).

15 April - The UN Envoy to the Middle East, Terje Roed-Larsen visited Jenin and declared that, “no military operation could justify the suffering we are seeing here” (Cited in: Bregman, 2005: 205).

19 April - UNSCR 1405 emphasised the “dire humanitarian situation of the Palestinian population” and authorised a UN investigation team to be sent to Jenin.

21 April - Israel ceased the full scale siege of Palestinian areas that it had been imposing as part of “Operation Defensive shield.” However, even after this cessation, unilateral Israeli “incursions” into the West Bank continued regularly. These “incursions” were intended to further consolidate Israeli control over Area C, or the 60% of West Bank territories surrounding Palestinian towns (Hammami, 2002: 6).

25 April - Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia visited President Bush’s Texas ranch. Abdullah urged Bush to pressure Israel to cease its occupation and military raids against Palestinian-controlled areas. It was agreed that President Bush would exert pressure on Ariel Sharon to halt “Operation Defensive Shield” and release Yasser Arafat. It was also agreed that Abdullah would exert pressure on Arafat to control Palestinian violence (Bregman, 2005: 208-9).

27 April - Ariel Sharon agreed to end the siege of Yasser Arafat’s *Muqata*, but only when the United States administration agreed to veto the UNSCR calling for the establishment of an investigation into the Israeli-perpetrated killings in Jenin (Bregman, 2005: 211).

29 April - Israeli forces invaded Hebron city and killed nine Palestinians. Israeli forces also killed a Palestinian militant in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

30 April - The Israeli cabinet voted to defy UNSCR 1405.

1 May - The UNSC disbanded the UN Jenin investigation team because of a threat of a United States veto (Reinhart, 2002: 156-7)

5 May - Ariel Sharon visited the United States. The purpose of the visit was to achieve advantages for Israel in the anticipated United States-sponsored “peace” plan (Bregman, 2005: 223-4)

7 May - Ariel Sharon cut his visit to the United States short because of a “suicide” attack at Rishon Lezion, which killed sixteen people and injured approximately sixty people. Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack.

10 May - The standoff between the IDF and approximately 200 Palestinians at Bethlehem’s Church of the Nativity ended.

19 May - A “suicide” bomb in a market in Netanya killed three and wounded fifty-nine people.

22 May - Two people were killed in a “suicide” bombing in Rishon Lezion.

29 May - Two Palestinians were killed by Israeli troops in Khan Younis, in the Gaza Strip. In Rafah, four Palestinian homes were destroyed and twenty Palestinian homes were damaged.

5 June - A car-bomb explosion perpetrated by Islamic Jihad in northern Israel killed sixteen and wounded fifty people.

10 June - Ariel Sharon attended talks at the White House.

16 June - Israel began its construction of the Separation Barrier (B'Tselem, 2003c; Human Rights Watch, 2003c: 5; Human Rights Watch, 2003d). In opposition, Palestinian protagonists argued that the Barrier constituted an illegal "apartheid wall."

The Separation Barrier has been severely criticised because of its devastating humanitarian, human rights and political implications for the Palestinians living in the West Bank (Amnesty International, 2004b). In particular, Israel was accused of fulfilling the "security needs" of illegally established Jewish settlements at the expense of local Palestinian communities (B'Tselem, 2003c; Human Rights Watch, 2003d). The Separation Barrier has also been condemned as an illegal form of collective punishment that is designed to institutionalise Israeli "closures" and restrict the movement of the Palestinian population (Human Rights Watch, 2004b). Israel was also accused of establishing a permanent "political fact" that was deliberately intended to undermine the "two-state solution" and increase illegal Jewish settlements on Palestinian lands (Sussman, 2004: 6-7).

18 June - Purportedly in "response" to a "suicide" bombing in Jerusalem that killed nineteen and injured seventy-four people, Ariel Sharon announced the launch of "Operation Determined Path." He declared that this "operation" would be imposed



for as “long as terror continues” and that it would involve the military re-occupation of Palestinian towns and the imposition of severe restrictions on Palestinian civilians (Human Rights Watch, 2003c: 2).

19 June - A “suicide” attack in Jerusalem killed seven and injured fifty people.

24 June - President Bush announced the launch of a United States “peace” initiative. However, he simultaneously called for the replacement of Yasser Arafat with a new Palestinian leadership that is “not compromised by terror.” He further declared that, only “when the Palestinian people have new leaders, new institutions and new security arrangements with their neighbours” will the United States “support the creation of a Palestinian state whose borders and certain aspects of its sovereignty will be provisional until resolved as part of a final settlement in the Middle East” (Cited in: <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rt/13544.htm> (Accessed on 4 July 2004)).

16 July - The Quartet (the United States, Russia, the EU and the UN) endorsed President Bush’s 24 June statement and called for “intensive effort on security and reform by all” to achieve a final settlement by 2005. It called on Israel to “take concrete steps to support the emergence of a viable Palestinian state”, including the halting of settlement activities, the easing of closures and the “withdrawal of Israeli forces to their pre-September 2000 positions” (Cited in: [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/med\\_mideast/news/statquartet.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/med_mideast/news/statquartet.htm) (Accessed on 4 July 2004)).

17 July - A double “suicide” bombing in Tel Aviv resulted in five deaths and approximately forty injuries.

22 July - Under the auspices of a European delegation, Palestinian militant organisations, including Hamas and Tanzim, reached an accord to suspend all attacks inside Israel, in return for Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian cities (PHRMG, 2002d: 2)

23 July - Just hours before the Palestinian ceasefire accord was announced, Israel assassinated the Hamas military leader, Salah Shehadeh, in a bomb attack that also killed fourteen and injured over 140 civilian bystanders (Human Rights Watch, 2003c: 3). In “response”, Hamas immediately revoked the accord (PHRMG, 2002d: 2).

30 July - A “suicide” bombing in Jerusalem killed two and wounded five people. Hamas claimed responsibility for the bombing.

31 July - Hamas perpetrated a “suicide” attack at the Hebrew University Cafeteria that killed seven students and wounded at least eighty people.

4 August - A Hamas-perpetrated bus “suicide” bombing occurred in northern Galilee, killing at least nine people and injuring fifty people. A Palestinian-perpetrated shooting attack in Jerusalem resulted in two deaths and sixteen injuries.

18 September - After a six-week halt in Palestinian “suicide” attacks, a “suicide” attack at the Umm al Fahm junction signaled a return to previous patterns of hostilities. This attack killed one Israeli policeman and wounded three civilians.

19 September - A bus “suicide” bombing in Tel Aviv killed six people. Hamas claimed responsibility for the bombing.

19 September - Israeli forces launched the cabinet-endorsed “Operation Question of Time”, which renewed military strikes against Arafat’s *Muqata* in Ramallah.

24-27 September - Israeli military raids were launched in Gaza, killing eleven and wounding more than forty Palestinians.

25 September - UNSCR 1435 called for Israel to end its military occupation of Ramallah and the siege of the *Muqata*, to completely cease all violent acts and hostilities and to withdraw its forces to positions occupied in September 2000. The United States abstained from voting on the resolution and Israel publicly rebuked it as “rewarding terrorism”

(see: <http://www.palestinechronicle.com/article.php?story=20020924184903987>

(Accessed on 15 March 2004)).

29 September - Israel ended its “siege” of Yasser Arafat’s *Muqata* in Ramallah under increasing pressure from the United States. This move, however, did not signal a total end to Israeli raids, which continued in the Gaza Strip throughout October.

10 October - A “suicide” bombing in central Israel killed one person and injured approximately thirty people.

18 October - The United States announced the terms of a new “peace” plan, based upon the inputs of Israeli and Palestinian representatives to the Quartet’s “roadmap.”

21 October - A “suicide” bombing in Hadera perpetrated by Islamic Jihad killed fourteen people and wounded forty-seven people.

25 October - Israel reoccupied the Jenin refugee camp because they claimed that the perpetrators of the suicide attack on 21 October were using this camp as their base.

27 October - Three IDF soldiers were killed and twenty people were wounded when a “suicide” bomber detonated a bomb at the entrance to Ariel settlement.

30 October - The Israeli government coalition collapsed when the Labour Party withdrew its support because of Ariel Sharon’s refusal to implement the party’s proposal to reduce the state’s investment in settlement expansion by \$147 million and to divert this money towards increasing the state’s social service provisions. A general election was called for 28 January 2003.

4 November - A “suicide” bombing in a shopping mall, which was perpetrated by Islamic Jihad, killed two and wounded at least thirty people.

15 November - Twelve Israeli settlers were killed and fifteen were wounded in an Islamic Jihad-perpetrated shooting attack in Hebron.

21 November - Hamas claimed responsibility for a “suicide” bus bombing in West Jerusalem that killed eleven people and injured approximately fifty people.

22 November - Israeli forces re-occupied Bethlehem.

26 December - Israeli forces killed several Palestinian civilians and “assassinated” a number of Palestinian militants in separate incidents throughout the Palestinian territories. In Nablus, the Israeli forces killed two Palestinian teenagers. In the West Bank village of Qabatiya, the Israeli forces killed Hamza Abu Roub, a top Islamic Jihad leader. Three members of Hamas were killed in separate military strikes in the Gaza Strip and Ramallah. Two Palestinian civilians were also killed in the strike in Ramallah. Additionally, a member of the Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades was killed in Tulkarem.

## **2003**

5 January - A double “suicide” bombing occurred in Tel Aviv, killing over twenty people and injuring approximately 100 people. Both Hamas and Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for this bombing.

6 January - Israeli forces raided the Maghazi refugee camp in Gaza and killed three and wounded approximately thirteen Palestinians.

11-12 January - Two Palestinians were killed and twelve Palestinians were wounded during an Israeli military raid on the town of Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip. Seven civilian facilities were also destroyed during the raid.

25-26 January - Israeli forces invaded the al-Zaytoun neighbourhood of Gaza City. Twelve Palestinians were killed, three of whom were hit with shrapnel from an artillery shell and nine of whom were shot dead. Seventeen workshops were demolished and fifteen workshops were severely damaged.

28 January - The general election in Israel returned Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister and the Likud gained a victory margin of forty seats.

31 January - Thirteen Palestinians were killed and over fifty were wounded as the IDF made its deepest “incursion” into Gaza City in years. Scores of buildings were raided and demolished.

Late February - Israeli forces began a further series of “incursions” into the Gaza Strip and Nablus, resulting in several civilian casualties.

5 March - A “suicide” attack occurred in Haifa, killing seventeen people and injuring approximately fifty-three people. Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack.

6 March - Following the firing of Qassam rockets on Sderot, the IDF reoccupied Jebalya refugee camp and the surrounding area.

7 March - Yasser Arafat publicly invited Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) to become the new Palestinian Prime Minister.

10 March - Following diplomatic pressure from the United States, Britain and other Quartet members, Yasser Arafat officially nominated Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), as the new Palestinian Prime Minister.

16 March - An Israeli bulldozer killed Rachel Corrie, an American citizen and activist with the International Solidarity Movement, when she attempted to prevent a bulldozer from demolishing a Palestinian house.

19 March - Mahmoud Abbas accepted the nomination for Prime Minister, which was subsequently approved by the Central Council of the PLO. However, it was not until late April 2003 that Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas agreed over the new cabinet appointments.

19 March - The United States-led invasion of Iraq began.

30 March - A “suicide” attack occurred in a café in Netanya, injuring between thirty and fifty people.

8 April - Israeli missile strikes within a densely populated area of Gaza City killed two Palestinian militants and five civilian bystanders, as well as injuring fifty-three bystanders.

9 April - Baghdad fell to the United States-led invading forces.

11 April - Tom Hurndall, a British member of the International Solidarity Movement, was killed by the Israeli army. He died on 13 January 2004, after almost a year of being in a coma.

29 April - Mahmoud Abbas was officially appointed as the Palestinian Prime Minister. He vowed to undertake reforms of the PA.

30 April - A British Muslim “suicide” bomber killed three and injured approximately sixty people when he blew himself up in a restaurant in Tel Aviv.

30 April - After Mahmoud Abbas and his accompanying cabinet were sworn in, President Bush consented to publicise the “performance-based roadmap.” The roadmap was then launched by the Quartet - the United States, the UN, EU and Russia.



2 May - A British cameraman was shot dead by Israeli soldiers in Rafah.

17 May - A “suicide” bombing in Hebron killed two Israelis.

17 May - The first official meeting took place between Ariel Sharon and Mahmoud Abbas.

18 May - A Palestinian “suicide” bomb killed seven and injured twenty Israelis on a bus in the Jerusalem settlement of French Hill. Hamas claimed responsibility for the bombing.

19 May - Two bomb attacks, one in Gaza and the other in Afula, killed six people and wounded over sixty people. In Afula, a female “suicide” bomber blew herself up at the entrance to a shopping mall. Islamic Jihad and the Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades claimed responsibility for this attack.

23 May - Ariel Sharon insisted to the United States’ administration that his government’s approval of the “roadmap” was conditional on the United States’ endorsement of Israeli-proposed “amendments.” In response, the United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell and National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice jointly stated that the United States administration “shares the view of the Government of Israel that these are real concerns and will address them fully and seriously in the implementation of the roadmap” (Cited in: Bregman, 2005: 253).

25 May - The Israeli cabinet conditionally approved the “roadmap” (12 to 7 votes in favour), subject to the fulfillment of fourteen amendments, which were defined as a “red line” of “painful concessions” (see: <http://www.meionline.com/editorial/50.shtml> (Accessed on 10 February 2004)).

3 June - President Bush met with Arab heads of state in Egypt. He called on Israel to “deal with the settlements” and ensure that the conditions are met for the foundation of a contiguous Palestinian state. The Arab heads of state endorsed the “roadmap.”

4 June - President Bush met with Jordanian, Israeli and Palestinian leaders in Aqaba. John Wolf was named as the new United States Middle East Envoy and was charged with overseeing the implementation of the “roadmap.” Israel and the PA agreed to the “roadmap” at the Sharm el-Sheikh and Aqaba Summits. At the conclusion of the Aqaba Summit, Mahmoud Abbas stated that:

We repeat our renunciation of terror against the Israelis wherever they might be. Such methods are inconsistent with our religious and moral traditions and are dangerous obstacles to the achievement of the independent, sovereign state we seek... The armed *intifada* must end... We will also act vigorously against incitement and violence and hatred (Cited in: Bregman, 2005: 261).

Ariel Sharon’s concluding speech made no such reference to Israel’s commitment to redressing Palestinian grievances and promoting Palestinian human rights. Instead, he declared that:

My paramount responsibility is the security of the people of Israel and of the State of Israel... There can be no compromise with terror and Israel together with all free nations will continue fighting terrorism until its final defeat (Cited in: Bregman, 2005: 261).

The “roadmap” engendered significant criticisms within both Israeli and Palestinian political domains. In particular, right-wing nationalist and religious groups within Israel criticised the “roadmap” as “concessions to terror.” These groups also condemned the Israeli cabinet’s endorsement of the “roadmap” as “treason” and a “national catastrophe” (see: <http://www.meionline.com/newsanalysis/51.shtml> (Accessed on 10 February 2004)).

