

# CAMERA's broken lens

An evaluation of the media watchdog's problematic conclusion of "pro-Arab" media bias

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For The Electronic Intifada

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August 2008 - The Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA) is a media monitoring organization with a large database of supporters known for its staunch support for Israeli policies and its ability to influence media coverage. While CAMERA claims to be objective and interested in holding the media accountable to its own "self-professed standards," [1] the terminology and views of the organization are largely consistent with those of the Israeli government itself. [2]

Earlier this year, an Electronic Intifada investigation brought CAMERA under scrutiny for its efforts to secretly take control of the administrative structures of the online encyclopedia Wikipedia in order to influence content relating to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. [3] The information obtained by EI indicated that CAMERA sought more than 50 volunteers to participate in the plan and had "set its sights on creating dozens of new editors and administrators over a long period of time." [4]

In yet another realm of the public discourse on the Arab-Israeli conflict, a study of newspaper opinion pieces (op-eds), CAMERA's efforts to influence the debate are once again called into question.

In a detailed report, CAMERA claimed that "Israel's voice" was being "stifled" on the op-ed pages of America's newspapers. [5] The statement was based on a 19-month study of guest opinion pieces (not including editorials or staff op-eds) dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Washington Post* in which CAMERA concluded that op-eds critical of Israel "overwhelmingly" outnumbered "pro-Israel" pieces. [6]

CAMERA argued that the finding of this research effectively refuted the case made by "Israel's detractors" such as former US President Jimmy Carter and Professors Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer that "pro-Israel" voices dominate the American media to the detriment of "pro-Palestinian" views. [7]

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However, a closer look at CAMERA's highly problematic study [8] using the same methodology and two of the same newspapers -- *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* -- found that CAMERA's conclusions were either misleading or wrong with numerous op-eds omitted or miscategorized.

CAMERA's analysis of *The Washington Post* failed to account for 10 primary and eight tangential op-eds supporting an Israeli perspective or criticizing Arab policies [9] for example, while their analysis of *The New York Times* reflected only eight out of the 18 primary op-eds supporting an Israeli point of view or criticizing Arab policies during the relevant period.

CAMERA's study concluded that 59 percent [10] of guest op-eds primarily dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* were either "pro-Arab" or "more critical of Israel," when only 38 percent had this point of view. Similarly, where CAMERA found that 21 percent [11] of the primary guest op-eds were "pro-Israel" or more critical of Arabs, almost twice that number 41 percent actually supported that view.

Far from Israel's voice being stifled on the editorial pages, when op-eds primarily covering the Arab-Israeli conflict were combined with commentaries only tangentially discussing the subject, the data showed that out of 111 op-eds in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, 46 percent supported an Israeli view or criticized Arab policies, 33 percent were supportive of Arab policies or critical of Israel, and 21 percent were neutral. [12]

### **CAMERA'S analysis of *The Washington Post***

CAMERA's analysis of *The Washington Post* found only four outside commentaries (17 percent) in a 19-month period supporting an Israeli view or criticizing Arab policies and 17 supporting an Arab perspective or criticizing Israel, with two neutral op-eds. [13] Only four op-eds on the conflict during this period would have been an extraordinarily small number considering this was a period which included the Israel-Lebanon war, Israel's proposed "convergence" plan, the Palestinian elections in which Hamas took control of the Palestinian parliament, the international boycott of Palestinians following the elections, and unprecedented intra-Palestinian violence.

CAMERA's flawed research led it to the conclusion that "[The] *Washington Post* Arab-Israeli commentary by outside writers is overwhelmingly pro-Palestinian, anti-Israeli or both." [14] "*The Washington Post* rarely publishes outside commentary by Israelis in the news, or their supporters, whose views contradict those of Palestinians like the terrorists [Hamas advisor Ahmad] Yousef, [Hamas Prime Minister Ismail] Haniyeh, or [Hamas leader Mousa Abu] Marzook; or those of Palestinian apologists like [journalist Daoud] Kuttab, [former US diplomat Aaron David] Miller, and [former Clinton advisor Robert] Malley or anti-Israel polemicists like [former US President Carter ...]" [15]

However, a closer look at the data shows that CAMERA had not included 27 relevant op-eds (16 primary, 11 tangential) and had improperly classified others. [16] Furthermore, most of the outside commentaries supporting Arabs or criticizing Israel contained views well within the mainstream international consensus for resolving conflict and support for international law.

During the 19-month period, *The Washington Post* had actually published not four, but 17 primary guest op-eds supporting an Israeli perspective or criticizing Arab policies, 13 more than claimed in the original CAMERA study. Ten of these 17 primary op-eds were missing from CAMERA's report altogether. There were also 16 primary op-eds supporting an Arab point of view or criticizing Israel with six neutral op-eds. [17]

The primary op-eds omitted by CAMERA included two by Dennis Ross ("The Art of the Possible Peace; Rice's First Task: A Viable Israeli-Palestinian Cease Fire," "The Specter of 'Hamastan'; More Must Be Done to Counter Islamist Gains in Gaza") and one each from David Makovsky ("The Next Mideast War"), Newt Gingrich ("The Only Option Is to Win"), Richard Holbrooke ("The Guns of August"), Michael Oren ("Necessary Steps for Israel; Confronting State Sponsors of Terror Is the Only Option"), David Rivkin and Lee Casey ("Israel Is Within Its Rights"), Philip Gordon ("Air Power Won't Do It"), John McLaughlin ("We Have to Talk to the Bad Guys") and Franklin D. Kramer ("Making Peace Stick in Lebanon").

