

bbcwatch

PICTURES OF PREJUDICE

by

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and

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**A PICTORIAL ANALYSIS OF THE BBC WEBSITE**

**1 JANUARY – 30 JUNE 2005**

## **Dedication**

This report is dedicated to the memory of RHA

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

**TREVOR ASSERSON** is a UK solicitor and a member of the Israeli Bar. After 20 years working in London, in 2005 he set up a UK law firm in Israel.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION and EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was first published privately on 9 January 2004, when it was provided to the BBC Governor's Impartiality Review of the Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. bbcwatch was one of only two individuals – not representing some official body – invited to make a submission and then to provide oral evidence to the Panel.

This is the 5th report by bbcwatch. Like all our earlier reports, we have again tested BBC news coverage against BBC obligations as set out in the Editorial Guidelines. We have used techniques of analysis of the type which would be used when bringing evidence before an English court.

In this report we have analysed one corner of the BBC website, “Day In Pictures,”<sup>1</sup> which loosely summarises world events by publishing typically 5-12 pictures each working day, 5 days per week. We have also had a helpful discussion with Pete Clifton, the Editor of News online at the BBC, who explained both how “Day in Pictures” is produced and its purpose.

Our study reveals two important if predictable findings:

- 1) There are parts of the BBC output on the Middle East which are not subjected to any or any effective editorial control; and
- 2) BBC journalists have a predilection to denigrate Israel and to evoke sympathy for Palestinians

The evidence for the first finding is set out in Schedule I below, which summarises a conversation with the editor of the BBC News online, Pete Clifton.

The evidence for the extent of the bias is set out in Schedule II below, which contains copies of the images studied together with a brief analysis of those images. We also analyse the bias statistically in various pie charts in the body of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in\\_pictures/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_pictures/default.stm)

## 2. RECOMENDATIONS

We have two principal recommendations:

- 1) The BBC must put in place management systems to find out what its journalists think. Armed with this essential management information it can then seek to ensure that the views of its journalists represent a wide spectrum of opinion. If the BBC fails to do this, then partiality, inaccuracy and unfairness will inevitably emerge.

If a programme were to be commissioned on the “the best footballers in the Premier League today” it would clearly be negligent if the commissioning editor failed to notice that the entire production team chosen for the programme happened to be dyed in the wool Arsenal supporters. Knowing this fact the commissioning editor might change some members of the production team or not, but s/he will at least be on notice of the possibility that a less than balanced programme could emerge and be able to take appropriate action to ensure that the final programme was balanced. The same applies to news and current affairs.

It is naïve to think that any human being can put aside all his/her personal views when selecting both which stories to cover, which to omit and how much prominence to give and what angle to emphasise in those stories chosen for attention.

It is particularly naïve to think that a political journalist – likely as not driven to the job by an interest in politics – does not have strong views on many topics which will affect the manner in which they make these important choices.

For example, in March 2004, Israeli soldiers apprehended a young boy who had been persuaded to act as a suicide bomber. Many journalists focused on the horror of the suicide bombing campaign and on the horror of the Palestinian decision to brainwash schoolchildren to kill themselves. The BBC alone chose to use the story to attack Israeli press freedom because the boy was not offered to the world press for interview<sup>2</sup>. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the BBC journalist was driven by her own personal views to seek to turn this story into one critical of Israel. For the BBC to be or to pretend to be ignorant of that

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<sup>2</sup> Orla Guerin, BBC News, March 24, 2004

journalist's views would be for it to turn a blind eye to what amounts to embedded bias within its own Jerusalem station.

There will be initial revulsion at the idea that journalists be asked about their personal views. There should not be. The concept is already accepted by two of the pillars of a free democracy, politicians and judges. Politicians must set down their interests in public records. Judges must recuse themselves from a case at the slightest hint of bias.<sup>3</sup> Why should the third pillar of a free democracy, the press, be exempt.

The Ofcom Broadcasting Code<sup>4</sup>, from which the BBC fought hard to exclude itself on the grounds that it is adequately regulated by the BBC Governors, sees no problem in requiring journalists to reveal their interests publicly. It provides:

*“5.8 Any personal interest of a reporter or presenter, which would call into question the due impartiality of the programme, must be made clear to the audience.”*

If independent broadcasters can be expected to reveal their personal interests, then the obligation on a publicly funded service, whose raison d'être is to provide impartial news and current affairs broadcasting, must be all the stronger. Having at least some basic information about what its journalists and editors think on a particular subject is an essential management tool for the BBC if it is to have any hope of complying with its obligations.

We do not suggest that news and current affairs teams be selected based upon their views. Nor do we suggest that the views of journalists across the broad spectrum of BBC programmes need be subjected to review. What the editor of Gardeners Question Time thinks about US foreign policy is probably fairly unimportant.

However in areas of considerable sensitivity, such as the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, a stance that the BBC should be entirely ignorant of the personal views of its journalists is neither responsible nor tenable.

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<sup>3</sup> In 1998, Lord Hoffman, a member of the House of Lords deciding on the extradition of General Pinochet to Spain, famously nearly lost his job because he gave judgement in relation to a petition of Amnesty International, an organisation with which he had links, albeit that those links were a matter of public record.