The “roadmap” consisted of three separate phases of implementation. During the first phase (to begin immediately and be completed by the end of May 2003), Palestinians were required to “immediately undertake an unconditional cessation of violence... accompanied by supportive measures undertaken by Israel.” This first phase would also require Palestinians to “undertake comprehensive political reform in preparation for statehood” and the resumption of joint Israeli-Palestinian security arrangements. During this first phase, Israel was required to take “all necessary steps to help normalize Palestinian life”, particularly by withdrawing from the re-occupied areas and ceasing all settlement activity, as stipulated by the Mitchell Report.

The second phase of the “roadmap” was supposed to begin from June 2003 onwards, or upon the completion of each of the above obligations. The “roadmap” stipulated that during this second phase, “the option of creating an independent Palestinian state with provisional borders and attributes of sovereignty” will be focused on, “as a way station to a permanent status settlement.” It was towards this end that the “roadmap” stated that Palestinian elections should be held in December 2003.

The “roadmap” stipulated that the third phase of its implementation would be “aimed at a permanent status agreement in 2005”, which “ends the Israel-Palestinian conflict” on the basis of UNSCR 242, 338 and 1397. The “roadmap” declared that this stage “ends the occupation that began in 1967 and includes an agreed, just, fair and realistic solution to the refugee issue and a negotiated resolution on the status of Jerusalem that takes into account the political and religious concerns of both sides” (see: <http://www.usinfo.state.gov/regional/nea/summit/text2003/0430roadmap.htm> (Accessed on 30 July 2004)).

8 June – An attack committed by Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades killed four Israeli soldiers at the Erez checkpoint.

10 June - In “retaliation” for the attack at Erez on 8 June, Israeli forces attempted to assassinate the Hamas leader Abdel Aziz Rantissi in Gaza, but he survived.

11 June - A bus bombing in central Jerusalem killed sixteen and injured seventy people. Hamas claimed responsibility for the bombing.

15 June - The United States dispatched their new Middle East envoy, John Wolf to Israel and the Palestinian territories with a brief to monitor progress by Israel and the PA in implementing the first stage of a future Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian areas it reoccupied during the *intifada*.

27 June - The so-called “Gaza Agreement”, which was brokered by John Wolf, was reached between Israeli and Palestinian negotiators. It covered the transfer of

security responsibilities for the Gaza Strip and Bethlehem areas from Israel to the PA.

28 June - The security responsibilities for the Gaza Strip and Bethlehem areas were transferred from Israel to the PA.

29 June - Fatah, Islamic Jihad and Hamas declared a truce, or *hudna*, which meant the suspension of all military activities against Israel for a period of three months. However, this suspension was conditional on Israel ceasing its military raids and “targeted killings.” Israel dismissed this truce as a mere pretext for groups to rearm, despite the fact that the truce lasted for approximately seven weeks.

29 June - Talks were held between President Bush and Ariel Sharon at the White House.

25 July - Mahmoud Abbas visited Washington. During his meeting with President Bush he urged the President to condemn the Separation Barrier.

29 July - Ariel Sharon’s visit to Washington emphasised Israel’s resistance to demolishing the Separation Barrier. Sharon insisted in his meeting with President Bush that the Separation Barrier was essential for Israel’s security.

12 August - A Hamas-perpetrated “suicide” bombing killed one person in a Rosh Ha’ayin supermarket. A further “suicide” bombing at a bus stop outside the Ariel settlement killed two people.

14 August - Israeli forces assassinated Mohammed Seder, the head of Islamic Jihad in Hebron, despite the fact that the Palestinian truce was still being maintained.

19 August - A “suicide” bus bombing in Jerusalem killed twenty-three people and wounded over 130 people. In “response”, Israel vowed to target all Hamas leaders. Strict curfews were imposed in Nablus, Jenin and Tulkarem. The Nablus curfew lasted for over 100 days.

21 August - Israel launched a helicopter strike in Gaza that assassinated Hamas activist, Ismail Abu Shanab. Israeli forces also launched other widespread military raids throughout the West Bank that killed several other alleged Palestinian militants.

29 August - Ariel Sharon and his cabinet announced that Israel would cease all contact with the PA.

September - After two months of “diplomatic deadlock”, negotiations on the implementation of the “roadmap” collapsed. Thereafter, Israel undertook an “all-out war” against Palestinian militant groups and Yasser Arafat’s *Muqata* was targeted again by Israeli attacks (Bregman, 2005: 278).

6 September - The attempted Israeli assassination of the Spiritual Leader of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin failed.

6 September - Mahmoud Abbas resigned from his position as Palestinian Prime Minister.

7 September - An Israeli helicopter attack on the home of Hamas member Abdul Salem Abu Musa in the Gaza Strip, wounded twelve people.

8 September - Ahmed Ali Mohammed Qurei (Abu Ala) is appointed the new Palestinian Prime Minister.

9 September - Nine non-combatant Israeli soldiers were killed and over thirty wounded when a “suicide” bomber exploded in a bus stop near the military base of Tzrifin. Hamas claimed responsibility for the bombing.

9 September - Seven people were killed and over fifty people were wounded when a “suicide” bomb exploded at the Cafe Hillel in Jerusalem. Hamas claimed responsibility for the bombing.

10 September - A missile strike on the home of Hamas member, Mahmoud Zahar, in Gaza killed two people and injured over twenty-five people.

11 September - Ariel Sharon denounced Yasser Arafat as a “complete obstacle to peace.” Following the Israeli cabinet’s decision to “remove this obstacle in the manner and time, of our choosing” (Cited in: Bregman, 2005: 278-9), Israeli forces launched a further offensive against Arafat’s *Muqata*.

11 September - Sixteen houses were demolished by the IDF in the Yibna refugee camp in Rafah.

18 September - President Bush announced that “Arafat has failed as a leader” and that resolving the crisis depended on a “leadership of the PA emerging which will commit itself to a 100% effort to fight off terror” (Cited in: Usher, 2003b).

1 October - The Israeli government published the approved plan for the projected construction of the second stage of the Separation Barrier. The plan proposed extending the already-existing Separation Barrier (180 km) to approximately 680 km at a cost of US\$4.7 million per kilometer. The planned routes of the second stage of the Separation Barrier earmarked approximately 57% of the West Bank (or 153,000 acres), for enclosure within twelve separate enclaves (Milne, 2004). These planned routes also expropriated approximately 14.5% of the most fertile land in the West Bank, within which 275,000 Palestinians and sixty-three percent of the Jewish settler population reside. Therefore, it was estimated that the Separation Barrier would adversely affect the daily lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians (OCHA, 2003).

2 October - The Israeli government announced future settlement expansion plans that would involve the building of an additional 550 new homes and 273 apartments in the West Bank

(see: [http://www.nmhschool.org/tthorton/mehistorydatabase/intifada\\_2000.htm](http://www.nmhschool.org/tthorton/mehistorydatabase/intifada_2000.htm) (Accessed on 4 October 2004)).



4 October - A Palestinian woman committed a “suicide” attack in Haifa that killed twenty people and injured more than fifty people. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attack. President Bush denounced the attack as “despicable” and stated that it “underscores once again the responsibility of Palestinian authorities to fight terror, which remains the foremost obstacle to achieving the vision of two states living side by side in peace and security” (Cited in: *The Observer*, 5 October 2003).

5 October - Israel attacked an alleged militant training camp in Syria in “retaliation” for the Haifa “suicide” attack and as a “warning” that “terrorists” could not hide in harbouring countries (*The Guardian*, 6 October 2003).

9 October - Ahmed Ali Mohammed Qurei resigned as Palestinian Prime Minister allegedly because of differences between himself and Yasser Arafat regarding the cabinet’s powers and composition.

9-14 October - One of the largest Israeli military raids was undertaken in the city of Rafah in southern Gaza, purportedly aimed at searching for weapon-smuggling tunnels. These raids killed eight Palestinians, including two children, and left approximately 1,500 Palestinians homeless. The UN Secretary General Kofi Annan accused Israel of breaching international law through “disproportionate use of force” in civilian areas. Yasser Arafat’s aides called the raid a “war crime and a human tragedy” (Cited in: *The Guardian*, 11 October 2003).

19 October - Three Israeli soldiers were killed and two soldiers were injured after a roadside ambush south of Ofra in the West Bank.

20 October - Israel renewed its air strikes on Gaza in “response” to Palestinian militants’ firing of Qassam rockets at Israeli targets and the ambushing of three Israeli soldiers. The Gaza air strikes killed at least fourteen people and wounded nearly 100 people. Ariel Sharon declared that the attacks were part of the Israeli military’s attempts to “foil terror attacks, capture murderers and liquidate terror organisations.” He also reiterated his threat to “remove” Yasser Arafat as the “greatest obstacle to peace” (*The Guardian*, 21 and 22 October 2003).

21 October - The UNGA passed a resolution that declared that the Separation Barrier constituted a “contravention of international law” and demanded that the building of the Separation Barrier be immediately reversed.

12 November - Following a series of domestic political negotiations in the aftermath of the crisis engendered by his resignation on 9 October, Ahmed Ali Mohammed Qurei established a “reformed” government within the Palestinian territories.

18 November - The EU denounced the Separation Barrier as unjustifiably preventing the creation of a viable Palestinian state (*The Guardian*, 18 November 2003).

19 November - UNSCR 1515 which further endorsed the “roadmap” was passed unanimously.

23 November - The report to the UNGA by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan recognised Israel's "duty" to protect its citizens, but stated unequivocally that this "should not be carried out in a way that is in contradiction to international law, that could damage the longer-term prospects for peace by making the creation of an independent, viable and contiguous Palestinian state more difficult, or that increases the suffering among the Palestinian people" (Cited in: *The Guardian*, 29 November 2003).

24 November - Ariel Sharon stated that his government would implement a unilateral withdrawal if the "roadmap" failed to secure lasting peace.

26 November - Three Palestinian civilians were killed by the IDF in the Gaza Strip while they were travelling in a car.

December - Israeli military raids continued in the Palestinian territories, killing at least thirty Palestinians, more than half of whom were women, children or elderly people. A three-week long occupation of Nablus resulted in the killings of at least twenty people, including the assassination of two PFLP members.

1 December - The "Geneva Accord" negotiated by left-wing Israeli politicians and Palestinian politicians was formally publicised. However, it was rejected by Ariel Sharon.

8 December - UNGAR A/RES/ES 10/14 was passed requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legality of Israel's construction of the Separation Barrier inside the West Bank (Amnesty International, 2004b: 1).

18 December - Ariel Sharon announced that his government intended implementing a "unilateral security move of disengagement" from the Gaza Strip. Sharon stated that this plan would remove all Jewish settlements from the Gaza Strip and "at the same time... Israel will strengthen its control over those same areas in the Land of Israel, which will constitute an inseparable part of the State of Israel in any future agreement, [i.e. areas of the West Bank]" (Cited in: Bregman, 2005: 281).

The Gaza Disengagement Plan was implemented in 2005 and was widely interpreted as marking Israel's complete departure from the negotiated "two-state solution" approach. Instead, the Gaza Disengagement Plan was based on Israeli unilateralism and the "43 per cent solution." The plan also facilitated IDF withdrawal from the security quagmires of the Gaza Strip and eased international pressures on Israel to make territorial concessions to the Palestinians.

23 December - An Israeli army raid on the Rafah refugee camp killed eight Palestinians and injured forty-two.

25 December - After an Israeli air strike killed three Islamic Jihad activists and two civilians, the PFLP carried out the first "suicide" attack in almost three months, killing four people in Tel Aviv. The PFLP claimed that this was in "retaliation" for Israel's assassination of its Nablus members during the previous week.

## **2004**

3 January - The IDF killed three Palestinians, including a fifteen year-old boy, when they clashed with Palestinian stone throwers in Nablus.

5 January - Ariel Sharon addressed the Likud Central Committee re-affirming his intention to implement the Gaza Disengagement Plan, even in the face of the Central Committee's opposition.

14 January - Reem Al-Reyashi perpetrated the first Hamas-organised female "suicide" attack at the Erez border crossing, killing four Israelis.

28 January - Eight Palestinians were killed and several were wounded in a single Israeli army raid in the Al Zaytoon area of Gaza city.

29 January - The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades perpetrated a "suicide" bombing in Jerusalem, which resulted in ten deaths and over fifty injuries, purportedly in "retaliation" for Palestinian deaths incurred during Israeli raids.

January - February - Deadly clashes occurred in the Gaza Strip as Israel continued its military raids on "terrorist infrastructure", killing at least seventy people.

2 February - Yasser Abu al-Aesh, an alleged local leader of Islamic Jihad, was among four militants killed during an Israeli raid in the Rafah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

2 February - Ariel Sharon announced that Israel would dismantle Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip. This announcement was accompanied by a declaration of his government's intention to continue "for all eternity" to expand the remaining Israeli-controlled West Bank settlements.

11 February - Twelve Palestinian militants and civilians were killed in clashes with Israeli forces in the Al-Shojaeya neighbourhood in Gaza city. In Rafah refugee camp, one Palestinian civilian was killed by Israeli sniper fire. During the day more than fifty Palestinians were wounded, twenty-three of whom were children.

22 February - A "suicide" bus bombing in Jerusalem killed eight people and wounded sixty people. The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades claimed responsibility for the bombing.

24 February - The International Court of Justice began its hearings on the legality of the Separation Barrier.

28 February - Mahmoud Jhouda, a leader of Islamic Jihad in Gaza, another Islamic Jihad member and a relative of his, were killed when the car they were in was "targeted" by Israeli helicopter missile strikes.

Early March - Israel launched further lethal raids into Gaza, resulting in the deaths of at least ten members of Hamas and the Popular Resistance Committees (PRC), in addition to the wounding of over seventy Palestinian civilians. Israel defended the attacks as a “pinpoint strike” against the “terrorist infrastructure.” However, PA spokespersons claimed that Israel was committing “state terror against our people.”

7 March - An Israeli military raid on the refugee camps of Al Nusseirat and Al Burreij in the Gaza Strip killed fifteen Palestinians, including three children. This raid also wounded several people.

14 March - A double “suicide” attack at Ashdod port killed ten people and injured twenty people. In “response” Israeli government sources vowed to intensify their efforts to “eliminate” militant leaders in the Gaza Strip.

16 March - Heavy air strikes were launched in the Gaza Strip that killed at least six Palestinians and wounded twenty-seven Palestinians.

18 March - Four Palestinians, including two children, were killed during Israeli air strikes on Rafah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. Several more Palestinian civilians were also wounded.

21 March - Israel assassinated the Spiritual Leader of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.

25 March - The United States vetoed the UNSCR condemning Israel for killing Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.

7 April - A demonstration by Palestinians and international activists against the Separation Barrier was fired upon by Israeli soldiers. Twenty people were injured.

14 April - President Bush issued a statement welcoming the Disengagement Plan as consistent with the “roadmap” and as marking “real progress toward realizing the vision I set forth in June 2002” (Cited in: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/04/20040414-2.html> (Accessed on 4 July 2004)). President Bush’s accompanying letter to Ariel Sharon endorsed the Israeli perspective on Jewish settlements as “already existing major Israeli population centres” and, therefore, to be treated within any future peace agreement as “new realities on the ground.” President Bush also claimed that, “it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949” (Cited in: <http://www.mfa.gov.il> (Accessed on 14 January 2005)).

14 April - In response to President Bush’s statement, Downing Street welcomed the United States’ initiative. It called on the Quartet to grasp this opportunity to reinvigorate the “roadmap” and called on Israel to “now coordinate with the Palestinians on the detailed arrangements.” The statement also called on the PA to “show the political will to make the withdrawal from Gaza a success and to deliver on their roadmap responsibilities, especially regarding security” (Cited in: *The Guardian*, 15 April 2004).



