MONTH OF OCTOBER

OCTOBER 2
News Article: RUSSIA – Sharon Visit Focus on Palestinian Conflict
Briefs

This article is neutral.

OCTOBER 3
News Article: A New Stand For Pat
By Tara Weiss
Courant Staff

This article is neutral.

OCTOBER 5
News Article: Photos Deemed Improper
By Johnny Mason
Courant Staff Writer

This article is about two photographs removed from an exhibit following objections from viewers. The story is presented in a balanced manner. The first photograph was of a poster equating Judaism with Nazism, and the second showed a poster with an American flag with its stars replaced by skulls and the red stripes resembling dripping blood. The story explains that the photos enraged employees at the exhibit and were subsequently removed.

OCTOBER 6
News Article: Teenager Dies In Nablus Crash
By Mohammed Daraghmeh
Associated Press

• Eastern Jerusalem was captured by Israel from Jordanian rule in the 1967 Six Day War and annexed afterward.

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This sentence casts Israel as an aggressor. There is no mention that Jordan had previously seized and annexed East Jerusalem (along with the entire West Bank) in an offensive war in 1948, whereas Israel expelled the Jordanians in a defensive struggle in 1967. There is also no mention that East Jerusalem is the site of the ancient Temple, the holiest site in Jerusalem.

- Foreign governments and aid organizations have expressed concern about the deaths of children during the Palestinian uprising...

There is no mention that the violence was unleashed by the Palestinians who rejected the terms offered at Camp David, and that Israel is defending itself against terrorism, the deliberate murder of innocent civilians. The Palestinian children’s deaths have been either due to their being caught in a cross fire, or to their being used as human shields by terrorists. The distorted implication due to this omission is that Israel is to be blamed for the killing of Palestinian children.

OCTOBER 7
News Article: 10 Palestinians Reported Killed
By Ibrahim Barzak
Associated Press

This news article is neutral.
OCTOBER 8
News Article: Militants Kill Palestinian Police Official
Los Angeles Times

- The Israeli raid, in which the army fired machine guns on a hospital and used a combat helicopter to fire a missile into a Palestinian crowd…

No source for the charge that the Israeli army fired on a hospital and fired a missile into a crowd is given, but we assume that Palestinians made the charge. An Israeli rebuttal to the charge of firing on the crowd is reported by the writer, however no answer to the charge of firing “on a hospital” by an Israeli spokesman is offered. Nothing is written, either, about what the targets were when the hospital was supposedly fired on. If gunfire against the Israeli soldiers was originating in the hospital, this should have been reported.

OCTOBER 11
News Article: Israeli Bus Driver Kept Bomber Pinned Down
By Ramit Plushnick-Masti
Associated Press

- During a raid in the Rafah refugee camp in Gaza, Israeli troops shot dead two Palestinians, one of them a 12-year old boy.

The shooting of the boy did not occur in a vacuum. Was the boy armed? Was the shooting accidental? These are questions that should be covered in the story, as a disinterested reader might conclude from the incomplete data presented that the killing was deliberate. Mentioning the age of the victim without an explanation creates the negative image of an indiscriminate child killer.
There is no explanation from the journalist or from Israeli sources why the refugee camp was raided. The most likely purpose, to seek known terrorists or bomb-making facilities, should have been mentioned.

**BRIEFS: ISRAEL**

**WOULD-BE BOMBER CAUGHT AT U.S. EMBASSY**

This two-paragraph “BRIEF” of a terrorist’s failed attempt to enter a cafe in Tel-Aviv should have been given more prominence. There is much criticism of Israel for “harshly” reacting to acts of terrorism, with claims that this Israeli reaction is not effectively working. Numerous attempted terrorist activity successfully thwarted by Israel is typically under-reported.