<sup>4</sup> [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk)

- 2) the BBC must accept that it cannot continue to be judge and jury in its own cause. It must subject itself to a truly independent system for dealing with complaints.

The BBC is the most influential opinion former in the UK and one of the most influential opinion formers in the world. It is paid some £3-4bn per annum by the government. Much of that money is given against a promise that it will produce news with due fairness, accuracy and impartiality.

The Hutton Report <sup>5</sup> demonstrated beyond argument that the BBC cannot be trusted to handle complaints against itself in a fair manner. The Chairman of the Board of Governors, which is meant to be an impartial appeal from the complaints system, actually said that he considered (wrongly, as Lord Hutton found) that his duty was to protect the BBC rather than to deal fairly with complaints.

The BBC would rightly criticise such a system of self regulation in any other similar government funded service. If it is to repair its tarnished reputation for due impartiality the BBC must now agree to submit itself to the independent judgement of others and ask the Government to set up an independent body, with appropriate judicial training and expertise, to assess complaints.

The present complaints procedure not only breaches all the rules of natural justice, but it also damages the very fabric of the BBC. The public grow weary of bothering to express complaints, thus cutting the BBC off from important feedback. When even valid complaints are consistently rejected, the erring journalists, encouraged in their waywardness, are denied the correcting guidance which reasonable criticism can bring. Above all, by adopting a system in which justice is not even seen to be done, the BBC undermines its own credibility.

### 3. **METHODOLOGY**

We analysed the entire body of images published by Day in Pictures over the 6 month period from 1 January – 30 June 2005, amounting to just under 1,000 images. Although our principal interest was in the Middle East, we also considered two further topics: religion and Iraq. We identified all those images

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.the-hutton-inquiry.org.uk/content/report/huttonreport.pdf>

published by Day in Pictures which dealt with these three topics. We then analysed them for signs of particular views as follows:

- |                   |    |                               |
|-------------------|----|-------------------------------|
| Religion          | 1) | Pro religion                  |
|                   | 2) | neutral                       |
|                   | 3) | Anti religion                 |
| Iraq              | 1) | Supportive of the war         |
|                   | 2) | Neutral                       |
|                   | 3) | Against the war               |
| Israel/ Palestine |    |                               |
|                   | 1) | Pro Israeli/anti Palestinian  |
|                   | 2) | Neutral                       |
|                   | 3) | Pro Palestinian/anti Israeli. |

We did not find that the topics of Religion or Iraq showed any easily detectable bias in the fields we were analysing. Accordingly images of those topics have not been subjected to more detailed scrutiny in this report.

Images on the Israeli/Palestinian dispute have been more closely analysed. We imagined a neutral observer equidistant between two opposing simplistic opinions:

- 1) Israelis are good and Palestinians are evil; and
- 2) Palestinians are good and Israelis are evil.

We then assessed whether any particular image would be likely to have the effect of moving our neutral observer towards either one of these two opposing views.

An image of armed and hooded Hamas members on parade will tend to evoke antipathy for Palestinians; an image of the Israeli victims of terror will evoke sympathy for Israelis. Both move our neutral observer in the same direction, so both would be labeled, for the purposes of this report, “pro Israeli/anti Palestinian.”

Similarly an image of a smiling good looking young Palestinian farmer will evoke sympathy for Palestinians and an image of aggressive Israeli soldiers apparently victimizing a Palestinian woman will evoke antipathy for Israelis.



Both move our neutral observer in the same direction, so both would be labeled, for the purposes of this report, “pro Palestinian/anti Israeli.”

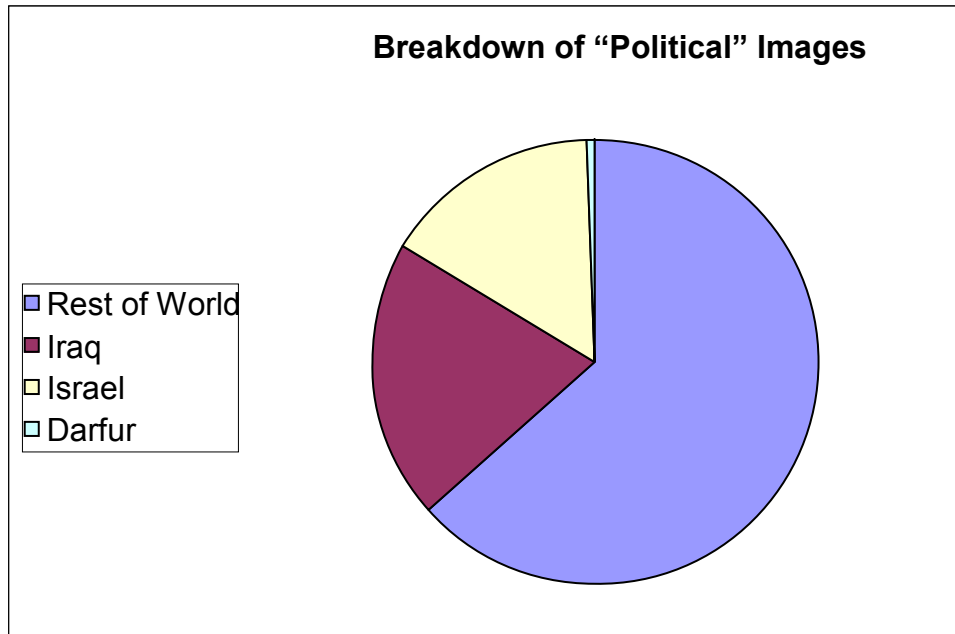
We recognize that our classification is ultimately subjective and that there will always be room for argument over our categorisation of individual images. Nevertheless the bias we discovered was so stark that, even were our classification to be successfully challenged in relation to a number of images, our overall conclusion would remain substantially sound.