14 April - EU political representatives voiced their opposition to unilateral changes in Israel's borders. President Jacques Chirac criticised President Bush's action as setting an "unfortunate and dangerous precedent" (Cited in: *The Guardian*, 16 April 2004).

14 April - Yasser Arafat declared that the Disengagement Plan would prompt a "cycle of violence and end all the signed agreements" between Israel and the Palestinians, because the United States' "assurances are being made at the expense of the Palestinian people and the Arab world without the knowledge of the legitimate Palestinian leadership. They are rewarding illegal occupation, settlement and the apartheid wall" (Cited in: Rabbo, 2004).

17 April - A joint Hamas and Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades "suicide" attack at Erez border crossing killed an Israeli border guard and wounded three others. In "response" to this attack, Israeli forces assassinated Abdel Aziz Rantissi, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin's successor as the leader of Hamas.

2 May - The Popular Resistance Committees (PRC) and Islamic Jihad killed five Israelis, including four children, during a shooting attack near the Kissufim checkpoint in the Gaza Strip.

2 May - The Likud party rejected Ariel Sharon's Disengagement plan.

11-12 May - A Palestinian militant attack in the Gaza Strip killed six Israeli soldiers. In "retaliation", the IDF launched two raids that killed over forty

Palestinians and wounded approximately 100 Palestinians. The raids also led to the demolition of hundreds of Palestinian homes and the displacement of thousands of people in Rafah and Gaza.

14 May - Two Israeli soldiers were killed and a further two soldiers were wounded by Palestinian sniper fire in the Rafah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

17 May - The UN Secretary General's office repeated its call on Israel to cease all "acts of collective punishment immediately and refrain from further grave violations of international law" (Cited in: Human Rights Watch, 2004a).

18 May - The IDF launched "Operation Rainbow", aimed at destroying the so-called "terrorist infrastructure" in Rafah. It was described as Israel's biggest military raid into the Gaza Strip since 1967.

19-24 May - The enforcement of "Operation Rainbow" continued, involving repeated bombardments of Rafah refugee camp, during which thirty-three Palestinians were killed. The IDF killed a further nine people when they opened fire on a peaceful protest in Rafah. "Operation Rainbow" also involved several mass arrests and interrogations (Human Rights Watch, 2004a).

19 May - The Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Brian Cowen condemned the "operation" in Rafah as completely disproportionate to any threat faced by the Israeli military, thus demonstrating a "reckless disregard for human life." He also stated that, "I would once again remind Israel, the occupying power, that the Fourth

Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war is fully applicable to the Gaza Strip” (Cited in: Human Rights Watch, 2004a).

6 June - The Israeli cabinet approved the first phase of the Disengagement Plan by a margin of 14 to 7 votes. The plan included a clause permitting increased Israeli settlement expansions in the West Bank (see: “Revised Disengagement Plan - Main Principles,” 6 June 2004, Article 8, Article 10).

9 July - The International Court of Justice issued its judgement that the Separation Barrier was illegal. This judgement was disregarded by Israel who declared its intention to continue with its construction by “re-routing” some sections of the Separation Barrier.

12 July - The UN Envoy Terje Roede Larsen issued a report that described Palestinian politics and society as being in chaos and crisis.

## APPENDIX 2

### SAMPLING INTERVALS

#### 1. LIST OF SAMPLES – DAILY NEWSPAPERS

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Year</u>
Monday	10	July	2000
Tuesday	8	August	2000
Wednesday	13	September	2000
Thursday	5	October	2000
Friday	17	November	2000
Saturday	2	December	2000
Monday	15	January	2001
Tuesday	6	February	2001
Wednesday	28	March	2001
Thursday	12	April	2001
Friday	25	May	2001
Saturday	2	June	2001
Monday	30	July	2001
Tuesday	14	August	2001
Wednesday	26	September	2001
Thursday	11	October	2001
Friday	23	November	2001
Saturday	8	December	2001
Monday	21	January	2002
Tuesday	5	February	2002

Wednesday	20	March	2002
Thursday	11	April	2002
Friday	17	May	2002
Saturday	8	June	2002
Monday	15	July	2002
Tuesday	27	August	2002
Wednesday	11	September	2002
Thursday	24	October	2002
Friday	8	November	2002
Saturday	21	December	2002
Monday	6	January	2003
Tuesday	11	February	2003
Wednesday	26	March	2003
Thursday	17	April	2003
Friday	2	May	2003
Saturday	14	June	2003
Monday	7	July	2003
Tuesday	26	August	2003
Wednesday	17	September	2003
Thursday	16	October	2003
Friday	14	November	2003
Saturday	27	December	2003
Monday	19	January	2004
Tuesday	3	February	2004
Wednesday	10	March	2004
Thursday	22	April	2004
Friday	7	May	2004
Saturday	19	June	2004
Monday	26	July	2004

## 2. LIST OF SAMPLES – SUNDAY NEWSPAPERS

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Year</u>
Sunday	9	July	2000
Sunday	6	August	2000
Sunday	10	September	2000
Sunday	22	October	2000
Sunday	26	November	2000
Sunday	3	December	2000
Sunday	7	January	2001
Sunday	11	February	2001
Sunday	11	March	2001
Sunday	15	April	2001
Sunday	27	May	2001
Sunday	24	June	2001
Sunday	1	July	2001
Sunday	26	August	2001
Sunday	2	September	2001
Sunday	21	October	2001
Sunday	4	November	2001
Sunday	9	December	2001
Sunday	20	January	2002
Sunday	17	February	2002
Sunday	24	March	2002
Sunday	14	April	2002
Sunday	26	May	2002
Sunday	2	June	2002

Sunday	28	July	2002
Sunday	25	August	2002
Sunday	29	September	2002
Sunday	13	October	2002
Sunday	24	November	2002
Sunday	22	December	2002
Sunday	5	January	2003
Sunday	2	February	2003
Sunday	16	March	2003
Sunday	20	April	2003
Sunday	4	May	2003
Sunday	15	June	2003
Sunday	6	July	2003
Sunday	24	August	2003
Sunday	14	September	2003
Sunday	12	October	2003
Sunday	2	November	2003
Sunday	28	December	2003
Sunday	18	January	2004
Sunday	29	February	2004
Sunday	28	March	2004
Sunday	18	April	2004
Sunday	23	May	2004
Sunday	6	June	2004
Sunday	11	July	2004

## APPENDIX 3

### **CODING DEFINITIONS, PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOL**

#### **1. MANIFEST CONTENT ANALYSIS – OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS AND CODING PROCEDURES**

**Variable 1:** The **unit of analysis** is the news item. Each unit is allocated a unique identification number to facilitate accurate codification and reliable retrieval of data.

**Variable 2:** The **day and date** of each unit is nominally coded.

**Variable 3:** The **location** of the news item within the newspaper is nominally coded as occurring within any of the following categories: front page, foreign/world/international news pages, feature pages, analysis/opinion pages, or editorial pages.

**Variable 4:** The news item is nominally coded as approximating one or other of the following types of **news format**: news “brief”, news report, analysis/opinion, editorial, or visual/cartoon format.

**Variable 5:** Coding the unit’s **narrative style** involves a general reading of the item to discern its approximation to an episodic narrative style, a thematic narrative style, or a mixture of episodic and thematic narrative styles.



**Variable 6:** The **length** of the news item is measured in terms of paragraphs.

**Variable 7:** The news item's **prominence** is coded by assessing the item's size, location, layout and display on the newspaper page, *relative to* and in *comparison with* the display of other items on the same page. News items that are accorded more space, accompanied by visuals, or located in central spaces of newspaper pages are, therefore, coded as more prominent than news items accorded minimal space and/or located at the bottom of the page.

**Variable 8:** The **source** of the news item (if any is attributed) is nominally coded as belonging to any of the following categories: foreign correspondents, newspaper-based journalists, feature writers, opinion columnists, editorial writers, international news agency sources, British or American newspaper syndication services. The attributed **author** (if any) is also nominally identified.

**Variable 9:** The news item's display of **topic(s)/subject matter(s)** is coded by undertaking readings of the macro-structure of the news item, such as the headline and lead features, in conjunction with readings of the news item's content. At the outset, it was predicted that a wide and diverse range of topics/subject matters would characterise coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the time-period selected for analysis. Therefore, the coding process permits the identification of up to three different topics/subject matters within each news item. Where new topics/subject matters emerge, especially in response to specific issues and events, the coding frame is amended to include those topics/subject matters.

**Variable 10:** This variable involves the coding of **assertions** that are attributed to sources within the news item. These assertions may be directly or indirectly quoted in the text, or they may be presented in paraphrased forms.

## 2. LIST OF VARIABLES EMPLOYED IN CODING ANALYSIS

### **Variable 1**    **Newspaper ID**

<i>The Irish Times</i>	IT
<i>Irish Independent</i>	II
<i>Sunday Independent</i>	SI
<i>Sunday Tribune</i>	ST

### **Variable 2**    **Day and Date**

### **Variable 3**    **Location in Newspaper**

1. Front page
2. Foreign/world/international news pages
3. Feature pages
4. Analysis/opinion pages
5. Editorial pages

### **Variable 4**    **Unit Format**

1. News “brief”
2. News report
3. Analysis/opinion
4. Editorial
5. Visual/cartoon/image (e.g: graphs or stand-alone photographs)

**Variable 5**      **Unit Narrative Style**

1. Primarily episodic narrative style
2. Mixed episodic and thematic narrative styles
3. Primarily thematic narrative style

**Variable 6**      **Unit Length**

1. 1-4 column paragraphs (“brief”)
2. 5-10 column paragraphs
3. 11-15 column paragraphs
4. 16-20 column paragraphs
5. Approx. ½ page
6. Approx. ¾ page
7. Full-page or more

**Variable 7**      **Unit Prominence**

1. Very prominent
2. Semi prominent
3. Not prominent

**Variable 8**      **Unit Source**

1.      *Foreign Correspondents*
  - 1.1      *The Irish Times* - David Horovitz
  - 1.2      *The Irish Times* - Michael Jansen
  - 1.3      *The Irish Times* - Peter Hirschberg
  - 1.4      *The Irish Times* - Deaglan de Breadun

- 1.5 *The Irish Times* - Lara Marlowe
- 1.6 *The Irish Times* - Hugh Schofield
- 1.7 *The Irish Times* - Paul Gillespie
- 1.8 *The Irish Times* - Washington correspondent
- 1.9 *The Irish Times* - European correspondent
- 1.11 *The Irish Times* - Diplomatic correspondent
- 1.12 *The Irish Times* - Other foreign correspondent
- 1.13 *Sunday Tribune* – Virginia Quirke
- 1.14 *Sunday Tribune* – David Pratt
- 1.15 *Sunday Tribune* – Marion McKeone
- 1.16 *Sunday Tribune* – Other correspondent
- 1.17 *Sunday Tribune* – Jessica McCallin
- 1.18 *Sunday Tribune* – Paul Kearns
- 1.19 *Sunday Tribune* – Richard Crowley
- 1.21 *The Irish Times* - London correspondent
- 1.22 *Sunday Independent* – Other correspondent

## **2. *General Journalists***

## **3. *Feature Writers/Opinion Columnists***

- 3.1 *Irish Independent/Sunday Independent* – Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien
- 3.2 *Sunday Independent* – Eoghan Harris

## **4. *Editorial Writers***

## **5. *AP International News Agency***

## **6. *AFP International News Agency***

## **7. *UPI International News Agency***

8. *Reuters International News Agency*
9. *Independent News Service*
10. *Combination of International News Agencies*
11. *Correspondents/Journalists Affiliated with British Newspapers*
  - 11.1 Robert Fisk (*Independent News Service*)
  - 11.2 Rupert Cornwell (*Independent News Service*)
  - 11.3 Alan Philips (*Daily Telegraph*)
  - 11.4 Inigo Gilmore (*Daily Telegraph*)
  - 11.5 Ohad Gozani (*Daily Telegraph*)
  - 11.6 Anton La Guardia (Diplomatic Editor, *Daily Telegraph*)
  - 11.7 Phil Reeves (*The Times, Independent News Service*)
  - 11.8 Stephen Farrell (*The Times*)
  - 11.9 Other (*Independent News Service*)
  - 11.11 Other (*The Times*)
  - 11.12 Other (*Daily Telegraph*)
12. *Cartoonist*
13. *Non-Affiliated News Source (Opinion Feature)*
14. *Other*
15. *Source of Unit Not Attributed*

**Variable 9**     **Topic(s)/Subject Matter(s) Present in Headline, Lead and Content of News Item**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Variable 10**     **Sources Quoted or Paraphrased (Directly or Indirectly)**

1. Israeli political actors, including the Israeli President, Prime Minister, government minister(s)/member(s), government spokesperson(s)/aide(s)/adviser(s)
2. Other Israeli political actors, including political opposition leader(s), Knesset member(s), Israeli-Arab political actor(s)
3. Israeli official(s)/security source(s)/“Israeli source(s)”
4. Israeli or foreign national peace activist(s)/demonstrator(s)
5. Israeli settler(s), Israeli Zionist/settler organisation(s), American Jewish/Zionist organisation(s)
6. Palestinian political actors, including Yasser Arafat, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), Ahmed Ali Mohammed Qurei (Abu Ala), PA/PLO/PLC member(s), PA spokesperson(s)/aide(s)/adviser(s)
7. Other Palestinian political actor(s)
8. Palestinian official(s)/security source(s)/“Palestinian source(s)”
9. Palestinian militant leader(s)/actor(s), eg: Hamas, Fatah, DFLP, PFLP, Islamic Jihad, Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades
10. Palestinian peace activist(s)/demonstrator(s)/stone-throwers
11. Jewish/Israeli civilian(s)/witness(es)/victim(s) of Palestinian violence, or relative(s) of victim(s)
12. Israeli-Arab civilian(s)/witness(es)/victim(s) of Israeli violence, or relative(s) of victim(s)
13. Palestinian civilian(s)/witness(es)/victim(s) of Israeli violence, or relative(s) of victim(s)

14. Arab political actor(s), including head(s) of state, governmental/official actor(s)/regional organisation(s)/leader(s)
15. United States political actor(s), including President, Vice-President, Secretary of State, Middle East Envoy, State Department official(s), other governmental actor(s)
16. Quartet, EU, or other European political/governmental/official actor(s)
17. UN leader(s)/representative(s), international NGO/human rights organisation(s)
18. Irish political actor(s), including the Taoiseach, government minister(s), or other governmental/official actor(s)
19. Palestinian Delegate General to Ireland
20. Israeli Envoy to Ireland, other international Israeli Envoy, Irish Envoy to Israel
21. Irish-Palestinian advocacy group
22. Irish-Jewish/Israeli advocacy group
23. Other Irish NGO leader(s)/spokesperson(s)
24. Jewish/Israeli academic(s)/expert(s)/commentator(s)
25. Arab/Palestinian academic(s)/expert(s)/commentator(s)
26. Other academic(s)/expert(s)/commentator(s)
27. Irish media/other international media
28. Israeli media
29. Arab/Palestinian media

**Variable 11   Does the News Item Display any Identifiable Frame(s) or Frame Component(s)?**

1. Yes
2. No

(If coded 1, the unit is included within the frame analysis. However, if coded 2, the unit is excluded from analysis)



**Variable 12   What Frame(s) are Displayed in the News Item?**

1. Meta Frame – *Law and Order/Terrorism*
2. Meta Frame – *Jewish Injustice/National Homeland*
3. Meta Frame – *Palestinian Injustice/Defiance*
4. Meta Frame – *Reconciliation/Dual Rights*
5. Meta Frame – *Nihilistic Violence/Warring Tribes*
6. Meta Frame - *Regional Stability/International Security*

**Variable 13   What Framing or Symbolic Device(s) are Displayed in the News Item?**

1. Metaphors .....
2. Historical Exemplars .....
3. Catchphrases.....
4. Depictions.....
5. Visual Images or Icons .....

**Variable 14   What Reasoning or Argumentative Device(s) are Displayed in the News Item?**

1. Roots, or causes of the conflict indicated .....
2. Consequences, outcomes, or solutions indicated.....
3. Appeals to principle indicated .....