There were also several improperly classified op-eds including:

- Aaron David Miller ("Palestinians' Crisis of Leadership") criticizes Palestinian leadership as not coherent and "irresponsible" which CAMERA acknowledges. [18] Nevertheless, CAMERA considered the article supportive of an Arab perspective.
- Steven A. Cook ("Don't Blame Democracy Promotion") blames Hamas and Hizballah for much of the conflict with Israel and criticizes their failure to embrace democracy, but CAMERA still considered the article neutral. [19]
- Robert Eisen ("Muslims and Jews: Common Ground") discussed the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from Muslim and Jewish perspectives and supported the role of the clergy in trying to bring people together. CAMERA characterized the article as a pro-Arab dismissal of threats to Israel -- and a failure to understand Islamic fundamentalism. [20]

When op-eds tangentially discussing the Arab-Israeli conflict were considered, the data actually showed that 10 additional guest commentaries took an Israeli perspective or criticized Arab policies (eight of which were not included in the original CAMERA report), bringing the total to 27. Three additional tangential op-eds supported an Arab perspective or criticized Israel, a total of 19 and three more neutral op-eds appeared for a total of nine. Rather than pro-Arab, anti-Israeli or both, the guest commentaries in *The Washington Post* were actually more supportive of Israel or critical of Arab policies, similar to the rest of the editorial page.

## CAMERA's analysis of *The New York Times*

CAMERA's analysis of *The New York Times* found only eight op-eds supporting Israel or criticizing Arab policies and twice as many criticizing Israel or supporting Arab policies which led to its conclusion that "rather than representing the 'nation's most important forum on the most contentious issues of the day,' *The New York Times* has become a vehicle for one-sided (pro-Arab) advocacy in a contentious debate." [21]

Far from a vehicle for "pro-Arab advocacy," in fact, *The New York Times* actually published not eight, but 18 primary guest commentaries supporting Israel or criticizing Arab policies. There were another 16 guest commentaries supporting an Arab view or criticizing Israeli policies and with 12 neutral op-eds.

When op-eds only tangentially covering the Arab-Israeli conflict were considered, the data showed that six additional op-eds supported an Israeli perspective or criticized Arab policies, raising the total to 24, two additional op-eds supporting an Arab point of view or 18 total, and two more neutral op-eds or 14 total. [22]

The primary difference between CAMERA's original analysis of guest commentaries in *The New York Times* and the re-examination was not the omission of articles *per se* as in their analysis of *The Washington Post* -- but the finding that CAMERA had arbitrarily classified many of the guest commentaries in a manner that downplayed op-eds supporting Israel or criticizing Arab policies and slightly increased the number commentaries supporting Arab policies or criticizing Israel.

In this regard, CAMERA's approach took several patterns. Some op-eds recommended ideas for how to resolve conflicts focusing primarily on the changes that could be made on the Arab side. These commentaries were considered neutral by CAMERA and not consistent with its own criteria for classifying articles:

- Former Israeli soldier Adir Gurion Waldman ("Lebanon's Force for Good") suggested that a task force between Israeli and Lebanese representatives could work on a broad range of issues but should have a new mandate for overseeing the "disarmament of Hizballah and other terrorist organizations." [23] Although many might agree with this policy, the analysis did not contain equal criticism of the parties involved in the conflict.
- Mark Helprin ("Forced to Get Along") endorsed the West Bank first strategy of isolating Hamas and all other residents of Gaza. Again, the criticism primarily focused on Palestinians and could not be considered neutral. [24]
- Michael Oren ("What if Israel and Syria Find Common Ground") considers the requirements for peace between Israel and Syria -- and in doing so discusses the problems with Syria from US and Israeli perspectives. Nevertheless, CAMERA considered the op-ed neutral. [25]

In addition, some writers appeared to be typecasted as “pro-Arab” regardless of the commentary and even if demands were placed on both sides. Discussing how to resolve the conflict between Israel and Hizballah, the commentaries by authors Chibli Mallat (“Resolve to Put Lebanon in Charge”) and Paul Salem (“Stop Bombs, Start Talks”) below supported among other elements, the disarmament of Hizballah, called for the Lebanese government to be put in charge of the entire country, and sought the return of prisoners -- but they were still not considered balanced by CAMERA. [26]

Finally, some classifications of op-eds were simply difficult to explain:

- CAMERA's description of an op-ed (“A Conflict that Will Stay Closer to Home”) by Edward Luttwak states, “Discusses Israeli-Hizballah conflict as part of a larger conflict financed and directed by Iran and Syria.” [27] Although the description clearly blamed Syria for the conflict, the op-ed was placed in a neutral category.
- In another op-ed (“Cold, Hard Cash”), CAMERA claimed that Geoff Porter “urged US, EU funding of a Hamas-led government” [28] when the main purpose of the article was to suggest that Arab states should make an effort to moderate Hamas with aid so that Hamas would not fall under Iran's orbit. This op-ed focused primarily on changing Palestinian behavior -- and whether or not this is an appropriate policy -- criticism was only directed at one side party to the conflict.
- An op-ed by Ted Koppel (“Look What Democratic Reform Dragged In”) argued the US was fighting a war with Iran through proxies -- and took the view that Israel's bombing of Lebanon was a function of Israel understanding their “enemy's intentions with greater clarity than most” -- but the op-ed was still considered neutral by CAMERA. [29]

## Conclusion

CAMERA is incorrect in its analysis and perception that outside commentaries in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* reflect an anti-Israeli bias. When CAMERA's own analytic criteria are correctly applied and arbitrarily excluded articles are included, the statistics reflect that supporters of Israel or those critical of Arab policies have a slight advantage in the narrow category of guest op-eds during the period examined. The fact that the editorial staff and regular columnists of these papers are also overwhelmingly supportive of Israel and critical of Arab policies -- an issue not examined by CAMERA -- only drives the point home more clearly of the real problem of bias on the editorial pages.