#### 4. **PRINCIPAL FINDINGS**

##### **I Israel Over Represented**

The BBC seems to be fascinated with the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, out of all proportion to the amount of human suffering to which it gives rise. We classified 39% of the images (386 images out of a total of 998) as being of a “political” nature. Of those the breakdown was as follows:

Iraq	79	20.46 %
Israel	61	15.80 %
Darfur	2	0.51 %
Rest of World	244	63.21 %
Total	386	100



The Israeli/Palestinian conflict merited an image approximately once every 2-3 days. The effect of this tendency to give prominence to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict – second in prominence only to Iraq - is to magnify the effect of any detectable bias. This brings a concomitant increase in the importance of setting up effective management and editorial systems for output on this topic.

We were particularly struck by the lack of interest in Darfur – two images out of 1,000, and 0.5% of the “political” images. During the period covered a genocidal war was being conducted in Darfur bringing human suffering on a massive scale. If human rights abuses or human suffering were the driving concern of the BBC, then Darfur would have featured far more prominently than the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. It did not.

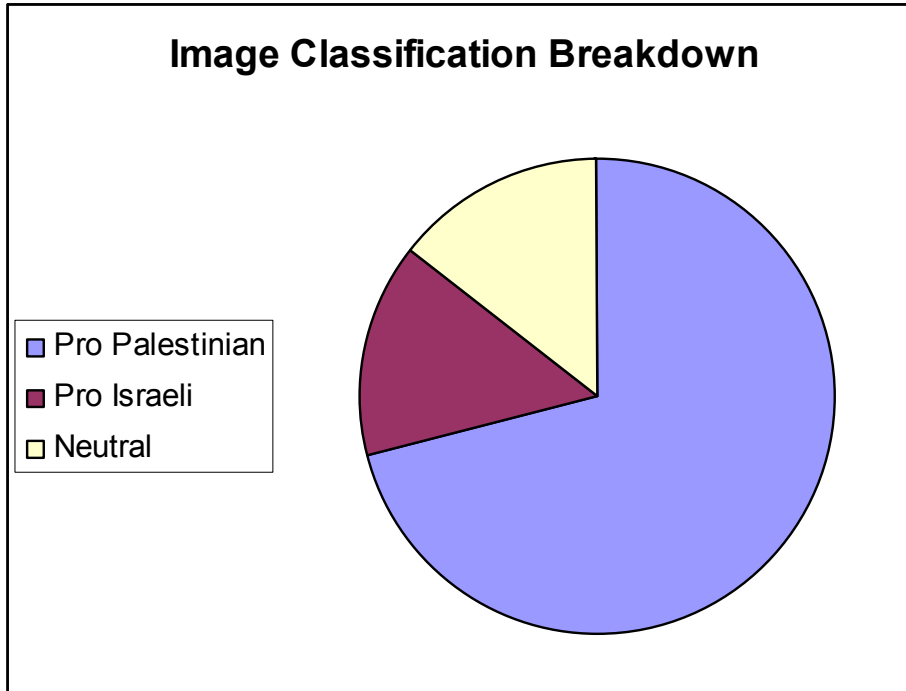
## **II Anti Israeli/Pro Palestinian Marked Bias**

There was a considerable imbalance of pro Palestinian/anti Israeli images, with very few neutral or pro Israeli/anti Palestinian images.

The breakdown was as follows:

		%
Pro Palestinian/anti Israeli:	41	66

Pro Israeli/anti Palestinian:	11	17.8
Neutral	<u>10</u>	<u>16.2</u>
Total	62	100



We detected frequently used techniques for evoking sympathy or antipathy. Israelis were almost always depicted as armed, male and as soldiers. They were often disembodied, showing arms, legs, boots or weapons, but not faces. Palestinians by contrast were very frequently depicted as women and children. Palestinian men, when shown, were generally unarmed (even Policemen) and were often praying, kneeling or bowing.

Particular use was made of faces. Palestinians were almost always shown with face full to camera and well lit by sunshine, the subjects were frequently physically attractive, looking peaceful, harmless and often subservient. Israeli faces by contrast were almost always obscured. Either they had their back to camera, or their faces were shrouded by shadow, or covered by weapons, helmets, sandbags etc. Where they were visible they look haughty, arrogant, or contemptuous.

Poverty was the leitmotif of Palestinian pictures. Since virtually no domestic scenes of Israelis were shown the impression given was that Palestinians have a monopoly on poverty in the area.