### 3. CODING TOPICS/SUBJECT MATTERS – GROUPED CODING CATEGORIES

#### 1. Conflict/Political Violence Topics/Subject Matters

##### **101 Israeli military or physical force violence against Palestinians**

- 1/1 Israeli military strike(s), raid(s), “blockade(s)”, “incursion(s)”, “siege(s)” and re-occupation(s) of Palestinian area(s)
- 1/2 Israeli military strike(s) against PA headquarter(s)/official building(s) and or Palestinian security/police infrastructure
- 1/3 Israeli military strike(s) against Lebanese, Syrian, Iraqi “target(s)”
- 1/4 Israeli security force-perpetrated killing(s)/shooting(s)/beating(s) of Palestinian civilian(s)/demonstrator(s)/stone-thrower(s)
- 1/5 Israeli security force shooting(s)/beating(s)/arrest(s) of Israeli or foreign national peace activist(s)
- 1/6 Israeli “targeted assassination(s)” or attempted “assassination(s)” of Palestinian militant(s)/political leader(s)/security personnel
- 1/7 Israeli shooting(s)/beating(s)/arrest(s) of suspected or known Palestinian militant(s)
- 1/8 Israeli “security” operation(s) designed to prevent “suicide” or other Palestinian militant attack(s)

##### **102 Israel’s occupation of the Palestinian territories; the construction/ impact of Israeli settlements and/or the Separation Barrier**

- 1/12 The continuation/increase in illegal Israeli settlements within the Palestinian territories; the adverse human rights, socio-political and/or economic consequences of Israeli settlements
- 1/13 Clashes between Israeli settler/right-wing organisation(s) and Israeli security forces; the opposition of settler/right-wing organisation(s) to the “roadmap”, the “Gaza Disengagement Plan”, or other “peace” agreements

- 1/14 The adverse human rights, socio-political and/or economic consequences of Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories
- 1/15 Israel's plans to construct the Separation Barrier; the adverse human rights, socio-political and/or economic consequences of the Separation Barrier

**103 Palestinian militant violence against Israel**

- 1/20 "Suicide" attack(s) perpetrated by Palestinian militant group(s)
- 1/21 Armed or guerrilla-style attack(s) perpetrated by Palestinian militant group(s) on Israeli settler(s)/settlement(s)/security force personnel/Israeli political actor(s)
- 1/22 Armed or guerrilla-style attack(s) perpetrated by Palestinian militant group(s) on Israeli civilian(s)
- 1/23 Armed or guerrilla-style attack(s) perpetrated by Palestinian militant group(s) on foreign national(s) within the Palestinian territories

**104 *Intifada*-related Palestinian popular protests, civil resistance, or other demonstrations**

- 1/25 Palestinian "days of rage", civil resistance against Israeli occupation, popular demonstrations, general strikes, stone-throwing, protests demanding release of political prisoners, pro-Arafat protests
- 1/26 Palestinian demonstrations indicating support for Saddam Hussein or Osama Bin Laden

**105 Violence perpetrated by "both sides"**

- 1/17 The continuation of "fighting" perpetrated by "both sides", including inter-communal clashes in Jerusalem, West Bank and/or the Gaza Strip; the adverse socio-political and economic consequences of *intifada*-related violence; inter-communal Christian-Muslim or Christian-Jewish conflict

## **106 Israeli and/or international rhetorical condemnation of Palestinians**

- 1/9 Israel's rhetorical condemnation of Yasser Arafat/PA as a "terrorist entity"/"security threat"/"corrupt", autocratic government; Israel's attribution of blame for the continuation of violence to Yasser Arafat; the Israeli cabinet's votes to "remove" Yasser Arafat
- 1/10 Israel's rhetorical condemnation of neighbouring Arab State(s)/Iran as "fundamentalist" supporters of Palestinian "terrorism", or legitimate targets of the "war on terrorism"
- 1/38 Arab state(s) condemn the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)
- 1/39 The United States condemns the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)
- 1/40 The Quartet condemns the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)
- 1/41 British sources condemn the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)
- 1/42 French sources condemn the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)
- 1/43 German sources condemn the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)
- 1/44 The EU condemns the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)
- 1/45 Russian sources condemn the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)
- 1/46 The UN condemns the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)
- 1/47 International/Irish human rights organisation(s)/NGO(s) condemn the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)
- 1/48 The Irish government condemns the PA/Palestinian violence/"suicide" attack(s)

## **107 Palestinian and/or international rhetorical condemnation of Israel**

- 1/16 Palestinian leader(s)/actor(s) denounce Israeli-perpetrated violence and/or the role of the United States in supporting Israel; Palestinian political leader(s)/actor(s) call for an end to Israeli-perpetrated violence and re-occupation and/or declare Palestinian independence
- 1/27 Arab state(s) condemn Israel's political violence/military occupation.
- 1/28 The United States condemns Israel's political violence/military occupation
- 1/29 The Quartet condemns Israel's political violence/military occupation
- 1/30 British sources condemn Israel's political violence/military occupation

- 1/31 French sources condemn Israel's political violence/military occupation
- 1/32 German sources condemn Israel's political violence/military occupation
- 1/33 The EU condemns Israel's political violence/military occupation
- 1/34 Russian sources condemn Israel's political violence/military occupation
- 1/35 The UN condemns Israel's political violence/military occupation
- 1/36 International/Irish human rights organisation(s)/NGO(s) condemn Israel's political violence/military occupation
- 1/37 The Irish government condemns Israeli's political violence/military occupation

**108 Other conflict/political violence topics/subject matters**

- 1/18
- 1/19
- 1/49

## 2. Peace Topics/Subject Matters

### **201 Israeli-Palestinian relations – positive development(s)**

2/1 Positive development(s) resulting from efforts at securing and/or maintaining a ceasefire; the resumption and/or continuation of negotiations

### **202 Israeli-Palestinian relations – mixed development(s)**

2/2 Mixed development(s) - i.e. a mixture of both positive and negative developments, or unknown/inconclusive developments - in relation to efforts at securing and/or maintaining a ceasefire; the resumption and/or continuation of negotiations

### **203 Israeli-Palestinian relations – negative development(s)**

2/3 Negative development(s) resulting from efforts at securing and/or maintaining a ceasefire; the resumption and/or continuation of negotiations

### **204 An Israeli declarative commitment to peace**

2/4 Israeli political leader(s)/actor(s) declare their commitment to a ceasefire or negotiations; Israeli political leader(s)/actor(s) declare their willingness to compromise; Israeli political leader(s)/actor(s) call on Palestinians to show similar commitment(s)

### **205 A Palestinian declarative commitment to peace**

2/5 Palestinian political leader(s)/actor(s) and/or militant leader(s)/actor(s) declare their commitment to a ceasefire or negotiations; Palestinian leader(s)/actor(s) declare their willingness to compromise; Palestinian leader(s)/actor(s) denounce “terror”/“suicide” attack(s) and/or agree to arrest militants; Palestinian leader(s)/actor(s) call on Israel to show similar

commitment(s); Palestinian leader(s)/actor(s) suspend the intention to declare unilateral statehood

**206 Israel's stance and/or the United States' stance – presented as rejectionist**

2/6 Israeli political leader(s)/actor(s) reject a Palestinian offer of a ceasefire; Israeli political leader(s)/actor(s) reject, or set pre-conditions for returning to negotiations; Israeli political leader(s)/actor(s) oppose troop redeployments or withdrawals

2/17 Israel's opposition and/or the United States' opposition to Palestinian prisoner releases or immunity

**207 The Palestinian stance – presented as rejectionist**

2/7 Palestinian political leader(s)/actor(s) reject, or set pre-conditions for returning to negotiations; Palestinian political leader(s)/actors(s) refuse to denounce violence against Israel

2/8 Palestinian militant organisation(s) refuse, oppose, or break ceasefire

**208 Coverage of peace “events”**

2/9 Camp David Summit (July 2000)

2/10 Paris/Sharm el Sheikh Talks (October 2000)

2/11 Taba Negotiations (January 2001)

**209 The United States-sponsored “roadmap”**

2/12 Discussion of the Middle East “roadmap”

2/13 The role of the United States in Israel and the Palestinian territories and/or the Middle East; the impact of the United States' foreign policies on Israel and the Palestinian territories and/or the Middle East

**210 Comparative discussions of the “peace process”**

2/14 Comparison/contrast of the Middle East conflict/“peace process”/“roadmap” with the Northern Ireland conflict/“peace process”

2/15 Comparison/contrast of the Middle East “peace process” with the present-day situation in South Africa

**211 The Gaza Disengagement Plan**

2/16 Discussion of Israel’s Gaza Disengagement Plan

**212 Peace initiatives from Israeli/Palestinian peace movements or civil society**

2/18 The Geneva Accords

2/19 Israeli peace movement/Israeli civil society-led peace initiative(s)/conscientious objectors

2/20 Palestinian peace movement/Palestinian civil society-led peace initiative(s)



### 3. International Political-Diplomatic Topics/Subject Matters

#### **301 Arab-Led Diplomacy**

3/1 Arab League Summit; Arab-led diplomatic developments

#### **302 United States-led diplomacy**

3/2 United States-led visits to Israel and/or the Palestinian territories; United States-led diplomatic developments

#### **303 International/European-led Diplomacy**

3/3 Quartet-led diplomacy/diplomatic developments

3/4 British-led diplomacy/diplomatic developments

3/5 French-led diplomacy/diplomatic developments

3/6 German-led diplomacy/diplomatic developments

3/7 EU-led diplomacy/diplomatic developments

3/8 Russian-led diplomacy/diplomatic developments

3/9 UN-led diplomacy/diplomatic developments

#### **304 Irish Diplomacy**

3/10 Irish official visits to Israel and/or the Palestinian territories; other Irish diplomatic developments; the impact of Ireland's role as president of the European Union (2004)

3/27 Ireland-Israel relations

3/37 Ireland-Palestinian relations

3/46 The Jewish Community in Ireland

#### **305 Other diplomatic developments**

3/11 Other diplomatic developments

**306 Israeli regional relations**

3/12 Israel-Jordan relations

3/13 Israel-Egypt relations

3/14 Israel-Syria relations

3/15 Israel-Lebanon relations

3/16 Israel-Saudi Arabia relations

3/17 Israel-Iraq relations

3/18 Israel-Iran relations

**307 Israel-United States relations**

3/19 Israel-United States relations

**308 Israeli international relations**

3/20 Israel-Quartet relations

3/21 Israel-Britain relations

3/22 Israel-France relations

3/23 Israel-Germany relations

3/24 Israel-EU relations

3/25 Israel-Russia relations

3/26 Israel-UN relations

**309 Palestinian regional relations**

3/28 Palestinian-Arab relations

**310 Palestinian-United States relations**

3/29 Palestinian-United States relations

3/38 Arab/"Middle East"- United States relations

- 3/41 The impact of the United States-led invasion of Iraq (2003) on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the role of the United States in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict against the background of the invasion of Iraq
- 3/43 The United States' veto of UN resolution(s)
- 3/44 The United States' capture of Abu Abbas in Iraq; the death of Abu Abbas

### **311 Palestinian/Arab States international relations**

- 3/30 Palestinian-Quartet relations
- 3/31 Palestinian-Britain relations
- 3/32 Palestinian-France relations
- 3/33 Palestinian-Germany relations
- 3/34 Palestinian-EU relations
- 3/35 Palestinian-Russia relations
- 3/36 Palestinian-UN relations
- 3/39 Arab state(s)-EU relations
- 3/40 Arab state(s)-UN relations
- 3/42 Passage of UNSCR or UNGAR resolutions on Israel and the Palestinian territories

### **312 Relationship of international media to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict**

- 3/45 The influence of international media and foreign correspondent(s) on the dynamics/outcomes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

#### 4. Domestic Israeli Topics/Subject Matters

##### **401 Elections, party leadership contests, inter-party issues/divisions, cabinet decisions, etc**

- 4/1 Internal differences, or power struggles within the Labour Party; Ehud Barak's loss of support from the Labour party/government coalition partners
- 4/2 Internal differences, or power struggles within the Likud party; Ariel Sharon's loss of support from the Likud party/government coalition partners
- 4/3 Profile of Ehud Barak's leadership
- 4/4 Profile of Ariel Sharon's leadership
- 4/5 Israeli elections
- 4/6 Inter-party negotiations on forming a coalition government; the appointment of a new Israeli Prime Minister
- 4/7 Government cabinet meeting(s), or cabinet vote(s) on Israel's policies in the Palestinian territories

##### **402 Trends in Israeli public opinion – the socio-political impact of the *intifada* on Israel**

- 4/8 Continuing/increasing public support for military strikes/"war on terror"/"assassination" policy against Palestinian "targets"
- 4/9 Continuing/increasing public support for security force withdrawals/negotiations/"compromise"
- 4/10 Decreasing public support for security force withdrawals/negotiations/"compromise"
- 4/11 Continuing/increasing public support for the Ehud Barak-led government, or the Labour Party
- 4/12 Decreasing public support for the Ehud Barak-led government, or the Labour Party
- 4/13 Continuing/increasing public support for the Ariel Sharon-led government, or the Likud party

- 4/14 Decreasing public support for the Ariel Sharon-led government, or the Likud party
- 4/17 The political or socio-economic consequences of continuing the military occupation of the Palestinian territories; the impact or consequences of the *intifada* for Israeli politics and society
- 403 Newspaper interview with Israeli political actor(s)**
- 4/16 Journalist-originated interview with Israeli political actor(s)
- 404 Other Domestic Israeli topic/subject matter**
- 4/15 The release of Mordechai Vanunu after serving an 18-year prison sentence for disclosing information regarding Israel's "secret" nuclear program
- 4/18 Other domestic public or political issue that is unrelated to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

## 5. Domestic Palestinian Topics/Subject Matters

### **501 Domestic Palestinian political violence**

5/1 Palestinian “collaborator” killing(s)

### **502 Elections, party leadership contests, inter-party issues/divisions, cabinet decisions, political “reforms,” etc**

5/2 The Palestinian Authority’s implementation of arrest(s) of suspected or known militant(s) and/or suppression by force of Palestinian demonstration(s)/protest(s); the Palestinian Authority’s effort(s) to negotiate or maintain a ceasefire

5/3 Profile of Yasser Arafat’s leadership

5/4 Internal differences, or power struggles within the PA, the PLO and/or Fatah

5/5 Changes in Palestinian ministerial cabinet or security force leadership

5/6 The implementation of PA reforms, including plans for future elections

5/7 The appointment of Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) as Prime Minister