Overall CAMERA claimed that 59 percent of *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* primary guest op-eds dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict supported an Arab perspective or criticized Israel. In reality, the proportion was only 38 percent. And whereas CAMERA claimed that just 21 percent of primary guest op-eds supported an Israeli perspective or criticized Arabs, in reality 41 percent took such a position. CAMERA based its conclusions on an examination of just 56 articles, when in fact there were 85 primary op-eds (39 in *The Washington Post*, 46 in *The New York Times*) that met its criteria for inclusion in the study. Once again it is worth noting that these 85 guest op-eds did not include newspaper editorials, staff op-eds, or nationally syndicated writers.

The broader implication of the research here is that a more balanced presentation of the issues and opinion is sorely needed in the pages of America's newspapers -- where there is a lack of discussion of international law generally, [30] UN Security Council resolutions pertaining to the conflict often do not appear, [31] casualties on the Arab side are given less mention or not discussed at all, [32] and the collective consensus of human rights organizations on critical issues of the conflict are rarely mentioned. [33] If the media cannot portray the issues accurately or fairly -- and the national discourse on foreign policy remains unchanged on the pages of these papers, there can be little hope that the foreign policy itself will reflect standards of international decency or lead to a just resolution for all parties involved.

## Methodology

Both CAMERA's original study and the re-examination were based on Lexis Nexis searches of guest op-eds dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict between 1 January 2006 and 31 July 2007. Guest op-eds do not include newspaper editorials, staff op-eds, or nationally syndicated writers.

Some of the major topics included the Israel-Lebanon war, Israel's proposed "convergence" plan, the Palestinian elections in which Hamas took control of the Palestinian parliament, the international boycott of Palestinians following the elections, and unprecedented intra-Palestinian violence.

If an op-ed dealt primarily with the Arab-Israeli conflict, it could be placed into one of three categories: [34]

### 1. Supporting Arab perspective/criticizing Israel:

- a) Defends Arab policies in the conflict
- b) Criticizes Israeli policies
- c) Criticizes US or UN role as too supportive of Israel or not supportive enough of Arabs

### 2. Supporting Israeli perspective/criticizing Arabs:

- a) Defends Israeli policies in the onflict
- b) Criticizes Arab policies
- c) Criticizes US or UN role as too supportive of Arabs or not supportive enough of Israel

### 3. Neutral:

- a) Containing criticism of both sides
- b) Does not take sides on policy issues
- c) Does not assign blame or criticize either side

If an op-ed did not deal primarily with the Arab-Israeli conflict, it was considered a “Tangential Op-ed” and tallied separately as either 1) supporting an Arab perspective/criticizing Israel; 2) supporting an Israeli perspective/criticizing Arabs or 3) Neutral. Iran-Israeli relations, book reviews, and some of the commentaries about the Iraq Study Group fell into this category.

The chart below shows a summary of results for the primary op-eds only.

	<i>The Washington Post</i>	<i>The New York Times</i>	Total (WP & NYT)
Supporting Arab Perspective or Criticizing Israel	CAMERA 17 (74%) Actual 16 (41%)	CAMERA 16 (49%) Actual 16 (35%)	CAMERA 33 (59%) Actual 32 (38%)
Supporting Israeli Perspective or Criticizing Arabs	CAMERA 4 (17%) Actual 17 (44%) +13	CAMERA 8 (24%) Actual 18 (39%) +10	CAMERA 12 (21%) Actual 35 (41%) +23
Neutral	CAMERA 2 (9%) Actual 6 (15%)	CAMERA 9 (27%) Actual 12 (26%)	CAMERA 11 (20%) Actual 18 (21%)
Total	CAMERA 23 (100%) Actual 39 (100%)	CAMERA 33 (100%) Actual 46 (100%)	CAMERA 56 (100%) Actual 85 (100%)

## ***The Washington Post data list***

*\*\*Omitted from CAMERA Study, \*Placed in another category by CAMERA*

### ***Primary op-eds: Israeli perspective/critical of Arabs***

1. \*24 January 2006, “The Palestinians’ Crisis of Leadership” by Aaron David Miller: Quoting CAMERA, “Miller acknowledges irresponsible Palestinian leadership, and insists that leadership never had a coherent strategy.” [35]
2. 5 February 2006, “Give Hamas Nothing For Free” by Dennis Ross: Calls for the international isolation of Hamas unless they recognize Israel as a Jewish state and reject violence, calls on the US to build international consensus to this end.