### III Sensitivity Ratings Increases Bias

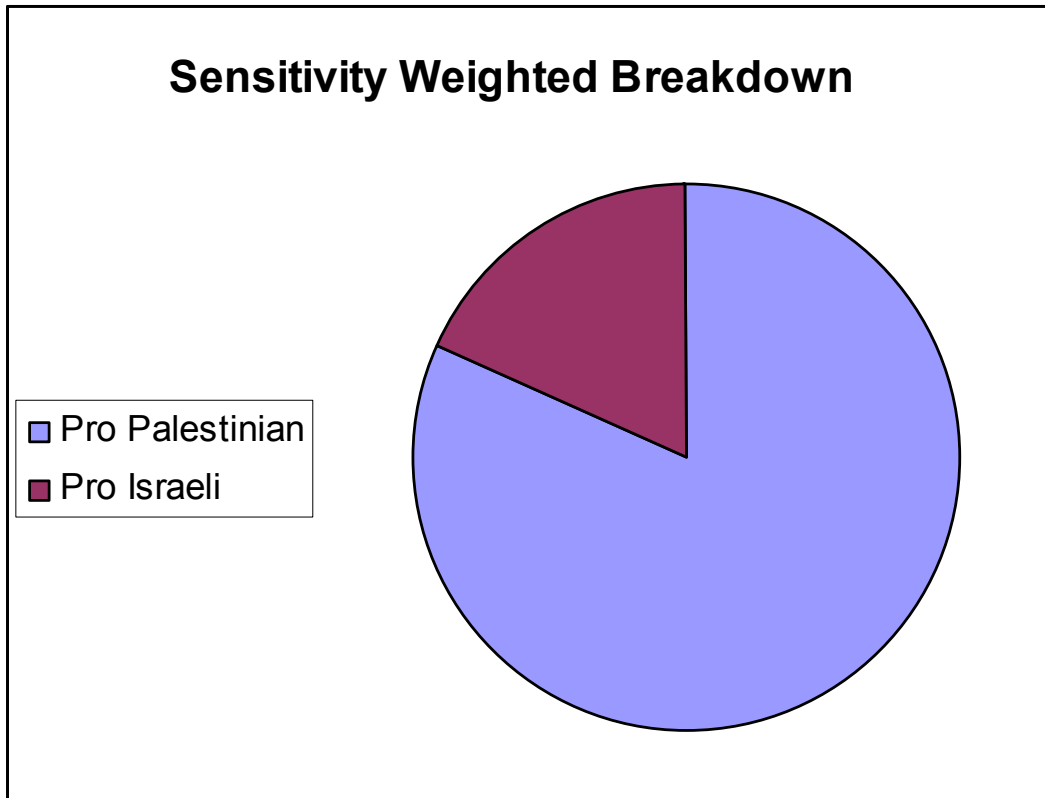
Some of the images evoke far stronger reactions than others. In order to reflect this factor in our findings we rated the images, giving 0 points to a neutral picture, 1 point to a weaker but nevertheless partial image (“marginal”) and 3 points to a powerfully partial image (“powerful”).

We recognize that this exercise only increases the margin for error which must necessarily exist when one is classifying images. Nevertheless we were struck by the fact that only 7 of the pro Israeli/anti Palestinian images were “powerful,” whereas 26 of the pro Palestinian/anti Israeli images were “powerful.” Thus those images likely to evoke sympathy for Palestinians or antipathy for Israelis were far more likely to be effective than the counterpart pro Israeli/anti Palestinian images. A failure to seek to reflect that fact in our findings would have been a source of criticism.

This analysis produced even more stark bias, as follows:

		Points	%	%
Pro Palestinian /anti Israeli:				
Marginal	(15 images)	15	12.7	
Powerful	(26 images)	78	<u>66.1</u>	78.8
Pro Israeli / anti Palestinian:				
Marginal	(4 images)	4	3.4	
Powerful	(7 images)	21	<u>17.8</u>	<u>21.2</u>
Neutral	(10 images)	0	0.0	
Total				100

The following pie chart shows a breakdown of the sensitivity ratings by number of images:



## 5. EDITORIAL COMMENT by bbcwatch

In addition to categorising images, we have added our own editorial comment, picking out what we consider important characteristics of the individual images. These comments give some guide as to how we categorised individual images. We appreciate that the comments will be perhaps more controversial than the categorisation itself. The comments do not of themselves form part of our overall statistical findings, but indicate how we went about categorising images.

## 6. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The period 1 January – 30 June 2005 was selected at random, in April 2005, before we could even know what would occur throughout the remainder of the period. We mention a few significant events to provide context:

i) Religion

The death of Pope John Paul II on 2 April 2005 was the most newsworthy religious event. This was heavily covered in the general news and also in Day in Pictures.

ii) Iraq

Iraq had elections on 30 January 2005. In the run-up to and aftermath of the elections the mainly Sunni insurgents began and intensified a campaign of terrorist violence against both Shia Iraqis and to a lesser extent against coalition troops. This was heavily covered by Day in Pictures throughout.

iii) Israeli/Palestinian Conflict

Most Palestinian groups called a halt to violence both in the run up to Palestinian elections on 28 January 2005 and in light of the forthcoming disengagement from Gaza (which actually occurred in August 2005, after the period covered by this report.) Notwithstanding a sharp drop in terrorist attacks compared with the previous three years, the Day in Pictures coverage was heavy throughout.

iv) Natural World

The aftermath of the Tsunami of 26 December 2004, which killed some 300,000 people, and made more than 1 million homeless, occupied significant coverage by Day in Pictures. This coverage diminished over the period of the report as the impact of the story – and of the event – receded.