5/8 The appointment of Ahmed Ali Mohammed Qurei (Abu Ala) as Prime Minister

### **503 Trends in Palestinian public opinion; the impact of the *intifada*/Israel’s militarization of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the impact of Israel’s re-occupation of Palestinian areas**

5/9 Decreased public support for the PA; PA “corruption” and/or human rights abuse(s)

5/10 Continuing/increasing public support for Hamas

5/11 Continuing/increasing public support for the *intifada* or uprising

### **504 Newspaper interview with Palestinian political/militant actor(s)**

5/12 Journalist-originated interview with Palestinian political/militant actor(s)

**505 Other Domestic Palestinian topic/subject matter**

5/13 Other domestic public or political issue that is unrelated to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

## APPENDIX 4

### SIGNATURE MATRIX OF FRAME INDICES

	<b>Table 4.1</b>
<b>Meta Frame</b>	<i>Law and Order/Terrorism</i> <sup>14</sup>
<b>Package</b>	Political Violence/"Palestinian Terrorism"
<b>Frame and Positions</b>	The key issue is the threat posed to Israel by Palestinian violence. The suffering of innocent Israelis is morally reprehensible and completely unjustified.
	Israel's military force is entirely reactive to Palestinian "terrorism." Charges that this force is disproportionate and excessive "state terror" are denied. "Pre-emptive" and "retaliatory" strikes are essential to defeat the "terrorist threat" and restore order in the Palestinian territories. Israeli "defensive" violence is also justified retribution for "terrorism."
	Israel's reluctant resort to the threat of asymmetrical military force is politically essential, as it alone guarantees Israel's security. It is only when chinks appear in Israel's military armor that Palestinians increase their "terrorism."
	Israel is willing to negotiate a just and lasting peace. However, intransigent and uncompromising Palestinians consistently reject Israel's "concessions."
	Arab states still have vital interests in eliminating the state of Israel, displayed by their support of Palestinian violence. "Enemy" states that "harbour terrorists" include Syria, Iraq and Iran.
	Israel represents the "free world" and "liberal democracy" within the Middle East, but is surrounded by "repressive" and "authoritarian" Arab states. Therefore, Israel is the only natural ally of "western" states that have vital and strategic interests in the Middle East.
	The "special" relationship between Israel and the United States is strengthened by the similarities that pertain between the two countries.

<sup>14</sup> See: Wolfsfeld, 1997: 146.



	Particularly, Palestinian “terrorism” threatens Israeli security in the same way as “Islamic terrorism” threatens American security.
<b>Metaphors</b>	Palestinian violence as a “time-bomb”, Arafat as “Israel’s bin Laden”, Israel’s fight against terrorism as “Israel’s September 11 <sup>th</sup> .”
<b>Historical Exemplars</b>	The Arab-Israeli Wars (1947-1949, 1967, 1973), Palestinian “terrorist” attacks, Palestinian support for Saddam Hussein in 1990, The “terrorist” attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, The “collapse” of the Camp David Summit (July 2000), The “outbreak” of the second Palestinian <i>intifada</i> (September 2000).
<b>Catchphrases</b>	“No prizes for violence”, “Death of Oslo”, “War on terrorism”, “No Palestinian partner for peace.”
<b>Depictions</b>	The PLO as a “terrorist” organisation, Palestinians as volatile, violent, intransigent, uncompromising, anti-Semitic, hypocritical (i.e. expressing a desire for peace, yet still harbouring intentions to destroy Israel), Arab states as hostile, belligerent or aggressive towards Israel, Israel as a “free”, “liberal democracy” that is pressured into adopting “defensive” military policies.
<b>Visual Images</b>	The aftermath of “suicide” bombs, Palestinian protests/demonstrations, masked and/or armed Palestinians, Palestinians burning Israeli/United States’ flags.
<b>Roots</b>	The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is caused by the Arab threat to annihilate Israel and/or their refusal to recognise the existence of the state of Israel, Anti-Semitism.
<b>Consequences</b>	Increased Palestinian “terrorism” and escalations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
<b>Appeals to Principles</b>	“National security”, “counter-terrorism” and anti-insurgency doctrines, Principles of “law and order.”

	<b>Table 4.2</b>
<b>Meta Frame</b>	<i>Jewish Injustice/National Homeland</i>
<b>Package</b>	Jewish Injustice/Jewish Nationalism
<b>Frame and Positions</b>	The Jewish people have inalienable rights to a national “homeland” in historic Palestine because of the biblical covenant given by God to the Jewish people and because Jewish people inhabited Palestine over 2,000 years ago.
	The Jewish people constitute a national people, as a result of their shared ethno-religious identity and common historical ancestry.
	The Jewish “homeland” can <i>only</i> be in Palestine. In contrast, Palestinians can have a “homeland” in Jordan because Jordan has a substantial Palestinian population, or they can have a “homeland” in any of the Arab countries, because they are also an Arabic people.
	The socio-economic and political modernisation of Israel is due to the resources and skills of Jewish immigrants and settlers.
	The state of Israel is an internationally recognised state, whose legitimacy stems from the 1947 United Nations Partition Plan. Moreover, since the state’s establishment, the Jews have earned absolute entitlements to live within Israel, symbolised by the “Jewish” character of the state.
	A Jewish state is required in Israel because of the worldwide oppression of Jews and the imperative to prevent any future mass persecution.
	The Palestinian people’s refusal to accept the Jewish “homeland” is anti-Semitic.
<b>Metaphors</b>	Masada, Palestinians as the modern-day equivalent of Nazis, Yasser Arafat as the modern-day Hitler.
<b>Historical Exemplars</b>	The Dreyfus Affair, Pogroms against Jewish communities in Eastern Europe and Russia, The Holocaust or Shoah.
<b>Catchphrases</b>	The Jewish people as a “people without a land”, Jerusalem as the “eternal and indivisible Jewish capital”,

	<p>“Never Again”,          Jewish immigration as the “ingathering of the exiles.”</p>
<b>Depictions</b>	<p>Israel as the divine and historic “homeland” for all Jewish people and the Palestinian territories as <i>Eretz Israel</i>,          Zionism as a “national liberation movement”,          International, regional and Palestinian oppositions to Israel’s policies as “anti-Semitic.”</p>
<b>Visual Images</b>	<p>The Temple Mount/the Western Wall,          Jewish ethno-religious iconography,          The Swastika and other Shoah-related imagery.</p>
<b>Roots</b>	<p>The roots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lie in the anti-Semitism of the Arab states and the Palestinian people. The conflict is a further manifestation of Jewish persecution.</p>
<b>Consequences</b>	<p>Securing the survival of a majority Jewish state in Israel and continuing the illegal occupation of <i>Eretz Israel</i>.</p>
<b>Appeals to Principles</b>	<p>Principles of national self-determination and “state protection”,          Zionist political philosophy,          Biblical references to the Jewish “homeland.”</p>

	<b>Table 4.3</b>
<b>Meta Frame</b>	<i>Palestinian Injustice/Defiance</i> <sup>15</sup>
<b>Package</b>	Palestinian Nationalism
<b>Frame and Positions</b>	Israel must cease its illegal occupation of Palestinian lands and its “oppressive” domination of the Palestinian people. The occupation is the cause of mass Palestinian suffering. The disproportionately higher numbers of Palestinians killed illustrates the “brutality” and “aggression” of the Israeli occupation.
	The fulfilment of Palestinian national and political rights, epitomised by the future establishment of a “viable” and “independent” state is the only basis for a “just and lasting” settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
	Palestinians are engaged in a legitimate “resistance”, or “liberation” struggle against the “injustice” of Israeli military “aggression.”
	Palestinian support for “suicide” attacks demonstrates the desperation and hopelessness of an entire people. “Suicide” attacks are the only means of “self-defence” available to Palestinians, while also constituting a form of religious “martyrdom” and national “sacrifice.”
	The United States’ intervention in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is wholly biased towards Israel. The United States is an “imperialist” superpower interested only in furthering its “colonial” ambitions in the region. Israel is the “client state” of the United States and receives enormous monetary support to suppress Palestinian nationalism and to prevent the emergence of an independent Palestinian state.
	The Israeli occupation is unjust and illegal under international law. Therefore, any just and legal resolution of the conflict must implement UNSCR 242 and 338. The United States’ vetoes of several UNSCR’s are unfair and hypocritical.
	Israeli-Palestinian negotiations need to be conducted within a “balanced” and “fair” international framework. This framework

<sup>15</sup> See: Wolfsfeld, 1997: 146.

	contrasts to the United States-led bilateral approach that favours Israel's positions.
	The UN and EU are morally obliged to "balance" the power disparities that characterise Israeli-Palestinian relations by pressuring Israel and the United States to address Palestinian grievances.
<b>Metaphors</b>	The <i>intifada</i> as <i>the</i> metaphor of Palestinian popular resistance, Palestinian David against Israeli Goliath, Palestinians as the "underdog", Dome of the Rock and Palestinian flag as nationalistic metaphors, "Suicide" bombers as revolutionary "martyrs", "Children of the stones" or <i>Shebab</i> , as metaphors for the popularity of the Palestinian "struggle" and the poverty/weakness of the Palestinian people vis-à-vis Israeli military might, Zionism as "cancer", The Gaza Strip as an "open air prison", The West Bank as "apartheid-like Bantustans", or "Swiss cheese", The Separation Barrier as an "apartheid wall."
<b>Historical Exemplars</b>	The Palestinian uprising in 1936, Deir Yassin (during the Arab-Israeli War of 1947-1949), "Apartheid" in South Africa, The Sabra and Shatila massacres in September 1982, The massacre of Palestinians at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron (February 1994).
<b>Catchphrases</b>	"Day of Rage", "Allah is great", "To hell or to Gaza."
<b>Depictions</b>	The Palestinians as victims fighting for their legitimate national rights, Israel as an illegal occupier, Israelis as colonial settlers and/or imperial racists, who strongly resist fair negotiations with the Palestinians, Yasser Arafat as a revolutionary leader.
<b>Visual Images</b>	Palestinian youths throwing stones at Israeli tanks,

	<p>Israeli security forces beating Palestinian protestors,          Palestinian deaths and casualties that are caused by Israeli military raids,          Yasser Arafat “under siege”,          Palestinians queuing at Israeli checkpoints,          The Separation Barrier between the West Bank and Israel.</p>
<b>Roots</b>	<p>The cause of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is Israel’s illegal and unjust occupation and continued expansion in the Palestinian territories.</p>
<b>Consequences</b>	<p>Palestinians will eventually achieve their “inalienable right” to “self-determination” and “independent statehood”, as Israel cannot indefinitely refuse to reach a settlement with the Palestinian people. The “two-state solution” will be the negotiated outcome of the conflict because Israel’s illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories is untenable in the long term.</p>
<b>Appeals to Principles</b>	<p>International Human Rights law and UN Resolutions,          Principles of national “self-determination”, “liberation”, “justice” and “equality.”</p>

	<b>Table 4.4</b>
<b>Meta Frame</b>	<i>Reconciliation/Dual Rights</i>
<b>Package</b>	Conflict Management/Resolution
<b>Frame and Positions</b>	A just peace that protects the rights of <i>both</i> Palestinians and Israelis is possible and desirable.
	Israeli and Palestinian violence continue because of the failure of “both sides” to reconcile and/or the failure of conflict resolution processes.
	All political actors must strive to reach a peaceful resolution of the conflict, thereby winning the battle against “terrorism.”
	The costs of political violence are so high that all efforts are required to reach agreement through compromises and trust/confidence-building measures.
	The political struggles between the Israeli “peace” and “anti-peace” camps and struggles between Palestinian “moderates” and “extremists” constrain Israeli and Palestinian “peacemakers.”
	Both Israel and the Palestinians must make “concessions” to forge a peace agreement based on equal recognition of the rights of “both sides.”
	The biggest threat to peace is the “extremists” on “both sides” and the escalation of violence to levels where it is the <i>only</i> response available to Palestinian militants and the Israeli security forces.
	The “risks for peace” taken by Israeli leaders must be reciprocated by greater Palestinian recognition of Israeli security needs and vice versa.
	The “international community” can play an important mediation role in brokering negotiations and providing the socio-economic and political environment required for peace and prosperity.
<b>Metaphors</b>	Dove, Olive branch, Clasped hands.
<b>Historical Exemplars</b>	The signing of the Oslo Accords in September 1993, The signing of the Oslo-related agreements (1994 to 1999),

	<p>The “end of Apartheid” in South Africa,</p> <p>The “success” of the Northern Ireland “peace process.”</p>
<b>Catchphrases</b>	<p>“There is room for both peoples within the holy land,”</p> <p>“Give peace a chance,”</p> <p>“Working towards peace together,”</p> <p>“Strengthening the middle ground,”</p> <p>“No to ‘extremism’ on both sides,”</p> <p>“Peace brings prosperity,”</p> <p>“Peace equals security,”</p> <p>“Securing the peace of the brave.”</p>
<b>Depictions</b>	<p>The PLO/PA and Israel as “negotiating partners”,</p> <p>The PLO/PA as a moderate and reformist political organisation that is willing to recognise Israel’s right to exist in peace and security,</p> <p>Israel as willing to “compromise” with the Palestinians,</p> <p>Israel and the PLO/PA as committed to implementing a “just and lasting” peace that jointly fulfils Israeli and Palestinian human rights.</p>
<b>Visual Images</b>	<p>The handshake between Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin on 13 September 1993,</p> <p>“Peace ceremonies.”</p>
<b>Roots</b>	<p>The roots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lie in the historic situation whereby two peoples with competing, yet equally legitimate claims to the same land found themselves locked within recurring conflicts.</p>
<b>Consequences</b>	<p>Both Israelis and Palestinians will eventually live in “peaceful coexistence”, either within the “two-state” or “bi-national state” framework.</p>
<b>Appeals to Principles</b>	<p>UN Resolutions calling for a “just and lasting peace”,</p> <p>Principles of conflict management and conflict resolution,</p> <p>Principles of self-determination and equality for all peoples.</p>



	<b>Table 4.5</b>
<b>Meta Frame</b>	<i>Nihilistic Violence/Warring Tribes</i>
<b>Package</b>	The key issue is that innocent people from “both sides” are dying needlessly in vicious, self-perpetuating cycles of violence and inter-communal hatred.
<b>Frame and Positions</b>	The Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues because “both sides” consistently fail to cease their violence towards the “other” and to reconcile their ethno-religious differences in a civilised and normal way.
	The gulf of hatred between Israelis and Palestinians is so wide and historically intractable that it is unlikely that peace can be achieved.
	Both Israelis and Palestinians are hell-bent on destroying each other. Thus, any attempts to forge a peace agreement are futile and international actors should not become involved as mediators.
	The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a senseless conflict, fuelled by “tit-for-tat” brutality from “both sides.” There is no political rationale underlying the conflict.
	Neither the Israelis nor the Palestinians are genuinely committed to peace. Instead, both parties are too pre-occupied with attributing blame and/or seeking retribution for the most recent cycles of violence.
	Both sides are too obsessed with the perceived injustices of history.
	Past peace agreements between Israel and the Palestinians have only been a travesty of peace.
	Moral culpability rests with both sides. Neither side deserves our support or empathy. Neither the Israelis nor the Palestinians have <i>justice</i> on their side. Both sides have foregone any claim to the legitimacy or rightness of their “cause.”
	It is ironic that such hatred and enmity occurs in the “holy land.”
<b>Metaphors</b>	Family quarrel, Blood feud, Greek tragedy.