**News Item: In Nablus, Lockdown Strongest**

**Sub-Heading: Occupation Disrupts Palestinians’ Lives**

Greg Myre – Associated Press

This article describes the hardships in Nablus caused by the Israeli occupation in tones that are sympathetic to the Palestinians. At the same time, however, the article presents the Israeli justification for the occupation (the homicide bombings), and also states that the result of the occupation is a reduction in these terrorist acts. Headlines and sub-headlines should reflect the basic text of the article. The headline/sub-headline of this news item should reflect Israeli justification and Israeli lives that have been disrupted by terror bombings.
• *Israeli soldiers began seizing West Bank cities June 20, after a pair of deadly suicide bombings…*

“Seize” is an inappropriate word, implying an aggressive offensive action with the intent of assuming permanent control. (For example: Hitler seized the Sudetenland). The Israeli action was defensive and not intended to be permanent. A more appropriate phrasing would have been “Israeli soldiers temporarily took control of West Bank cities…after a pair of deadly homicide bombings.”

• *One clear result is a dramatic drop in suicide bombings. Another is the suffocation of normal life for Palestinians*

These two sentences imply “equivalence.” A “drop in suicide bombings” results in “suffocation of normal life for Palestinians.” Disrupting normal life is not equivalent to the intentional murder of innocent men, women and children blown apart into unrecognizable body parts. “Suffocating” is an imaging creative adjective casting blame on Israel for defending its people against terrorism.

• *Since the (Israeli) military invaded West Bank cities nearly four months ago…*

The appropriate word is “incursion,” implying a temporary action. An “invasion” implies an aggressive permanent action. The sentence could have read “Since the Israeli incursion into West Bank cities…”
• “…kids have been challenging the Israeli troops with stones, and four youths, aged 10 to 15, have been shot dead in the past two weeks.”

The distorted implication is that the Israeli troops deliberately kill children throwing stones. There is no mention that Israelis do not intentionally kill children. As has been demonstrated in the past, stone throwers often mingle Molotov cocktails with the stones, sometimes children are used as shields, and sometimes they are the victims of crossfire with armed Palestinians. The journalist offers no explanation.

• “The occupation now feels semi-permanent…”

Rather than report news objectively, the journalist has now offered his opinion by using three different inappropriate words (seizing, invaded, occupation) to describe what is a temporary incursion.

OCTOBER 15
News Article: Death Again Visits A Palestinian Clan
Sub-headline: Israel blamed for the killing of a West Bank activist who is blown apart by a booby-trapped phone
By Laura King (Los Angeles Times)
Special to the Courant

The sub-headline words “blown apart” are rarely used to describe innocent Israeli victims who have frequently been blown apart by Palestinian suicide bombers. The headline/sub-headline should reflect the context of the news article that explains that many of the Palestinian clan are active with the terrorist group Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade.
• “(He was) lying bloodied on the ground, his entrails spilling out, the hand...blown clearly off.”

This grizzly description is a common occurrence for hundreds of innocent Israeli victims in pizza parlors, buses, etc., but rarely described in this gruesome, yet truthful manner, when innocent Israelis are deliberately blown apart with “entrails spilling out” and limbs, heads, etc. “blown clearly off.”

• …Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, a Palestinian militia whose attacks have killed scores of Israelis.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade is a terrorist wing of Arafat’s Fatah group. It is not a “militia.”

The entire article and headline, through the use of words such as “activists” and “militia,” and the grizzly graphic description of a dying Palestinian reflects the journalist’s biased opinion through “imaging.”

OCTOBER 16
Death Notices
Shaden ABU HIJLEH

Using the Death Notices column as a propaganda tool is a despicable act that desecrates the memory of loved ones who lived or have lived in the regional area.

It should have been glaringly obvious to the Courant staff that the alleged “obituary” was politically motivated and should have been investigated. There was obviously no haste in publishing since time and place of funeral arrangements were not noted.
OCTOBER 17
News Article:  Bush Sending Envoy To Promote Middle East Peace
By Robin Wright
Los Angeles Times

This article is neutral.

OCTOBER 18
News Article:  U.S. To Hit Missiles Aimed At Israel If War Comes
By Vernon Loeb & Thomas Ricks
Washington Post

This article is neutral.