## **7. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BBC WEBSITE**

The BBC is probably the single most influential force in news production in the world and is overwhelmingly powerful in the UK. The BBC's news staff of c.2,000 is probably the largest in the world; its annual government grant of some £3-4 billion allows it to outspend its rivals. It broadcasts to some 52 countries, producing 5 hours of news for every hour of the day and boasts that it reaches over 90% of the UK public each week.

The BBC's closest rivals, perhaps CNN and News International, are discounted by many either for being American or for being controlled by a single individual. The BBC – with its legal obligation to be duly impartial, fair and

accurate – is still seen by many to produce “the truth.” This reputation for accuracy – however damaged it now is – further boosts the BBC’s huge influence. It’s website is now regularly used as a resource for schools, universities, students and teachers.

The BBC website is rapidly becoming the BBC’s most powerful tool for broadcasting its particular basket of views. The 24/7 availability of website articles renders them available to a far larger audience than a broadcast which can only be absorbed by those actually tuned in at the particular time of transmission.

In an editorial on 16 June 2005, the Economist suggested that the BBC Website, with a discreet annual budget of some £80m, and the freedom to call upon the huge news resources of the entire BBC, is now threatening the very existence of an independent press in the UK.

In its response to the London bombings of July 2005, the UK Government rightly focused concern on the spread of hatred and the glorification of martyrdom by certain Muslim leaders. Ideas influence people. If they did not, no politician would ever bother to give an interview, write an article or make a speech.

For the same reason we consider that the growing dominance on political thought which the BBC is now developing through its website, and other broadcast media, should be a cause for grave concern. It is inappropriate to entrust so much control of political thought to a single government subsidised body. It is hard to see how such concentrated power, virtually free from any effective regulation, is consistent with maintaining healthy and free political debate within modern Britain.

## **8. LEGAL DUTIES OF THE BBC**

In each of our previous reports we have set out at some length the duties of the BBC. For those who wish to consider those duties in detail please see our previous reports on [www.bbcwatch.com](http://www.bbcwatch.com), or visit the BBC website at [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk).

In summary, the BBC has a legal obligation to produce news reports with due impartiality, fairness and accuracy and to avoid making its own views known

when reporting news. The word “due” seems to be largely ignored by the BBC. For example, in its note on use of the word “terrorism” the BBC declares:

*“... We recognise the existence and the reality of terrorism ... but we try to avoid the word ourselves;...because terrorism is a difficult and emotive subject with significant political overtones.*

*We have learnt from the experience of covering such events in Northern Ireland as much as in Israel, Spain, Russia, Southern Africa or the many other places where violence divides communities, and where **we seek to be seen as objective by all sides**, that labels applied to groups can sometimes hinder rather than help.”<sup>6</sup>*

This desire to be “*seen as objective by all sides*” is entirely inconsistent with an important obligation of the BBC. The Agreement accompanying the BBC Charter states that:

*“Due impartiality does not require absolute neutrality on every issue or detachment from fundamental democratic principles.”<sup>7</sup>*

These fundamental democratic principles are not defined. But the intentional mass murder of civilians by terrorists in pursuit of a political policy must surely be contrary to fundamental democratic principles. Accordingly, if the BBC is attempting “*to be seen as objective by all sides*” when reporting terrorist attacks, then it is misdirecting itself.

Ofcom supports this argument by defining the expression “due impartiality” in its Broadcasting Code, as follows:

*“Meaning of “due impartiality”:*

*“Due” is an important qualification to the concept of impartiality. Impartiality itself means not favouring one side over another. “Due” means adequate or appropriate to the subject and nature of the programme. So “due impartiality” does not mean an equal division of time has to be given to every view, or that every argument and every*

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<sup>6</sup> GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF LANGUAGE WHEN REPORTING TERRORISM The relevant Editorial Guideline states: We must report acts of terror quickly, accurately, fully and responsibly. [www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/assets/advice/guidanceontheuseoflanguagewhenreportingterrorism...](http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/assets/advice/guidanceontheuseoflanguagewhenreportingterrorism...)

<sup>7</sup> Agreement accompanying BBC Charter, Article 5.5



*facet of every argument has to be represented. The approach to due impartiality may vary according to the nature of the subject, the type of programme and channel, the likely expectation of the audience as to content, and the extent to which the content and approach is signalled to the audience. Context, as defined in Section Two: Harm and Offence of the Code, is important.”*

Where something such as terrorism is repugnant to fundamental democratic principles the BBC actually has an obligation to demonstrate that repugnance. It is precisely because “*terrorism is a difficult and emotive subject with significant political overtones*” that the BBC should use it to demonstrate its revulsion at terrorist acts, not shy away from appearing judgemental.