<b>Historical Exemplars</b>	The Arab-Israeli Wars (1947-1949, 1967, 1973), <i>Intifada</i> -related violence, Palestinian “suicide” attacks, Historic Israeli invasions of the Palestinian territories and IDF-perpetrated killings of Palestinians.
<b>Catchphrases</b>	“A Plague on both your houses”, “Cycle of violence”, “Descent into the abyss”, “Tit-for-tat fighting”, “Eye-for-an-eye”, “Deadlock.”
<b>Depictions</b>	Innocent Israeli and Palestinian civilians as the primary victims, “Both sides” as aggressors, Violence as futile and irrational.
<b>Visual Images</b>	Scenes of human suffering and loss, e.g. grieving relatives at gravesides, Scenes of property destruction caused by Israeli missile strikes or Palestinian “suicide” attacks.
<b>Roots</b>	The cause of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the dysfunctional relations that exist between Israelis and Palestinians. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is also a symptom of the dysfunctional politics of the Middle East region.
<b>Consequences</b>	It is most likely that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will escalate, resulting in ongoing deteriorations in Israeli-Palestinian relations and increased atrocities by “both sides.” Given the regressive nature of Israeli-Palestinian politics, it is unlikely that a negotiated settlement can be achieved. Instead, the conflict will descend into an all-out-war situation, or even a regional Israeli-Arab confrontation.
<b>Appeals to Principles</b>	Principles of rationality, reasonableness, mutual trust, or sense of compromise and fairness.

	<b>Table 4.6</b>
<b>Meta Frame</b>	<i>Regional Stability/International Security</i>
<b>Package</b>	The key issue is the consequences that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has for political stability in the Middle East region and for international relations.
<b>Frame and Positions</b>	The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a strategically significant conflict, as it impacts on the political situation that pertains in the Euro-Mediterranean region and in the arena of international relations.
	The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the “core” political problem of the Middle East region. There is an ever-present danger that the conflict will “spill over” into other Arab countries or the Euro-Mediterranean region.
	The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has the capacity to create tension between Europe and countries in the Middle East and between the United States and countries in the Middle East.
	The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a “running sore” of “East/West” relations and relations between the “Muslim world” and the “Christian world.”
	The “international community” has political, strategic and moral interests in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A “comprehensive” regional settlement is required to enhance international security.
	The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has international significance because it directly affects the vital or strategic interests of the United States and Europe.
<b>Metaphors</b>	Time-bomb, Uncontrollable fire.
<b>Historical Exemplars</b>	The Suez Canal Crisis in 1956, Cold War-based divisions, The Arab oil Embargo in 1973, Israel’s invasions of Lebanon in 1978 and 1982, Funding by Iran and Syria of Palestinian militant groups,

	The first Persian Gulf War in 1991, The United States-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.
<b>Catchphrases</b>	“Clash of civilisations”, “Spill-over” effects, “Regional volatility.”
<b>Depictions</b>	The “international community”, particularly the United States and the EU as “peace” brokers in the Middle East region and in the arena of Israeli-Palestinian relations, The Israeli-Palestinian conflict as threatening regional peace and the politico-economic security of the international world order.
<b>Visual Images</b>	Leaders or representatives from the United States, the EU and/or the Arab States engaged in Israeli-Palestinian diplomacy.
<b>Roots</b>	The origins of the present-day conflict between Israel and the Palestinians lie in the Arab-Israeli Wars of 1947-1949 and June 1967. Since 2000, the conflict has escalated because of the repeated failures of Israel and the Palestinians to implement a “comprehensive” regional peace. The escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since 2000 is also a reflection of the failure of the Middle East policies adopted by the United States and the EU.
<b>Consequences</b>	If the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not resolved by the intervention of the “international community”, there is an ongoing danger that the conflict would precipitate a regional war. Israel’s ongoing occupation of the Palestinian territories will also continue to represent a “threat” to global peace and security because it fuels the growth of “Islamic fundamentalism” and “international terrorism.”
<b>Appeals to Principles</b>	Principles of “international law” and “global security”, Principles related to the “responsibility” of the “international community” to “manage”/“mediate”/“resolve” the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

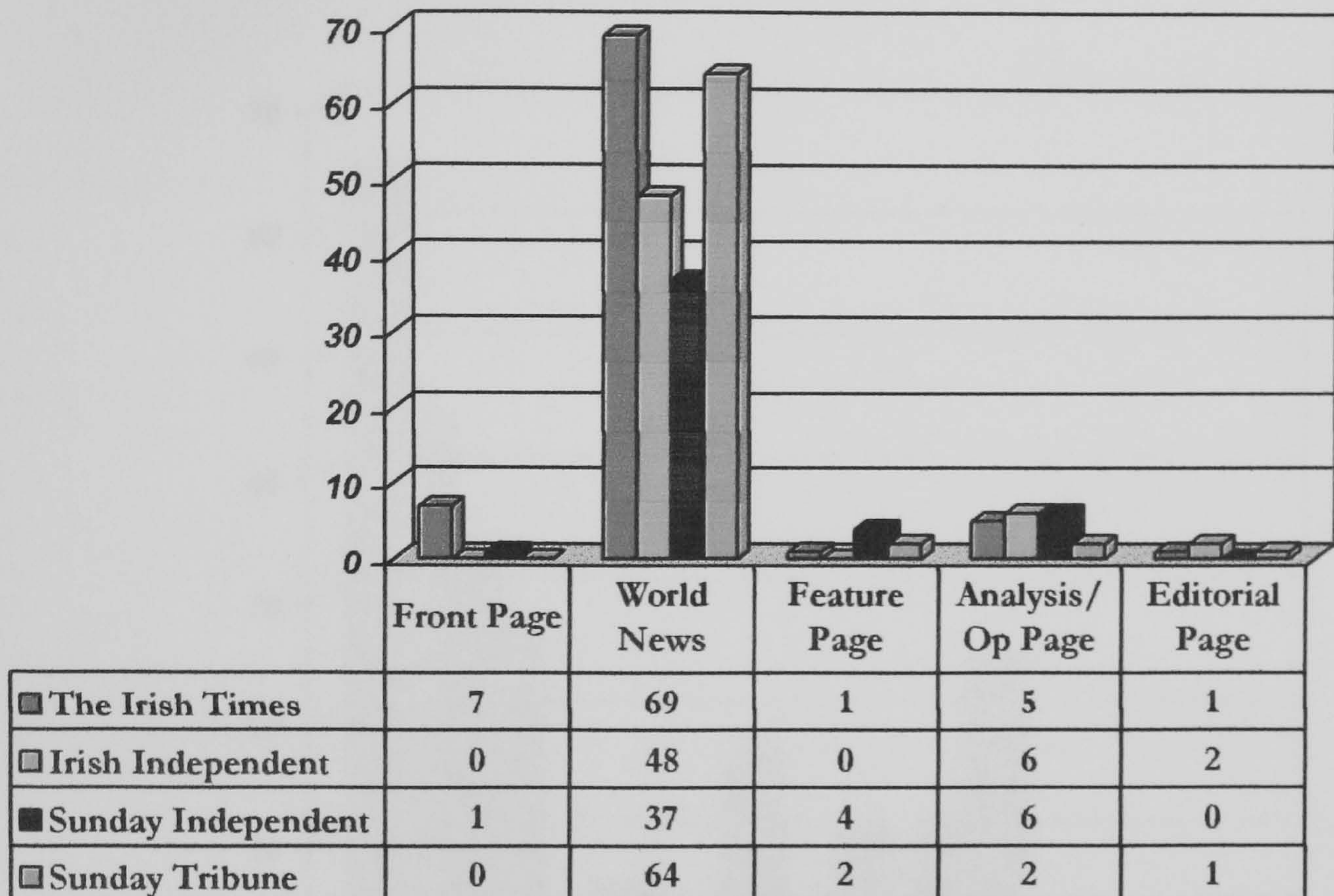
## APPENDIX 5

### STATISTICAL FINDINGS OF DESCRIPTIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS AND FRAME ANALYSIS

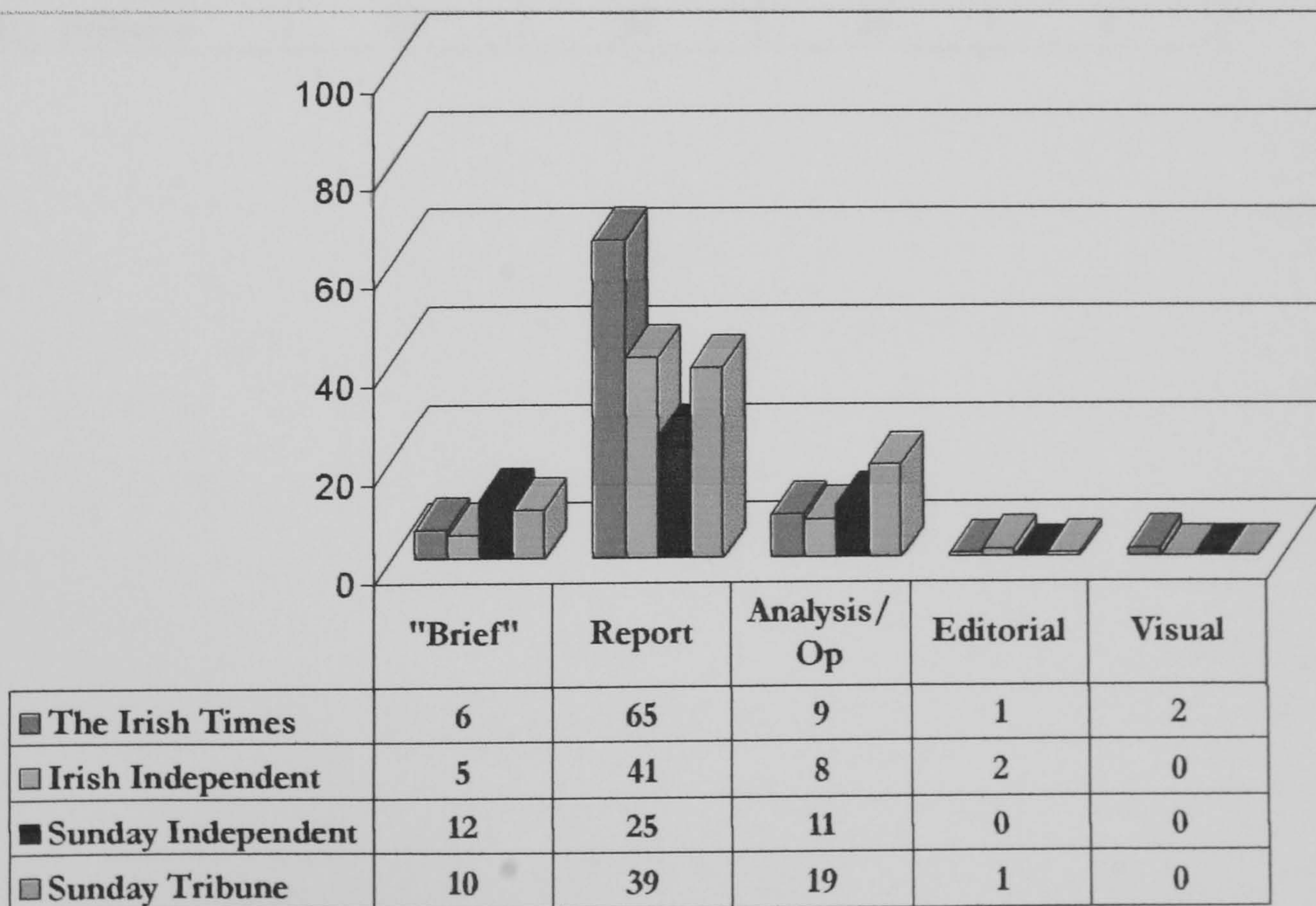
**Table 5.1: Source of News Items by Newspaper (July 2000 to July 2004)**

Source of News Item	<i>The Irish Times</i>	<i>Irish Independent</i>	<i>Sunday Independent</i>	<i>Sunday Tribune</i>
David Horovitz	22	---	---	---
Michael Jansen	9	---	---	---
Peter Hirschberg	18	---	---	---
Deaglan De Breadun	9	---	---	---
Lara Marlowe	3	---	---	---
Conor Cruise O'Brien	---	3	4	---
Eoghan Harris	---	---	4	---
Paul Kearns	---	---	---	16
Virginia Quirke	---	---	---	9
Richard Crowley	---	---	---	1
David Pratt	---	---	---	3
Jessica McCallin	---	---	---	3
London-based Correspondent	2	---	---	---
United States-based Editor/Correspondent	3	---	---	5
Other Foreign Correspondent	5	---	---	---
Editorial	1	2	---	1
Journalists affiliated with British Newspapers	---	42	2	1
International News Agencies	9	1	---	2
Cartoonist	1	---	---	---
General Journalist	---	---	4	6
Not attributed to any source	---	2	17	12
Other	1	6	17	10
<b>Total News Items</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>69</b>

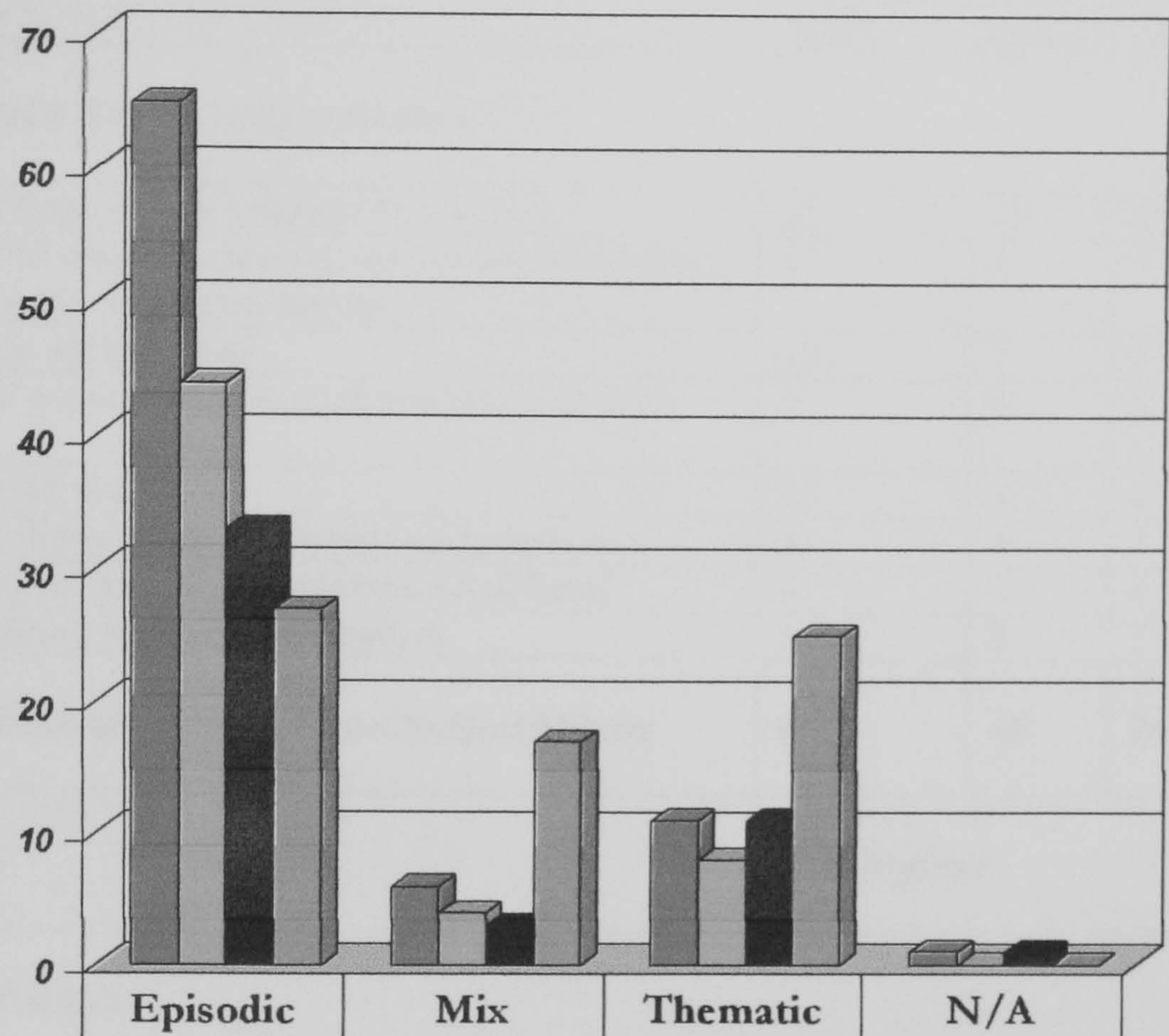
**Figure 5.1: Rate of Coverage within Different Newspaper Spaces**  
(July 2000 to July 2004)