OCTOBER 19
BRIEFS:  Troops Withdraw From Jenin

This article is neutral.

OCTOBER 21
News Article:  Israeli Chiefs At Odds Over Settlement Clash
Chicago Tribune

This article is neutral.

OCTOBER 22
News Article:  Israel To Reinforce Closures
Sub-headline:  Bus Bombing Makes Military Retaliation Likely Against Palestinians
By Jamie Tarabay – Associated Press

The basic news event is the murder of 14 innocent Israeli and the wounding of 45 others in two major terrorist attacks. The headline should reflect the horror of these events. Instead, the casual reader or headline scanner focuses on the Israeli intent to “reinforce closures” and use “military retaliation.”
OCTOBER 22 (continued)

The headline (which is written by a Courant staff writer), should have read “Palestinian Terrorist Suicide Bombing Kills 14 Innocent Israelis.” And the sub-headline should have said “Body Parts Spewed For Hundreds of Feet.”

• The militant Islamic Jihad movement claimed responsibility …said the bombing was in “retaliation for the series of massacres committed by the criminal enemy against our people.”

There is no Israeli response to, or substantiation of, the vicious distorted allegation of “massacres” and “criminal enemy.” In contrast, the perpetrators of this brutal murder by the Islamic Jihad terrorist are referred to as “The militant Islamic Jihad movement” – an egregious distortion of a terrorist organization. There is no mention by the writer that Israel’s defense against terrorism is to root out the terrorists and their bomb factories. Since terrorists operate in civilian areas, some Palestinian civilian casualties are inevitable. This could hardly be considered a “series of massacres.”

The author has difficulty properly identifying the murderous Islamic Jihad movement as “terrorist” preferring the innocuous terms “militant” and “movement.”

OCTOBER 23
BRIEFS-ISRAEL: Work on U.S. Plan Continues Despite Attack

This article is neutral.
In the evolving duel between Palestinian attackers and Israel’s security forces…

This article is an egregious example of efforts by the media to sanitize murder and terrorism. The article deals with the development of bigger bombs capable of brutally killing larger numbers of innocent Israeli civilians, but it is treated with a matter-of-fact attitude.

Not once in the fifteen paragraphs in this article is the term “terror” or “murder” used. The Islamic Jihad, Hamas and Al-Aqsa Martyr’s Brigade are described only as “attackers”, “bombers” and “suicide-bombers”, but not as terrorists. Nor does the article mention that these organizations are on the State Department’s list of terrorist organizations.

The tactic is a response to the tough security measures Israel has taken against suicide bombers…

This is the journalist’s opinion, not objective reporting. Three paragraphs later, in fact, the writer states that Islamic Jihad, “which doesn’t recognize Israel’s right to exist, has carried out dozens of attacks in the past two years.” There is no mention that Islamic Jihad is dedicated to terrorism – the killing of innocent Israeli citizens and considers the killing of Jews moral and just. The implication that Islamic Jihad is conducting suicide bombing in response to Israel’s security measures to defend its people against murderous terrorism is an egregious distortion.
This article deals with the paid obituary notice of a Palestinian woman, Shaden Abu Hijleh, placed by Gale Toensing, a known pro-Palestinian activist.

The purposes of an obituary notice are to pay honor to the memory of a deceased person, and secondarily to notify mourners of funeral arrangements. Since Mrs. Toensing is a known Palestinian activist, the Courant should not have accepted this obituary. Mrs. Toensing is not a relative of the deceased, and her motive in placing it was politically motivated, to bring discredit to Israel. The story, based on the accounts of family members, states that an Israeli soldier shot her for no apparent reason. There is no independent verification of this story of deliberate murder without provocation despite the claim of the Courant staff writer that it appeared in the New York Times. (The Times may have merely reprinted the same online dispatch that Mrs. Toensing read.)