In its belief that the BBC must treat for example the perpetrator of a terrorist attack with the same impartiality as its victim, we consider that the BBC has profoundly misunderstood its legal obligations.

## 9. THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF **bbcwatch**

bbcwatch is one of a number of media study organisations which have sprung up over recent years to analyse BBC output. These organisations have together produced a wave of criticism of the BBC, thoroughly undermining the BBC’s now undeserved reputation for due impartiality.

bbcwatch is a privately funded organisation founded and run by Trevor Asserson, aided by research assistants who he has hired to assist with specific reports. bbcwatch published its first report on BBC coverage of the Middle East in 2000. The report was placed on the [www.bbcwatch.com](http://www.bbcwatch.com) website from where it was rapidly circulated around the world and won international attention. Since then bbcwatch has published four further reports including this one.

Trevor Asserson has become a recognised expert on BBC bias, and is regularly consulted by Israeli, American and English politicians and journalists and by Jewish communal leaders from around the world. He has appeared on numerous radio and television programmes and has been the subject of many radio, newspaper and magazine interviews, including by the BBC. His work is referred to in books and academic theses, has been cited in university courses. He was one of only two individuals (not representing some communally

elected body) specifically to be invited to give written and oral evidence to the BBC Governor's Impartiality Review of the Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

More importantly bbcwatch reports are widely perceived – whether rightly or wrongly - to have been highly influential on the BBC. Richard Sambrook, the former head of news at the BBC confirmed that influence in a private meeting with Trevor Asserson in 2004; another BBC journalist interviewing Trevor Asserson confirmed that bbcwatch reports were widely read by senior BBC news journalists, and the BBC itself has issued lengthy reports seeking to rebut bbcwatch reports and on more than one occasion has threatened defamation proceedings against Trevor Asserson personally – threats which were not followed up. Senior BBC journalists have twice engaged in public debate with Trevor Asserson and then refused further invitations to continue the dialogue.

Notwithstanding the attention which bbcwatch has earned from the BBC, the BBC has never accepted a single one of the criticisms issued by bbcwatch. This worrying inability of the BBC to recognise its own shortcomings is a further indication that the BBC is simply unable to play the role of Judge and Jury in its own cause and must be subjected to the decisions of an independent complaints panel.

## **SCHEDULE I**

### **10. INTERVIEW WITH PETE CLIFTON EDITOR BBC NEWS ONLINE – THE BBC’S ARGUMENTS**

We have benefited considerably from welcome assistance from Pete Clifton the editor of the BBC News online. He gave generously of his time to explain how Day in Pictures operates. This report thus incorporates not only our original findings, but also a summary of the BBC’s principal arguments, albeit before the BBC saw this report.

We were told that Day in Pictures is something of a by product of the BBC website. A journalist from the website team will be asked on an ad hoc basis to be responsible for Day in Pictures for that day. The selection of pictures is then left to that individual.

Pete Clifton accepts that Day in Pictures is under his overall editorial responsibility and that it is covered by the BBC Editorial Guidelines and the Charter which require accuracy, fairness and due impartiality and which also require that the BBC refrain from expressing its own views. However no individual mission statement exists for Day in Pictures and the journalist selecting pictures for the site is left to his/her own devices apparently without any real editorial control. The title of the site –Day in Pictures – seems to provide the only real guidance as to what the journalist is meant to do.

We consider that, because of this lack of editorial control, Day in Pictures probably reflects, with some degree of accuracy, what the BBC journalists actually think. It is a window into the minds of the BBC website journalists as a group. They choose the pictures which they find representative of a particular story. The fact that they almost unfailingly select images which reflect the Palestinian narrative of the conflict strongly suggests that it is the Palestinian narrative with which they feel most sympathy.

Even more striking than the ad hoc way it is put together, World in Pictures is evidently subjected to no systematic long term editorial review. The BBC will often seek to respond to criticism of a particular piece of partial or biased reporting by declaring that there is insufficient space to reflect all views in a single programme or single story, but that over time all views are fairly

represented. This argument (which is rarely borne out by long term analysis of programmes over time) rings entirely hollow when, as Pete Clifton admitted, no review of output over a longer period is in fact conducted. Our 4<sup>th</sup> report, detailing a three and a half year campaign of anti-Israel documentaries clearly demonstrated how hollow this particular BBC defence really is. In the case of Day in Pictures the defence cannot even be presented.

Pete Clifton, overall editor of the site, claims that any conclusions drawn from World in Pictures would be unsafe for a number of reasons:

**10.1 The site is largely dependent on a subject being photogenic.**

This is a fatuous argument which reflects more on the skill of photographers than anything else. It is simply not credible for example that photogenic pictures of Israelis cannot be found but photogenic pictures of Palestinians can be. Even were this true, it does not permit the BBC to be unfair, inaccurate or biased in its coverage.

**10.2 World in Pictures might not bother to cover a story where it is already fully covered elsewhere on the site.**

Whilst this argument might have some superficial merit, we found that it was not borne out by the facts. The stories most covered were precisely those we expected. The Tsunami for instance was well represented at the time it hit, and diminished over time. The Middle East and Iraq were consistently given considerable coverage, just as they have been in other BBC news programmes. The Pope's death was extensively covered for a period of time and then quickly diminished in importance.