3. \*\*14 July 2006, "Necessary Steps for Israel; Confronting State Sponsors of Terror Is the Only Option" by Michael Oren: Calls for the elimination of "terrorist leaderships" in Gaza and southern Lebanon in order to restore security to Israel and send a message to Iran and Syria.
4. \*\*23 July 2006, "We Have to Talk to Bad Guys" by John McLaughlin: Calls for improved and more open diplomacy to ongoing conflicts, places enormous responsibility on Iran and Syria, praises the previous role of Dennis Ross in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.
5. \*\*25 July 2006, "Air Power Won't Do It" by Philip H. Gordon: Argues that air bombing Lebanon will not defeat Hizballah, calls for a different approach that will involve a more proportional response, support for the Lebanese government, and international pressure on Iran and Syria.
6. \*\*26 July 2006, "Israel Is Within Its Rights" by David A. Rivkin, Jr. and Lee A. Casey: Describes Israel's actions in the Lebanon war as fully compliant with the laws of war.
7. \*29 July 2006, "Don't Blame Democracy Promotion" by Steven A. Cook: Criticizes Hamas and Hizballah not embracing democratic values and provoking conflict with Israel; maintains that violence in Lebanon, Iraq, and the Middle East conflict is not the result of the Bush administration's push for democracy in the region but not pushing enough.
8. 3 August 2006, "The Rules of War" by Moshe Yaalon: Discussing the Qana bombing in Lebanon, maintains that Israel makes every effort to avoid harm to civilians and criticism should be directed at Hizballah, Iran, and Syria instead of Israel.
9. \*\*10 August 2006, "The Guns of August" by Richard Holbrooke: Maintains that containing the violence and finding a solution that protects Israel should be two of the main US priorities in Iraq and Lebanon.
10. \*10 August 2006, "A Price of Fighting Terrorism" by David Bernstein: Argues that civilian casualties in Lebanon and Gaza are the fault of extremists and their supporters in the war on terror.
11. \*\*11 August 2006, "The Only Option is to Win" by Newt Gingrich: Maintains that US foreign policy goals include defeating terrorists, preventing the proliferation of nuclear and biological weapons to Iran and North Korea, and defending Israel.
12. 17 August 2006, "A Cease Fire Reality: Dealing with Syria" by Dennis Ross: Discusses the potential for Syria to thwart the implementation of UN Resolution 1701 in Lebanon and makes recommendations for dealing with Syria.

13. \*\*19 August 2006, "Making Peace Stick in Lebanon" by Franklin D. Kramer: Makes recommendations for the success of peacekeeping forces in Lebanon and in general, focuses only on the Arab side of the equation.
14. \*\*15 February 2007, "The Art of the Possible Peace; Rice's First Task: A Viable Israeli-Palestinian Cease-Fire" by Dennis Ross: Argues that a push for final status issues might threaten the intra-Palestinian unity government; calls ceasefire a more realistic goal.
15. \*\*3 May 2007, "The Next Mideast War" by David Makovsky: Calls for the enforcement of UN resolutions in Lebanon, faults Syria for its role in Lebanon, criticizes Hamas's approach to a ceasefire in Gaza.
16. \*\*4 June 2007, "The Specter of 'Hamastan'; More Must Be Done to Counter Islamist Gains in Gaza" by Dennis Ross: Calls for Egypt, Israel and Fatah to cut off the supply of weapons to Hamas in Gaza, recommends re-branding of Fatah with donor aid in West Bank and Gaza.
17. 15 June 2007, "A Two State Solution, Palestinian-Style" by Martin Indyk: Endorses the West Bank first strategy, isolation of Gaza.

***Primary op-eds: Arab perspective/critical of Israel***

1. 31 January 2006, "What Hamas Is Seeking" by Mousa Abu Marzook: Discusses performance of Hamas in Palestinian elections and their expectations going forward.
2. 20 February 2006, "Don't Punish the Palestinians" by Jimmy Carter: Views the international boycott of Hamas and Palestinians in general as counterproductive to the peace process and unnecessary punishment of Palestinians.
3. 18 May 2006, "Israel's Half Plan" by Gershom Gorenberg: Applauds Olmert's unilateral plan to withdraw from parts of the West Bank; argues that the convergence plan does not go far enough.
4. 11 July 2006, "Aggression Under False Pretenses" by Ismail Haniyeh: Criticizes Israel's use of force in Gaza and US role in conflict; calls for ceasefire.
5. \*\*17 July 2006, "Postcard from Lebanon" by Fawaz A. Gerges: Discusses the impact of Israel's bombing of Lebanon from first hand observation and a historical perspective; calls for UN imposed ceasefire.
6. 1 August 2006, "Stop the Band-Aid Treatment; We Need Policies for a Real, Lasting Middle East Peace" by Jimmy Carter: Criticizes Israel's use of force in Gaza and Lebanon, lack of engagement from Bush administration; calls for comprehensive regional peace talks.

7. 3 August 2006, "An Appeal for Leadership" by Abdullah Gul: Criticizes Israel's use of force in Lebanon and the failure of the US to call for an immediate ceasefire.
8. 7 August 2006, "A Bad Status Quo; We Must Address the Roots of the Mideast Crisis" by John Waterbury: Criticizes international system and Israel's preference for a status quo that consists of conventional military superiority over all neighbors and strategic depth through its continuous hold over the occupied territories.
9. 9 August 2006, "End This Tragedy Now" by Fouad Sinora: Calls for an immediate end to the Israeli bombardment of Lebanon and discusses seven steps for a diplomatic resolution of the conflict.
10. \*\*23 August 2006, "The New Middle East Bush Is Resisting" by Saad Eddin Ibrahim: Discusses the resistance of the Bush administration to the rise of Islamic democrats in the Middle East and the impact of the Lebanon war on Hizballah's image in the region.
11. \*\*1 October 2006, "Building Nowhereland" by Gershom Gorenberg: Discusses the isolation of Palestinian residents in the West Bank by construction of Israel's separation barrier; critical of settlement policy generally.
12. 18 January 2007, "A New Chance for Peace?" by Jimmy Carter: With the Iraq Study Group Report and new lead Democratic role in Congress, argues now is a good time for the US to press for peace.
13. 26 March 2007, "Obstacle or Opportunity?; How the Palestinian Unity Government Offers A Path to Peace" by Daoud Kuttab: Argues that the Palestinian unity government presents a great opportunity for the international community and Israel to press for a resolution of the conflict.
14. 19 June 2007, "West Bank First, It Won't Work" by Robert Malley and Aaron David Miller: Argues that isolating Gaza while focusing on incentives for the West Bank is a policy doomed to fail.
15. 20 June 2007, "Engage With Hamas; We Earned Our Support" by Ahmed Yousef: Attempts to explain intra-Palestinian violence; seeks an opportunity for Hamas to govern free from outside intervention.
16. 23 July 2007, "A Destination, Not a Road Map" by Daoud Kuttab: Criticizes step by step approach to peace making in the past; preference to see final status issues negotiated.