- *Meanwhile… a 56-year old American citizen (Toensing) was so moved …that she felt compelled to honor this woman.*

Later in the story it says:

- *The reason I did it was so people know what’s going on there, said Toensing.*

This sentence is in contradiction to the original assertion, that Toensing placed the obituary to honor the deceased woman.
By her own admission she acknowledges that she did so for propaganda purposes. In addition, the alleged intimate details of her death, how she was shot by a passing Israeli soldier (as claimed by family members) who stopped his jeep, went to the back to pick up his weapon, and then shot her in the heart and neck, is what we would expect from a news story, not an obituary notice. Placing this “obituary” which lacked proper verification, was done for propaganda purposes and the Courant should not have accepted it under these circumstances.

• To some local Jewish residents, however, the submission raises concerns…

This implies that only Jewish residents are concerned about this inappropriate obituary. Non-Jews were also offended.

OCTOBER 24
News Article: A Hazardous Harvest For Palestinians
Sub-Headline: Jewish Settlers Wage An Economically Devastating War Against Olive Pickers
By John Ward Anderson – Washington Post

The sub-headline is inaccurate and inappropriate. The sub-headline should have explained the reason for the settler’s actions, as noted in the picture caption and text. The sub-headline could have read “Settlers Concerned That Olive Groves Are Used To Shield Terrorists.”

...settlers…shot and killed a …Palestinian man who was picking olives…according to Palestinian witnesses.
OCTOBER 24 (continued)

No response or rebuttal from Israeli sources are offered, nor is there verification as to who the witnesses were. There is no reason given for the alleged shooting. (Indiscriminate killing of Palestinian olive pickers is not Israeli practice.)

• *The report said that 7000 olive trees were uprooted by Israeli Soldiers in the past two years “as punishment for Palestinians throwing stones”…*

  No rebuttal from an Israeli source is given to this unverified accusation, that 7000 trees were destroyed as “punishment” – an opinion by the report writer. Israel has acknowledged uprooting some trees that were being used as cover for attacking terrorists, but the number 7000 is suspect.

OCTOBER 25
News Article: Israelis Enter West Bank Town
By Mark Lavie
Associated Press

  This article is neutral.

OCTOBER 27
BRIEFS: MIDEAST – Troops Arrest Dozens; Boy Killed in Gaza

  This article is neutral.
OCTOBER 28
News Item: Bomb Kills 3 Israeli Soldiers
Sub-headline: Suicide Bomber’s Explosives May Have Been Detonated By Bullets
By John Ward Anderson
Washington Post

The headline should have read “Homicide Bomber Kills 3 Israeli Soldiers” and the sub-headline should have read “18 Civilians Injured By Explosives” Why not explain in the headline, rather than the sub-headline, that this was a homicide-bombing? The headline is also misleading in its implication that only soldiers were the targets.

… assaulted a group of Palestinian olive pickers and foreign peace activists…

The foreigners who came to harvest the olive crop are commonly called “peace activists” by Courant writers as well as most of the media. In fact they do not come to Israel to promote peace, but rather to sympathize with and assist the Palestinians in whatever ways they can. If there were Israeli workers who needed assistance, these so-called “peace activists” would be conspicuously absent.

OCTOBER 30
News Article: Vote Threatens Israel’s Governing Coalition
By Ramit Plushnick-Masti
Associated Press

This article is neutral.
News Article:  Peace Efforts At Risk
Sub-headline: Israeli Coalition’s Collapse Seen As Undermining U.S. Plan For Mideast Peace
Combined Wire Services

“Undermining” is the wrong word for the sub-headline. The proper word would have been “Delaying” as explained in the text of the story.

• Shimon Peres…had helped craft the landmark Oslo accords; Sharon made it his mission to dismantle them.

Sharon’s mission is to quell the violence initiated by the Palestinians and bring peace to the area. No mention is made by the writer that the Oslo accords, which were signed by Arafat, call for a total end to violence and the prohibition of all acts of terror. This has been violated by the Palestinians since its inception. The statement by the writer about “Sharon’s mission” is unverified opinion, reflecting a conscious or unconscious bias by the writer. It has no place in a news story.