The fact that Darfur merited only two pictures in 6 months in Day in Pictures may not be a fair reflection of the BBC Website as a whole. Pete Clifton argued that the site has a section devoted to Darfur. But then it also has sections devoted to Iraq and the Israeli/Palestinian dispute. There will be many "marginal"<sup>8</sup> stories for which Day in Pictures does not contain a statistically relevant

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<sup>8</sup> We do not for a moment suggest that Darfur should be a marginal story, but merely that the BBC World in Pictures appears to treat it as such.

number of images. For the major stories however, we consider that it does.

**10.3 World in Pictures is largely dependent on pictures coming in from the agencies and so is somewhat random in its selection.**

This is a shocking argument, suggesting that the BBC's ability to comply with its statutory obligations is a function of pure chance. The BBC has an obligation to be fair, accurate and apply due impartiality. If it cannot achieve this from the pictures randomly sent to it, it must either commission specific pictures or abandon any coverage of the story in question.

**10.4 Generally the World in Pictures is far too small a sample to be a safe basis from which to draw conclusions.**

This is a serious point. Media studies experts and statisticians can debate when a sample becomes significant. We think that a 6 month sample of 1,000 (actually 998) images – constituting 100% of the output over half a year, is a statistically relevant sample. However we accept that it also represents a tiny proportion of the total output of the BBC. Some indication of what would be a statistically relevant series of programmes which OFCOM considers can be legitimately subjected to editorial scrutiny for due fairness, accuracy and impartiality, is set out in the OFCOM Broadcasting Code.<sup>9</sup>

With 5 hours of news transmission for every hour of the day the BBC will always be able to claim that any study covers a

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<sup>9</sup> “Ofcom Broadcasting Code - **5.5** Due impartiality on matters of political or industrial controversy and matters relating to current public policy must be preserved on the part of any person providing a service (listed above). This may be achieved within a programme or over a series of programmes taken as a whole.

Meaning of “series of programmes taken as a whole”:

This means more than one programme in the same service, editorially linked, dealing with the same or related issues within an appropriate period and aimed at a like audience. A series can include, for example, a strand, or two programmes (such as a drama and a debate about the drama) or a ‘cluster’ or ‘season’ of programmes on the same subject.”

statistically insignificant proportion of its total output. The argument will only carry weight when the BBC admits what is statistically significant and can show that an independent study of such output disproves the many findings of bias in studies of shorter periods. We do not believe that the BBC can credibly argue that 6 months is too short a period over which it can be expected to redress an imbalance in any particular broadcast.

## SCHEDULE II

### THE IMAGES FROM DAY IN PICTURES – 1 JANUARY – 3 JUNE 2005

#### I Pro Palestinian/Anti Israeli -41 images

- a) **Separation Barrier – 9 images**  
(sensitivity analysis – powerful)



Israel's West Bank barrier looms behind posters supporting Palestinian presidential candidate Mahmoud Abbas, ahead of Sunday's elections. 06/01/05

#### **bbcwatch comment:**

*Some 5% of the barrier constitutes a solid wall, in those places where Israel argues there is a maximum danger of sniper fire. Elsewhere the barrier is a wire fence which looks far less oppressive. Yet 83% (5 out of 6 ) images*

*showing the barrier in Day in Pictures depict it as a wall. The preponderance of images of the solid parts of the barrier thus constitutes an inaccurate and misleading view.*

*Day in Pictures chooses to present most of its pictures of the barrier as being a solid wall, thus accentuating the oppressive nature of the barrier.*



“Palestinians pray in front of the Israeli separation barrier at Kalandia checkpoint near the entrance to Ramallah. 10/01/05.”

### **bbcwatch comment**

*Note that the solid wall section of the barrier is depicted.*

*Another trend is to show Muslims praying. This gives an image of men of faith putting their trust in God – and by implication peaceful means - to find a solution to their problems.*

*A further trend is to depict Palestinian poverty. Here for example the Palestinians use old cardboard boxes instead of prayer mats, and pray in a bleak environment. The reasons for such poverty – corrupt political leadership, spending money on arms, collapse of the Palestinian economy following 4 years of violent Intifada – are not explained.*

*Israel claims that the security barrier has significantly assisted in reducing the success of terrorist attempts. This important explanation as to why the barrier*

*was erected is entirely omitted by the captions, which tend to concentrate only on Palestinian suffering caused by the barrier and to ignore Israeli suffering .*

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The discovery of stalactites in a cave during work on the West Bank barrier near Bataf, north-west of Jerusalem, has temporarily halted construction work by Israel.07/03/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*This picture is somewhat confusing and dull. Its only apparent interest is to provide an excuse to remind viewers yet again that Israel is building a controversial barrier.*

---





“Palestinians take time out to pray as they protest against Israel's West Bank barrier.04/03/05.”