***Primary op-eds: neutral***

1. \*6 January 2006, "The Bulldozer" by Gershom Gorenberg: Discusses Ariel Sharon's legacy, highlights purported strengths, contributions as well as "tragic flaws."

2. \*15 May 2006, "For Israel and Hamas, A Case for Accommodation" -- Robert Malley and Aaron David Miller: Claims that while the long term goals of Hamas and Israel are far apart, there are some short term goals where the interests may coincide such as a ceasefire.
3. \*9 May 2006, "Muslims and Jews: Common Ground" by Robert Eisen: Discusses the Middle East conflict from Muslim and Jewish perspectives, calls for the role of the clergy in promoting dialogue.
4. \*\*28 July 2006, "A Time to Act" by Warren Christopher: Blames Hizballah for repeatedly instigating violence with Israel and the mediating role played the US in the past, calls for an immediate cease fire in the Lebanon war with an eye towards longer term negotiations.
5. \*\*30 July 2006, "Beyond Lebanon; This Is the Time for a US-Led Comprehensive Settlement" by Brent Scowcroft: Discusses the potential terms for a US led comprehensive settlement in the Middle East conflict and Lebanon war.
6. 28 July 2007, "What Use Were All The Wars?" by Mona Eltahawy: Forty years from the 1967 war, criticizes the lack of reform in Arab countries, Palestinian leadership and the continuing Israeli occupation.

***Tangential op-eds: Israeli perspective/critical of Arabs***

1. 20 February 2006, "The Choice of How to Respond" by Ronald D. Asmus: Maintains Israel should become a full member of NATO citing Iran and the failure of the peace process.
2. 5 April 2006, "Yes, It's Anti-Semitic" by Eliot A. Cohen: Argues the 'Israel Lobby' study by Mearsheimer and Walt is anti-semitic and biased against Israel.
3. \*\*20 July 2006, "Why I'll Vote for Bolton" by George V. Voinovich: Citing the Lebanon war and need to defend Israel, among other factors, Senator explains why he would back UN Ambassador John Bolton if re-nominated to the position by President Bush.
4. \*\*31 July 2006, "The Next Steps with Iran" by Henry Kissinger: Discusses Iran's role in supporting Hizballah and Hamas, the negotiations with European nations and US relations.
5. \*\*13 August 2006, "Standing By Bush" by Joshua Muravchik: Discusses support for the Bush administration policies regarding Israel, the Palestinians, and the war in Lebanon.
6. \*\*25 August 2006, "Israel's Broken Process; Decision-Making on National Security Must Be Fixed" by Yoram Peri: Maintains that weak civilian leadership bowed too hastily to the Israeli military in Lebanon, calls for reform of Israeli national security decision making.

7. \*\*31 August 2006, "We're Not Winning This War" by John Lehman: Criticizes Iran's role in Lebanon, calls for more intensive efforts for the US to protect itself from Islamic extremists.
8. \*\*19 December 2006, "Forget the Domino Theories" by Robert Satloff: Faults the Iraq Study Group Report for linking strategy in Iraq to a resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.
9. 20 January 2007, "Jimmy Carter's Jewish Problem" by Deborah Lipstadt: Maintains President Carter's book downplays threats to Israel and the history of Jewish suffering.
10. \*\*27 July 2007, "How to Manage Assad" by Jon Alterman: Calls for US to engage Syria and manage relations from a position of strength, refers to Syria as a regional spoiler.

***Tangential op-eds: Arab perspective/critical of Israel***

1. \*\*17 February 2006, "In the Mideast, the Third Way Is a Myth" by Shibley Telhami: Argues the US strategy of creating alternatives to existing governments and Islamists has been a failure -- and that the US should engage Islamist parties.
2. \*\*27 July 2006, "Try Talking with Syria; Assad Isn't Going Away" by David W. Lesch: Argues the US should talk to Syria who has made overtures to the US and Israel in the past and could be in a position to help the US in Iraq.
3. \*\*30 August 2006, "Diversionary Strike on a Rights Group" by Kathleen Peratis: Discusses the criticism of Human Rights Watch for their analysis of the Lebanon war by individuals and organizations supportive of Israel.

***Tangential op-eds: neutral***

1. \*\*8 May 2006, "A Realistic Idealism" by Madeleine K. Albright: Calls the Bush administration's democracy promotion strategy naive, maintains the Palestinian elections will force Hamas to change or fail which is a positive change in the status quo.
2. \*\*13 June 2006, "The Wrong Way to Sway Egypt" by Jon Alterman: Argues the strategy of directly tying aid to reform in Egypt was useful in the past but not working today, calls for reduction in aid, cooperation of intelligence services, but not an end to the call for openness.
3. 12 August 2006, "Learning from Hizballah" by Brian E. Humphreys: Discusses Hizballah as a social movement in Lebanon and the lessons that can be learned from the perspective of the US military and counterinsurgency.