**Figure 5.2: Rate of Coverage within Different News Formats**  
(July 2000 to July 2004)



**Figure 5.3: Rate of Coverage within Episodic, Thematic, or Mixed Narrative Styles (July 2000 to July 2004)**



	Episodic	Mix	Thematic	N/A
<b>The Irish Times</b>	65	6	11	1
<b>Irish Independent</b>	44	4	8	0
<b>Sunday Independent</b>	33	3	11	1
<b>Sunday Tribune</b>	27	17	25	0

**Table 5.2: Topic/Subject Matter Presentational Trends Displayed by News Items  
(July 2000 to July 2004)**

	<i>The Irish Times</i>	<i>Irish Indep</i>	<i>Sun Indep</i>	<i>Sun Trib</i>
<b>1. Conflict/Political Violence Topics/Subject Matters</b>				
Israeli military or physical force violence against Palestinians	22	21	23	28
Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories; the construction/impact of Israeli settlements and/or the Separation Barrier	5	2	1	9
Palestinian militant violence against Israel	12	7	7	15
<i>Intifada</i> -related Palestinian popular protests, civil resistance, or other demonstrations	5	4	5	2
Violence perpetrated by "both sides"	13	4	4	10
Israeli and/or international rhetorical condemnation of Palestinians	5	3	1	3
Palestinian and/or international rhetorical condemnation of Israel	4	2	4	2
Other conflict/political violence topics/subject matters	3	2	1	---
<b>Total Displays: Conflict/Political Violence Topics/Subject Matters</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Total for all Newspapers</b>	<b>229 Displays</b>			
<b>2 Peace Topics/Subject Matters</b>				
Israeli-Palestinian relations – positive development(s)	1	2	1	---
Israeli-Palestinian relations – mixed development(s)	5	3	4	1
Israeli-Palestinian relations – negative development(s)	6	1	3	3
An Israeli declarative commitment to peace	3	2	---	---
A Palestinian declarative commitment to peace	3	3	4	1
Israel's stance and/or the United States' stance – presented as rejectionist	2	6	---	1
The Palestinian stance – presented as rejectionist	4	---	1	2
Coverage of peace "events"	1	6	---	3
The United States-sponsored "roadmap"	4	5	5	11
Comparative discussions of the "peace process"	2	---	1	1
The Gaza Disengagement Plan	4	1	1	1
Peace initiatives from Israeli/Palestinian peace movements or civil society	---	---	---	2
<b>Total Displays: Peace Topics/Subject Matters</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Total for all Newspapers</b>	<b>110 Displays</b>			
<b>3 International Political-Diplomatic Topics/Subject Matters</b>				
Arab-Led diplomacy	3	3	4	2
United States-led diplomacy	6	4	3	4
International/European-led diplomacy	4	---	3	---
Irish diplomacy	3	---	5	2
Other diplomatic developments	---	---	3	---



Israeli regional relations	1	1	---	---
Israel-United States relations	---	5	3	2
Israeli international relations	6	5	1	1
Palestinian regional relations	1	2	---	2
Palestinian-United States relations	8	2	2	3
Palestinian/Arab States international relations	1	---	1	1
Relationship of international media to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	---	---	---	1
<b><i>Total Displays: International Political-Diplomatic Topics/Subject Matters</i></b>	<b>33</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Total for all Newspapers</b>	<b>98 Displays</b>			
<b>4 Domestic Israeli Topics/Subject Matters</b>				
Elections, party leadership contests, inter-party issues/divisions, cabinet decisions, etc	7	8	1	11
Trends in Israeli public opinion – the socio-political impact of the <i>intifada</i> on Israel	1	3	---	6
Newspaper interview with Israeli political actor(s)	2	---	---	---
Other domestic Israeli topic/subject matter	4	2	---	1
<b><i>Total Displays: Domestic Israeli Topics/Subject Matters</i></b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Total for all Newspapers</b>	<b>46 Displays</b>			
<b>5 Domestic Palestinian Topics/Subject Matters</b>				
Domestic Palestinian political violence	3	1	---	---
Elections, party leadership contests, inter-party issues/divisions, cabinet decisions, political “reforms,” etc.	10	4	4	5
Trends in Palestinian public opinion; the impact of the <i>intifada</i> /Israel’s militarization of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the impact of Israel’s re-occupation of Palestinian areas	2	---	---	1
Newspaper interview with Palestinian political/militant actor(s)	1	---	---	1
Other domestic Palestinian topic/subject matter	---	---	---	---
<b><i>Total Displays: Domestic Palestinian Topics/Subject Matters</i></b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Total for all Newspapers</b>	<b>32 Displays</b>			

**Table 5.3: Frequency of Appearance of Sources' Assertions (July 2000 to July 2004)**

<i>Frequency of Appearance of Source Assertions</i>	<i>Number of Displays of Source Assertions - Expressed as % of Total Assertions</i>			
	<i>The Irish Times</i>	<i>Irish Indep</i>	<i>Sunday Indep</i>	<i>Sunday Tribune</i>
<b>Israeli political actors, including the Israeli President, Prime Minister, government minister(s)/member(s), government spokesperson(s)/aide(s)/adviser(s)</b>	56 (20.5%)	36 (16.5%)	10 (8.5%)	37 (14.9%)
<b>Other Israeli political actors, including political opposition leader(s), Knesset member(s), Israeli-Arab political actor(s)</b>	6 (2.2%)	7 (3.2%)	---	12 (4.8%)
<b>Israeli official(s)/security source(s)/"Israeli source(s)"</b>	32 (11.7%)	34 (15.6%)	14 (12%)	31 (12.5%)
<b>Israeli or foreign national peace activist(s)/demonstrator(s)</b>	2 (0.7%)	2 (0.9%)	---	4 (1.6%)
<b>Israeli settler(s), Israeli Zionist/settler organisation(s), American Jewish/Zionist organisation(s)</b>	1 (0.4)	2 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	4 (1.6%)
<b>Palestinian political actors, including Yasser Arafat, Mahmoud Abbas, Ahmed Ali Mohammed Qurei, PA/PLO/PLC member(s), PA spokesperson(s)/aide(s)/adviser(s)</b>	37 (13.6%)	12 (5.5%)	16 (13.7%)	29 (11.7%)
<b>Other Palestinian political actor(s)</b>	5 (1.8%)	2 (0.9%)	3 (2.6%)	4 (1.6%)
<b>Palestinian official(s)/security source(s)/"Palestinian source(s)"</b>	13 (4.8%)	20 (9.2%)	12 (10.3%)	18 (7.2%)
<b>Palestinian militant leader(s)/actor(s), eg: Hamas, Fatah, DFLP, PFLP, Islamic Jihad, Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades</b>	18 (6.6%)	11 (5.0%)	6 (5.1%)	16 (6.4%)
<b>Palestinian peace activist(s)/demonstrator(s)/stone-thrower(s)</b>	1 (0.4%)	---	---	3 (1.2%)
<b>Israeli/Jewish civilian(s)/witness(es)/victim(s) of Palestinian violence, or relative(s) of victim(s)</b>	7 (2.6%)	6 (2.8%)	---	5 (2%)
<b>Israeli-Arab civilian(s)/witness(es)/victim(s) of Israeli violence, or relative(s) of victim(s)</b>	1 (0.4%)	---	---	2 (0.8%)
<b>Palestinian civilian(s)/witness(es)/victim(s) of Israeli violence, or relative(s) of victim(s)</b>	8 (2.9%)	13 (6.0%)	6 (5.1%)	17 (6.8%)
<b>Arab political actor(s), including head(s) of state, governmental/official actor(s)/regional organisation(s)/leader(s)</b>	18 (6.6%)	12 (5.5%)	15 (12.8%)	7 (2.8%)

<b>United States political actor(s), including President, Vice-President, Secretary of State, Middle East Envoy, State Department official(s), other governmental actor(s)</b>	<b>22 (8.0%)</b>	<b>23 (10.5%)</b>	<b>9 (7.7%)</b>	<b>18 (7.2%)</b>
<b>Quartet, EU, or other European political/governmental/official actor(s)</b>	<b>10 (3.7%)</b>	<b>9 (4.1%)</b>	<b>7 (6%)</b>	<b>3 (1.2%)</b>
<b>UN leader(s)/representative(s), International NGO/human rights organisation(s)</b>	<b>8 (2.9%)</b>	<b>7 (3.2%)</b>	<b>4 (3.4%)</b>	<b>11 (4.4%)</b>
<b>Irish political actor(s), including the Taoiseach, government minister(s), or other governmental/official actor(s)</b>	<b>4 (1.5%)</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>2 (1.7%)</b>	<b>2 (0.8%)</b>
<b>Palestinian Delegate General to Ireland</b>	<b>1 (0.4%)</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>1 (0.4%)</b>
<b>Israeli Envoy to Ireland, other International Israeli Envoy, Irish Envoy to Israel</b>	<b>1 (0.4%)</b>	<b>1 (0.5%)</b>	<b>2 (1.7%)</b>	<b>2 (0.8%)</b>
<b>Irish-Palestinian advocacy group</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>1 (0.9%)</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Irish-Jewish/Israeli advocacy group</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>1 (0.9%)</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Other Irish NGO leader(s)/spokesperson(s)</b>	<b>1 (0.4%)</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>1 (0.4%)</b>
<b>Jewish/Israeli academic(s)/expert(s)/commentator(s)</b>	<b>2 (0.7%)</b>	<b>3 (1.4%)</b>	<b>1 (0.9%)</b>	<b>7 (2.8%)</b>
<b>Arab/Palestinian academic(s)/expert(s)/commentator(s)</b>	<b>9 (3.3%)</b>	<b>2 (0.9%)</b>	<b>2 (1.7%)</b>	<b>4 (1.6%)</b>
<b>Other academic(s)/expert(s)/commentator(s)</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>2 (0.9%)</b>	<b>1 (0.9%)</b>	<b>3 (1.2%)</b>
<b>Irish media/other international media</b>	<b>1 (0.4%)</b>	<b>3 (1.4%)</b>	<b>3 (2.6%)</b>	<b>2 (0.8%)</b>
<b>Israeli media</b>	<b>8 (2.9%)</b>	<b>8 (3.7%)</b>	<b>1 (0.9%)</b>	<b>5 (2%)</b>
<b>Arab/Palestinian media</b>	<b>1 (0.4%)</b>	<b>3 (1.4%)</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>1 (0.4%)</b>
<b>Total Number of Source Assertions</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>249</b>

**Table 5.4: Patterns of Frame Displays within News Discourses (July 2000 to July 2004)**

Frame	<i>Number of News Items Displaying Frames within News Content</i>			
	<i>The Irish Times</i>	<i>Irish Independent</i>	<i>Sunday Independent</i>	<i>Sunday Tribune</i>
<i>Law and Order/Terrorism</i>	19 (22.9%)	4 (7.1%)	9 (18.7%)	2 (2.9%)
<i>Jewish Injustice/National Homeland</i>	1 (1.2%)	1 (1.8%)	2 (4.2%)	---
<i>Palestinian Injustice/Defiance</i>	11 (13.3%)	9 (16%)	---	15 (21.7%)
<i>Reconciliation/Dual Rights</i>	2 (2.4%)	4 (7.1%)	---	5 (7.2%)
<i>Nihilistic Violence/Warring Tribes</i>	7 (8.4%)	3 (5.4%)	2 (4.2%)	7 (10.1%)
<i>Regional Stability/International Security</i>	1 (1.2%)	---	1 (2.1%)	2 (2.9%)
<i>Law and Order/Terrorism and Jewish Injustice/Defiance</i>	1 (1.2%)	---	1 (2.1%)	---
<i>Law and Order/Terrorism and Reconciliation/Dual Rights</i>	1 (1.2%)	---	---	---
<i>Law and Order/Terrorism and Nihilistic Violence/Warring Tribes</i>	3 (3.6%)	---	---	---
<i>Law and Order/Terrorism and Regional Stability/International Security</i>	---	---	1 (2.1%)	---
<i>Law and Order/Terrorism and Jewish Injustice/National Homeland and Regional Stability/International Security</i>	---	---	1 (2.1%)	---
<i>Palestinian Injustice/Defiance and Reconciliation/Dual Rights</i>	---	---	---	3 (4.3%)
<i>Palestinian Injustice/Defiance and Reconciliation/Dual Rights and Regional Stability/International Security</i>	---	---	---	1 (1.5%)
<i>Palestinian Injustice/Defiance and Nihilistic Violence/Warring Tribes</i>	---	---	---	3 (4.3%)
<i>Palestinian Injustice/Defiance and Regional Stability/International Security</i>	---	---	---	2 (2.9%)

<i>Reconciliation/Dual Rights and Nihilistic Violence/Warring Tribes</i>	<b>1</b> <b>(1.2%)</b>	---	---	<b>1</b> <b>(1.5%)</b>
<i>Nihilistic Violence/Warring Tribes and Regional Stability/International Security</i>	---	---	---	<b>1</b> <b>(1.5%)</b>
<i>Total Number of News Items Displaying News Frame(s)</i>	<b>47</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>42</b>
<i>Total Percentage of News Items Displaying News Frame(s)</i>	<b>(56.6%)</b>	<b>(37.4%)</b>	<b>(35.5%)</b>	<b>(60.8%)</b>
<i>Total Number of News Items Not Displaying any News Frame(s)</i>	<b>36</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>
<i>Total Percentage of News Items Not Displaying any News Frame(s)</i>	<b>(43.4%)</b>	<b>(62.6%)</b>	<b>(64.5%)</b>	<b>(39.2%)</b>
<i>Total Number of News Items</i>	<b>83</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>69</b>
<i>Total Percentage of News Items</i>	<b>(100%)</b>	<b>(100%)</b>	<b>(100%)</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

## APPENDIX 6

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

#### 1. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE GUIDING INTERVIEWS WITH FOREIGN AND MIDDLE EAST CORRESPONDENTS

1. For what periods of time have you covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for your current newspaper employer? Where were you based?
2. What other journalistic work have you undertaken?
3. How would you describe the quantity and quality of coverage devoted by your newspaper employer to Israel and the Palestinian territories? Do you think this coverage has contributed to Irish public understandings of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
4. Do you think your newspaper employer's coverage differs from the coverage provided by other Irish newspapers?
5. From your experience, what have been the most newsworthy issues and events in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Why is this so? Have there been any changes over time, or across different phases of the conflict?