***The New York Times data list***

*\*\*Omitted from CAMERA Study, \*Placed in different category by CAMERA*

***Primary op-eds: Israeli perspective/critical of Arabs***

1. 6 January 2006, "In the Shadow of Sharon" by Benny Morris: Discusses Sharon's legacy focusing primarily on the most recent years of the conflict.
2. 18 March 2006, "How I Learned to Love the Wall" by Irshad Manji: Discusses her support for Israel's wall in the West Bank.
3. 27 March 2006, "Stupor in Our Time" by Etgar Keret: Explains support for Kadima and Olmert in the upcoming Israeli elections.
4. \*30 March 2006, "You Say You Want a Constitution" by Stephen Mazie: Discusses concerns related to the drafting of a constitution for Israel, including the status of Palestinian citizens of Israel but does not recommend that the constitution itself require equal rights for all Israeli citizens.
5. \*11 May 2006, "Cold, Hard Cash" by Geoff Porter: Maintains if Arab governments cannot get Hamas to moderate its policies along with its financial assistance, Hamas will seek funding from more radical sources and will be more difficult to deal with.
6. 22 June 2006, "Hiding Behind the Enemy" by Haim Watzman: Discusses the Israeli military's need to use Palestinians as human shields and Israeli army home demolition policy.
7. 18 July 2006, "The Way We War" by Etgar Keret: Explains the impact of the Lebanon war on Israeli society, distinguishes Lebanon war from the type of conflict fought daily against civilian populations in the West Bank and Gaza.
8. \*18 July 2006, "A Conflict That Will Stay Closer to Home" by Edward Luttawk: Maintains although Iran and Syria are sponsoring the fighting in Lebanon, the confrontation is not likely to further involve other countries.
9. 19 July 2006, "Israel Leaves the Scuds Behind" by Zev Chafets: Maintains Israel can re-establish its deterrent power in Lebanon that it had withheld in previous confrontations and send a message to Iran and Syria at the same time.
10. \*21 July 2006, "Look What Democratic Reform Dragged In" by Ted Koppel: Emphasizes Iran's role in the Lebanon war, Iraq and Gaza violence through its support for Hamas and Hizballah, claims that the US is at war with Iran through surrogates.

11. 22 July 2006, "An Appropriate Response" by Richard Perle: Supports Israel's actions in the Lebanon war and Gaza, calls for an unambiguous defeat of Hizballah and Hamas.
12. \*25 July 2006, "Another Man's Honor" by John Tierney: Maintains the Arab world has a different "honor culture" than the West when it comes to supporting democratic values, the justification for war, and the value of human life.
13. \*2 August 2006, "Lebanon's Force for Good" by Adir Gurion Waldman: Recommends the creation of an Israel-Lebanon monitoring group as part of a long term diplomatic resolution of outstanding issues including the disarmament of Hizballah.
14. 2 August 2006, "Peacekeepers Are Not Peacemakers" by Nancy Soderberg: Argues peacekeepers will not be effective unless Hizballah is disarmed, calls for Iran, Lebanon, Syria to drop the claim that Israel did not withdraw from Lebanon in 2000.
15. \*9 January 2007, "Don't Play with Maps" by Dennis Ross: Comments on Carter's book, but includes a substantive discussion of Camp David negotiations from a primary participant, continues "generous offer" discourse.
16. \*24 January 2007, "What if Israel and Syria Find Common Ground" by Michael Oren: Discusses the requirements for an Israel-Syrian peace agreement, considers criticism of Syrian government from both US and Israeli points of view.
17. 19 June 2007, "Brothers to the Bitter End" by Fouad Ajami: Discusses intra-Palestinian violence, repeats "generous offer" discourse, faults Arab states for not doing more to help Palestinians.
18. \*19 July 2007, "Forced to Get Along" by Mark Helprin: Maintains the interests of Israel and the Palestinian Authority are aligned today in a manner similar to Egypt and Israel prior to Camp David, supports West Bank first strategy, isolation of Gaza.

***Primary op-eds: Arab perspective/critical of Israel***

1. 27 January 2006, " Hamas at the Helm" by Fotini Christia and Sreemati Mitter: Maintains US should not trumpet ideals of democracy and ignore the will of Palestinians voters and that the peace process will not be possible without including Hamas.
2. 1 March 2006, "What the PLO Has to Offer" by Saeb Erekat: Explains the poor performance of Fatah in the Palestinian elections, faults Israel in part, maintains that the election of Hamas cannot obscure the reality that Palestinians still want peace.

3. 10 March 2006, "Israel's Tragedy Foretold" by Gershon Gorenberg: Discusses the decision of the Israeli Foreign Ministry in the aftermath of the 1967 war that building settlements in the West Bank would be a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.
4. 22 July 2006, "The Terrorism Trap" by Rashid Khalidi: Calls for a ceasefire in Lebanon, maintains that the US and Israel should seek to end the occupation of Arab lands which serves as a root cause of regional conflicts.
5. 22 July 2006, "Meet Your Enemies" by Robert Malley: Calls for a cease fire, comprehensive talks with all parties, prisoner exchanges, and easing the boycott on Hamas.
6. 22 July 2006, "Don't Just Talk to States" by Judith Kipper: Calls for direct or indirect talks between the US and all parties to the Lebanon conflict including Hamas, Hizballah, Iran and Syria seeking a comprehensive resolution of regional problems.
7. 27 July 2006, "The Tribes of War" by Abbas El Zein: Criticizes the repeated Israeli bombing of Lebanon over the years and disproportionate force, also faults Hizballah for the current conflict and missile fire on Haifa.
8. 3 August 2006, "Ground to a Halt" by Robert Pape: Maintains the Israeli military strategy against Hizballah will not work and will likely increase recruitment, recommends international pressure and diplomacy to cut off the supply of missiles as a more limited strategy.
9. 17 August 2006, "Is Hamas Ready to Deal?" by Scott Atran: Discusses reasons that the US and Israel may want to deal with Hamas.
10. 18 August 2006, "Start Talking to Hizballah" by Lakhdar Brahimi: Criticizes the US role in the Lebanon war, discusses outstanding issues between the parties, calls for comprehensive steps for a resolution including the disarmament of Hizballah.
11. 7 October 2006, "We Can't Go Home Again" by Sam Bahour: Discusses Israel's policy of preventing Palestinians from visiting their families or returning to the West Bank and Gaza.
12. 1 November 2006, "Pause for Peace" by Ahmed Yousef: Calls for a *hudna* or truce between Israel and Hamas.
13. 11 May 2007, "Give the Arab Peace Initiative a Chance" by Fouad Sinora: Discusses the Arab Peace Initiative in the aftermath of the Lebanon war, calls for diplomacy and compromise over future violence.

14. 5 June 2007, "What If Israel Had Turned Back" by Tom Segev: Criticizes Israel's conquest of the West Bank and East Jerusalem following the 1967 war as counterproductive.
15. 20 June 2007, "What Hamas Wants" by Ahmed Yousef: Attempts to explain the intra-Palestinian violence, discusses the goals of Hamas governance, calls on the international community to end the isolation of Gaza.
16. 21 July 2007, "Getting Hizballah to Behave" by Nicholas Noe: Argues by addressing some of the basic concerns of Hizballah that the potential for further violence with Israel can be greatly reduced.

*Primary op-eds: neutral*

1. 23 March 2006, "Cuba on the West Bank" by Gideon Lichfield: Maintains the international isolation of Hamas is not likely to succeed, calls for a carrot and stick approach for both Hamas and Israel to move in the right direction.
2. 14 July 2006, "Israel's Invasion, Syria's War" by Michael Young: Criticizes Hizballah's actions in the conflict with Israel on several levels, calls for the gradual disarmament of Hizballah, exchange of prisoners, and Israeli withdrawal from Shebba farms.
3. 22 July 2006, "Bring in the Quartet" by Avishai Margalit: Calls for outside parties to intervene in the Lebanon war if direct talks between the parties cannot be arranged -- with either representatives of the Arab League Initiative or members of the Quartet.
4. \*22 July 2006, "Resolve to Put Lebanon in Charge" by Chibli Mallat: Calls for a ceasefire in the Lebanon war, the disarmament of Hizballah, return of prisoners, for the end of outside intervention in Lebanon, and for the Lebanese government to assert authority throughout the country.
5. \*22 July 2006, "Stop Bombs, Start Talks" by Paul Salem: Calls for a ceasefire in the Lebanon war, the disarmament of Hizballah, return of prisoners, and authority of the Lebanese government throughout the country.
6. 5 August 2006, "To Help Israel, Help Syria" by Andrew Tabler: Recommends options to break Syria from Iran including economic reforms and support for Syrian civil society led by the US private sector.
7. 22 August 2006, "In Lebanon, Even Peace Is Possible" by Carlos Pascual and Martin Indyk: Recommends steps to rebuild Lebanon in the aftermath of the war with Israel.

8. \*28 October 2006, "Stuck in the Canal" by David Fromkin: Discusses the 1956 Suez crisis from a historical perspective.
9. \*17 December 2006, "If You Love Lebanon, Set It Free" by Robert Grenier: Argues that further integrating Hizballah into Lebanese politics, minimizing the involvement of outside powers, and allowing the Lebanese government to reign in Hizballah's war making capacity will go along way toward promoting stability in the region.
10. \*4 January 2007. "Getting the Middle East Back on Our Side" by Brent Scowcroft: Consistent with the Iraq Study Group Report, maintains a resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and other regional conflicts will establish the appropriate framework with the eventual withdrawal of US troops from Iraq.
11. 9 January 2007, "A Green Land in the Sand" by David Newman: Discusses the decision by the Israeli Ministry of Education to reintroduce the pre-1967 Israeli border, "Green Line" into Israeli textbooks.
12. \*18 June 2007, "New Lyrics for Israel" by Adam Lebor: Maintains the Israeli national anthem should be changed to become more inclusive of all of its citizens, calls for reciprocal gestures to bind Arab loyalty to the state -- misses component of Palestinian dispossession altogether.

***Tangential op-eds: Israeli perspective/critical of Arabs***

1. \*26 July 2006, "The Enemy of My Enemy Is Still My Enemy" by Bernard Haykel: Maintains support for Hizballah in the Lebanon war by Shia and Sunnis is marginalizing al-Qaeda and may result in a more united Shia-Sunni front against US troops in Iraq.
2. 7 August 2006, "Counterinsurgency, by the Book" by Richard H. Schultz, Jr. and Andrea J. Dew: Praises Israeli intelligence gathering against Palestinians; suggests Israel has provided a blueprint for successful intelligence architecture.
3. \*\*16 August 2006, "Muslim Myopia" by Irshad Manji: Considers it hypocritical for Muslims to protest the violence in Gaza and Lebanon, but to remain silent when it comes to Muslim violence against fellow Muslims or others.
4. \*\*10 December 2006, "The Last War" by Fouad Ajami: Criticizes the Iraq Study Group for linking the Iraq war to a resolution of the Middle East conflict.
5. \*\*17 January 2007, "Another Perspective, or Jihad TV" by Judea Pearl: Questions whether Arab television and Al-Jazeera is providing a platform for jihadists and propaganda against Israel.