6. What issues and events have been relatively neglected, or failed to achieve equivalent levels of newsworthiness? Why?
7. What primary roles and responsibilities do you think should be performed by your newspaper employer in covering this conflict?
8. Do you think international or Irish media provide coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that differs from the coverage provided by Israeli or Palestinian media? What do you think might explain these differences?
9. Do you think that your newspaper employer has an ideological or political position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Can you give examples where it could be seen to be “pro-Palestinian” or “pro-Israeli”? Or, do you think these categories are irrelevant for understanding media reporting of this conflict?
10. Do you think the long history and complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict hinders newspaper coverage?
11. How do you think the first Palestinian *intifada* changed media reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
12. How do you think the Oslo “peace process” changed media reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

13. How do you think the second Palestinian *intifada* changed media reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
14. What is your opinion regarding the positive and/or negative roles played by Palestinian and Israeli political protagonists in shaping media coverage?
15. How would you say your experience of covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict compares with other experiences you had of different foreign reporting contexts?
16. In your opinion what have been the most positive aspects of your coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Can you give examples of “good practice” coverage that you have undertaken?
17. What difficulties, restrictions and limitations have you encountered in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
18. When covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where do you most frequently acquire the information that you need?
19. What sources do you primarily rely on? Why?
20. What do you think is the Irish state’s or Irish government’s position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?



21. How do you think the general public in Ireland view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
22. Do your perceptions regarding Irish public opinion on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict affect the ways in which you report on this conflict?
23. Would you say that your reporting is sympathetic to Israeli or Palestinian perspectives? Or would you describe your reporting as neutral and/or unsupportive of either side?

## 2. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE GUIDING INTERVIEWS WITH NEWSPAPER COLUMNISTS AND OPINION WRITERS

1. For what periods of time have you been a columnist or opinion writer for your current newspaper employer?
2. How would you describe the key aspects of your work?
3. What other journalistic work have you undertaken?
4. How often do you cover the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
5. In relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, what topics most frequently feature in your opinion columns or commentary?
6. In what ways do you think newspaper opinion or commentary forums might be better forums for covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
7. How would you describe the quantity and quality of coverage devoted by your newspaper employer to Israel and the Palestinian territories? Do you think this coverage has contributed to Irish public understandings of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
8. Do you think your newspaper employer's coverage differs from the coverage provided by other Irish newspapers?

9. What primary roles and responsibilities do you think should be performed by your newspaper employer in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
10. Do you think that your newspaper employer has an ideological or political position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Can you give examples where it could be seen to be “pro-Palestinian” or “pro-Israeli”? Or, do you think these categories are irrelevant for understanding media reporting of this conflict?
11. From your experience, what have been the most newsworthy issues and events in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Why is this so? Have there been any changes over time, or across different phases of the conflict?
12. What issues and events have been relatively neglected, or failed to achieve equivalent levels of newsworthiness? Why?
13. What would you say are the most important guidelines, practices, or values that guide your writing and analysis?
14. What difficulties, restrictions and limitations have you encountered in writing about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
15. Where do you most frequently source the information that you require for writing analyses and commentaries on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
16. What sources do you primarily rely on? Why?

17. What do you think is the Irish state's or Irish government's position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
18. How do you think the general public in Ireland view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
19. Do your perceptions regarding Irish public opinion on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict affect the ways in which you write about it?
20. Would you say that you have a relatively stable viewpoint on this conflict? If so, could you describe it? How does your viewpoint relate to the viewpoints of your colleagues, editorial staff, etc?
21. Does your viewpoint affect the ways in which you write about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
22. Would you say that your reporting is sympathetic to Israeli or Palestinian perspectives? Or would you describe your reporting as neutral and/or unsupportive of either side?

### 3. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE GUIDING INTERVIEWS WITH EDITORIAL STAFF

1. For how long have you been working for your current newspaper employer?  
How long have you been working in the editorial department?
2. On a day-to-day basis, what does your work entail?
3. In your opinion what are the key duties and responsibilities of the editorial department?
4. How significant is foreign news coverage (in terms of newspaper space and prominence), within overall newspaper coverage?
5. In relation to other foreign issues, would you say that your newspaper employer views the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a significant foreign issue? Why?
6. In your opinion, what have been the major factors influencing the ways in which your newspaper employer covers the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
7. How would you describe the quantity and quality of coverage devoted by your newspaper employer to Israel and the Palestinian territories? Do you think this coverage has contributed to Irish public understandings of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

8. Do you think your newspaper employer's coverage differs from the coverage provided by other Irish newspapers?
9. From your experience, what have been the most newsworthy issues and events in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Why is this so? Have there been any changes over time, or across different phases of the conflict?
10. What issues and events have been relatively neglected, or failed to achieve equivalent levels of newsworthiness? Why?
11. Do you think the long history and complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict hinders newspaper coverage?
12. How do you think the first Palestinian *intifada* changed media reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
13. How do you think the Oslo "peace process" changed media reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
14. How do you think the second Palestinian *intifada* changed media reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
15. What is your opinion regarding the positive and/or negative roles played by Palestinian and Israeli political protagonists in shaping media coverage?

16. What is the editorial position of your newspaper employer on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? What primary roles and responsibilities does this position accord to the newspaper in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
17. How do you think the editorial position of your newspaper employer differs from the positions displayed by other Irish media outlets?
18. Would you say that your newspaper employer provides coverage that is sympathetic to Israeli or Palestinian perspectives?
19. Why does your newspaper employer not have a resident correspondent in the Middle East or in Israel and the Palestinian territories?
20. Are there specific guidelines influencing how your newspaper employer sources news reports and analysis on the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? For instance, does this newspaper rely on particular sources and writers more than others? Why is this so?
21. Does your newspaper employer have a preference for covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within news report formats, or within opinion and analysis features? Can you explain the reasons for this preference?
22. How does the editorial department decide on the reliability and accuracy of available news copy?

23. What procedures and criteria guide the editorial decisions that are made in relation to covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
24. From your experience, what do you think prevents “good practice” journalism in relation to covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
25. What do you think is the Irish state’s or Irish government’s position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
26. Do you think that Ireland’s colonial and nationalist history influences Irish newspaper coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
27. How do you think the general public in Ireland view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
28. Do editorial perceptions regarding Irish public opinion affect the decisions that are made in relation to covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?



#### 4. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE GUIDING INTERVIEWS WITH IRISH HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS AND ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN SUPPORT GROUPS

1. When was your organisation/group founded? What were its founding aims and objectives?
2. How many members belong to the organisation/group?
3. What are your organisation's/group's primary sources of funding? What other resources/assets does the organisation/group possess?
4. In relation to the organisation's/group's primary objectives, what are its ongoing campaigns and activities?
5. Can you briefly outline the organisation's/group's position on the causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and proposed solutions?
6. Do you think any of the Irish newspapers reflect these positions (mostly, sometimes, occasionally, not at all)?
7. Do you think that international media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is important? Why?

8. How important do you think media access is for your organisation's/group's objectives and campaigns?
9. Does your organisation/group have a media strategy? If yes, what central message(s) does it seek to get across to the media?
10. When would you say the organisation/group has been most successful in gaining good coverage within Irish media?
11. Would you say that there are differences *between* Irish newspapers in terms of the ways in which they cover the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? What do you think may explain these differences?
12. Do you think any of the Irish newspapers display ideological biases that are either favourable to Israeli or Palestinian perspectives? Please explain.
13. Do you think any of the Irish newspapers adhere to the norms of accuracy, impartiality, balance, fairness, etc, in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Can you think of any examples?
14. Overall, in what ways do you think any, or all the Irish media have enabled the Irish public to understand the history and politics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

15. Do you think Irish newspapers provide adequate information to facilitate greater public understanding of the causes and ongoing development of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

16. In relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, what issues and events do you feel have been over-covered? Why?

17. What issues and events do you think have been neglected and deserve more attention? Why?

## 5. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE GUIDING INTERVIEWS WITH POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC ACTORS

1. What are the main duties and responsibilities of your work? Does your work involve any relationship with Irish media? If yes, please elaborate.
2. Do Irish media seek to access the opinion of yourself, or your department?
3. On what issues have Irish media most sought your views or information?
4. Which Irish media do you have most frequent relations with?
5. In relation to the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, would you say that Irish newspapers are receptive to your opinions, or the opinions of your department?
6. What message do you seek to promote to the media when presented with the opportunity to do so?
7. What are your own personal perceptions regarding the causes and current situation characterising the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
8. What is your general understanding of Israeli and Palestinian perspectives regarding their ongoing conflict?

9. Have you any opinion about the impact that the events and dynamics of the conflict exert on international media coverage?
10. Do you think that power disparities between Israeli and Palestinian protagonists impact on the ways in which the international media cover the conflict?
11. What are your opinions regarding the historical and contemporary relations that exist between Ireland and Israel?
12. What are your opinions regarding the historical and contemporary relations that exist between Ireland and Palestinian political representatives?
13. What is your understanding of the official Irish government position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
14. Have there been any significant historical differences between the approaches adopted by successive Irish governments towards the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
15. Do you think the Irish state has national interests in the Middle East, or in Israel and the Palestinian territories, which impact on its foreign policy in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

16. Do you think Irish relations with Israel and the Palestinian territories differ from those adopted by France, Britain and the United States? If yes, what are the differences?
17. To what extent would you say that Ireland's foreign policy in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict follows European Union positions? How does Ireland's policy compare or contrast with the policies of other European countries?
18. What is your view of the role of the United States in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
19. How do you think Ireland's relationship with the United States affects its policies towards the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
20. Do you think that the positions adopted by the United Nations in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have an influence on Irish political and foreign policy positions on the conflict?
21. What do you think are the effects of United Nations resolutions and United Nations-sponsored criticism of Israel within the Irish public sphere?
22. Do you think that Irish newspapers tally themselves to the foreign policy positions of the Irish government and, therefore, locate their coverage of Israel and the Palestinian territories within the parameters of those positions?

23. Do you think that political sentiments or cultural affinities exist between Ireland and Israel, or between Ireland and the Palestinian territories?
24. Do you see differences between Irish newspapers in the ways in which they cover the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
25. In terms of your own reading of newspaper coverage, what issues do you think are neglected by Irish newspapers?
26. How do you think Irish newspapers' daily reports, as well as opinion, analysis and editorial features, present the complexities and intricacies of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
27. Do you think that the lack of Irish permanent correspondents based within Israel and the Palestinian territories has affected Irish newspapers' coverage?
28. What do you think are the likely implications of newspaper reliance on international news agency reports?
29. Do you think Irish newspapers have different editorial positions on this conflict?  
What have been your impressions of those positions?
30. Do you think that these differences are related to media factors, political factors, or cultural factors?

## APPENDIX 7

### LIST OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS AND INTERVIEW TIMETABLE

Interviewee Identification	Employment	Date/Time/Venue	Electronic Recording	Anonymous
<b>Irish Journalist</b>	Irish newspaper	<i>29 June 2004</i> Rathmines, Dublin 6 <i>1.30pm - 3.10pm</i>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien</b>	Columnist – <i>Irish Independent</i> and <i>Sunday Independent</i>	<i>30 June 2004</i> Howth, Co. Dublin <i>11.00am - 12.10pm</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Israel-based Journalist</b>	Stringer Correspondent	<i>11 July 2004</i> West Jerusalem <i>11am - 12pm</i>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Israel-based Journalist</b>	Stringer Correspondent	<i>16 July 2004</i> Emeq Refa'im, Jerusalem <i>9.40am - 11.10am</i>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Dr Niall Holohan</b>	Irish Representative to the Palestinian Authority	<i>19 July 2004</i> The office of the Irish Representative to the PA, Ramallah <i>9.00am - 9.30am</i> <i>11.00am - 12.00pm</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Israeli Diplomat</b>	Former Israeli Embassy Staff	<i>20 July 2004</i> Foreign Affairs Ministry, Rabin St., Jerusalem <i>12.00pm - 1.10pm</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Israeli Diplomat</b>	Former Israeli Embassy Staff	<i>20 July 2004</i> Foreign Affairs Ministry, Rabin St., Jerusalem <i>1.30pm - 2.20pm</i>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Dr Nooh al-Kaddoh</b>	Executive Director of the Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland	<i>4 August 2004</i> Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland, Clonskeagh, Dublin 14 <i>10.30am - 11.35am</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Irish Diplomat</b>	Irish Department of Foreign Affairs	<i>4 August 2004</i> Department of Foreign Affairs, St Stephens Green, Dublin 2	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>



		3.05pm - 4.10pm		
<b>Dr Ali Halimeh</b>	Delegate General of Palestine to Ireland	5 August 2004 Palestinian Delegation to Ireland Office, Adelaide Rd., Dublin 2 3.00pm - 3.50pm	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Mr Brian Dooley</b>	Communications and Fund-Raising Manager, Amnesty International, British and Irish sections	2 September 2004 Amnesty International, 48 Fleet St., Dublin 1 10.05am - 11.00am	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Mr Martin Spain</b>	Editor – <i>An Phoblacht</i>	2 September 2004 <i>An Phoblacht</i> 58 Parnell Sq. Dublin 1 2.05pm - 2.40pm	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Irish Foreign Policy Adviser</b>	Adviser to the Irish Government	19 October 2004 Central Dublin 6.30pm - 8.10pm	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Senator David Norris</b>	Seanad Eireann	20 October 2004 Leinster House, Dublin 2 1.00pm - 2.20pm	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Mr Michael Wolsey</b>	Deputy Foreign Editor - <i>Irish Independent</i>	1 June 2005 Central Dublin 2.05pm - 2.55pm	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Mr Raymond Deane</b>	Chairman of the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign	2 June 2005 Dun Laoighre, Dublin 1.50pm - 2.40pm	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Professor John Horgan</b>	Professor of Journalism in the School of Communications, Dublin City University	3 June 2005 DCU, Dublin 9 11.10am – 12.00pm	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Mr Michael Foley</b>	Former Journalist with <i>The Irish Times</i> , Lecturer - Department of Journalism and Communications (Dublin Institute of Technology)	15 June 2005 DIT Aungier St. Dublin 2 11.00am - 12.05pm	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Mr Paddy Smyth</b>	Foreign Editor – <i>The Irish Times</i>	16 June 2005 <i>The Irish Times</i> Editorial Department, Fleet St., Dublin 2 12.45pm - 1.30pm	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Ms Michael Jansen</b>	Middle East Stringer Correspondent	22 January 2006 East Jerusalem 1.30pm - 2.20pm	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

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