6. \*\*29 July 2007, "Israel's Incredible Sinking Sea" by Haim Watzman: Discusses the plight of the Dead Sea from an Israeli point of view (see title).

***Tangential op-eds: Arab perspective/critical of Israel***

1. 19 April 2006, "A Lobby, Not a Conspiracy" by Tony Judt: Criticizes the lack of coverage of the Israel lobby study in the US media, does not agree with its conclusions necessarily, but acknowledges a key argument of the uncritical nature of US support for Israeli policies.
2. 24 April 2007, "The Neocon Paradox" by Robert Wright: Maintains the stated goals of neocons are often undermined by their tendency to enrage public opinion against them, criticizes Ariel Sharon's policies toward Palestinians.

***Tangential op-eds: Neutral***

1. 24 August 2006, "Sweating Out the Truth in Iran" by Maziar Bahari: Maintains that Iranian officials recognize Hizballah as a liability to Iran even though they celebrate Hizballah's performance in the Lebanon war.
2. \*\*13 July 2007, "Who Killed Ashraf Marwan?" by Howard Blum: Explores the life and recent death of an Egyptian spy in the backdrop of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

## Endnotes

- [1] Eric Rozenman, "Washington Post-Watch: A Freudian Slip at The Washington Post," CAMERA, 11 July 2008.
- [2] CAMERA insists on the use of the term "disputed" territories in referring to the Gaza Strip, West Bank and East Jerusalem which has been rejected by the International Court of Justice, UN Security Council Resolutions, the UN General Assembly, and human rights organizations among others who use the term "Occupied Palestinian Territories" in order to acknowledge the continuing legal and humanitarian obligations which stem from the Israeli occupation. The term "disputed" is still used by many news services including the Associated Press.
- [3] The Electronic Intifada, "EI exclusive: a pro-Israel group's plan to re-write history on Wikipedia," 21 April 2008.
- [4] Ibid., p.6
- [5] Ricki Hollander, Eric Rozenman, Tamar Sternthal, "Study: On Nation's Op-Ed Pages, Israel's Voice is Stifled," CAMERA, 5 February 2008.
- [6] Ibid.
- [7] Ibid.
- [8] Guest op-eds are not the employees of the paper and far fewer in number than editorials newspaper and staff op-eds so they hardly reflect the voice of America's newspapers. The terminology of pro-Israel and pro-Arab does not account for the diversity of viewpoints on both sides and which overlaps on many occasions. CAMERA seems to make pro-Israel synonymous with Israeli government policy -- and many Israelis clearly do not agree with those policies. The study also failed to consider that outside commentaries or guest op-eds are likely intended to balance the heavy support for Israeli policies in the editorial pages of *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*.
- [9] See Methodology Section. Op-eds primarily dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict were classified separately from those giving it less attention or containing another focus altogether.
- [10] Ibid., p. 3.
- [11] Ibid., p. 3.
- [12] Overall 111 op-eds were examined in this study, 51 supported an Israeli view or criticized Arab policies, 37 supported an Arab perspective or criticized Israel, and 23 were considered neutral.
- [13] Ibid.
- [14] Eric Rozenman, "Study: Washington Post Op-Eds: A 'Wide Range of Commentary'?" p. 2, CAMERA, 5 February 2008.
- [15] Ibid., p. 4.
- [16] It should be stated that three primary and several tangential op-eds supporting an Arab perspective or critical of Israel were also omitted from the report.
- [17] *The Washington Post* editorial page is staffed by Fred Hiatt, Jackson Diehl, Charles Krauthammer, George Will, Michael Kinsley, Colbert I. King, Michael Gerson, Jim Hoagland, Sebastian Mallaby, Richard Cohen, and Lally Weymouth (interviews) who typically weigh strongly in Israel's favor. Earlier this year an editorial questioned whether a humanitarian crisis in Gaza actually existed. "Breach in Gaza," Editorial, *The Washington Post*, 24 January 2008, Page A18.

[18] Rozenman at p. 4.

[19] Ibid., p. 4.

[20] Ibid., p. 5.

[21] Ricki Hollander, "Study: NY Times Op-Eds: Forum for Contentious Issues or One Sided Advocacy," p. 1, CAMERA, 5 February 2008.

[22] Bill Kristol, Thomas Friedman, David Brooks, Roger Cohen, and occasionally Ethan Bronner are some of the writers at *The New York Times* associated with strong support for Israel. Howard Friel and Richard Falk document some of the recurring problems with *The New York Times* coverage and commentary including the failure to mention international law and the lack of Palestinian perspective generally. Friel, Howard and Richard Falk, *Israel-Palestine On Record: How The New York Times Misreports Conflict in the Middle East*, New York: Verso, 2007.

[23] "Lebanon's Force for Good," Waldman, Adir Gurion, *The New York Times*, 2 August 2006.

[24] Hollander at p. 3.

[25] Ibid., p. 3.

[26] Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[27] Ibid., p. 2.

[28] Ibid., p. 3.

[29] Ibid., p. 6.

[30] Friel (2007); Marda Dunsky. *How the American Mainstream Media Report the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.

[31] Ibid.

[32] If Americans Knew Report Card, "Off the Charts: New York Times Coverage of Israeli and Palestinian Deaths."

[33] Friel (2007).

[34] Hollander, et al., pp. 1-2.

[35] Hollander, et al., p. 4.