**bbcwatch comment**

*Palestinian men, when depicted, tend to be shown praying.*

*This image of Palestinian protests being characterized by rural/pastoral family get togethers, interspersed with prayers, is at odds with the reality of an urban terror war against Israeli citizens.*



“A Palestinian sits against Israel's West Bank barrier in the town of Al-Ram. 21/03/05”

**bbcwatch comment**

*Note that the solid barrier is again depicted.*

*Note that the Palestinian man is unarmed, looking harmless and desolate. Palestinians are generally depicted in this way, and usually it is women who*

*are depicted. Israelis by contrast are usually depicted as male, armed, confident and aggressive.*

---



A Palestinian woman hangs her laundry outside her house close to Israel's West Bank barrier near Jerusalem. 14/04/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*Again we see a large expanse of the solid barrier.*

*Day in Pictures tends to show Palestinians as women engaged in domestic chores which emphasizes their harmless and homely characteristics.*

*Note the background emphasizing poverty – hanging out washing in a bleak environment. The subliminal message is that the poverty is created by Israeli oppression, with the barrier as a visible symbol of that oppression.*

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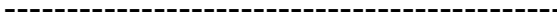


“Palestinian boy walks during a protest at the construction of the Israeli security barrier in the West Bank. 28/04/05”

**bbcwatch comment**

*Again it is the solid barrier which is depicted.*

*Here we see a Palestinian child, emphasising Palestinian vulnerability and weakness.*



Israeli border police stand over an Israeli activist lying in the path of bulldozers during a protest against the construction of Israel's West Bank barrier. 31/05/05

## **bbcwatch comment**

*This slightly confusing picture is the only one of the barrier depicting the fence which constitutes some 95% of its length.*

*The Israeli border police are shown merely as faceless armed and booted figures, projecting the image of dehumanised instruments of military oppression.*

*They are here depicted apparently oppressing an Israeli where he has the temerity to be seeking to protect the human rights of Palestinians. The subtext is of an Israel which rides rough shod over human rights – an inaccurate suggestion in light of the record of Israel’s courts.*



“Palestinian woman gesticulates before a group of Israeli soldiers during a protest over the West Bank barrier 24/06/05”

## **bbcwatch comment**

*Palestinians tend to be depicted as women and children, emphasising their vulnerability*

*Israelis tend to be depicted as men, and very frequently armed, emphasising their aggression.*

*Note that the Palestinian woman is depicted apparently kneeling, surrounded by a phalanx of gun-toting Israeli soldiers. This is a strong image of the weak – female – Palestinian surrounded by the overwhelming military force of Israel.*

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**b) Palestinian suffering under Israeli occupation – 11 images**  
(sensitivity analysis – powerful)



“A 15-year-old boy waits at a checkpoint near Nablus in the West Bank. The Israeli army said he was arrested carrying an explosive belt, a home-made gun and 20 bullets.03/02/05.”

**bbcwatch comment**

*Again we see Palestinians depicted as unarmed children – here oppressed by Israelis, who have blindfolded him. The Palestinian is seen bathed in light and facing us. The Israeli, in semi- darkness with his face barely visible and dehumanized by a large helmet.*

*The caption “...the Israeli army **said** he was carrying an explosive belt...” is designed to throw doubt on whether his arrest was in fact justifiable at all. Haaretz – a newspaper known for being critical of Israel – reported the same story. It expressed no doubt that the boy was carrying an explosive belt.*



A guard waits for a key crossing from Gaza to Israel at Erez to reopen, allowing Palestinian workers to take up jobs in Israel. 10/02/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*Israelis are generally depicted, as here, as armed males, their human features partly shrouded. The caption makes it clear that this armed Israeli is engaged in the task of oppressing Palestinians by restricting their movement. No explanation as to why these restrictions are in place – the protection of Israeli citizens from terrorist attacks – is indicated. Instead it is merely suggested that the closure of a crossing from Gaza had damaging economic consequences.*

*The subliminal message is that Israelis cause harm to the Palestinian economy for no particular reason, as an example of military oppression.*

---





The wife of a Gaza militant, whose body was handed over by Israel months after his death, comforts her children during his funeral in the Gaza Strip.15/02/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*Typically Palestinians are seen as women or children, often crying and in drab surroundings stressing their poverty – all likely to evoke sympathy. No mention is made of why the “Gaza militant” died. Quite possibly he was a terrorist who had been involved in the brutal murder of Israeli citizens.*



A Muslim woman walks past the "Peace in Palestine" banners outside a conference hall in Putrajaya, Malaysia.28/01/05

## **bbcwatch comment**

*It is remarkable that the elections in Malaysia should be taken as an opportunity to denigrate Israel. The images on the “Peace in Palestine” poster are very strong – a pair of tiny children watching as an Israeli tank bears down on them; children sitting on rubble – perhaps their former home?; female refugees carrying their few belongings with them. The subject of the picture – a Muslim, though not a Palestinian- is of course female.*



A Palestinian child in the isolated Muwasi neighborhood in southern Gaza on the day a London conference discusses the creation of a viable Palestinian state. 01/03/05.

## **bbcwatch comment**

*Again we see Palestinians depicted as poor, female and children. What could be more appealing, or more harmless, than this pretty child clutching her rag doll outside the wreckage which one assumes is her home, with a rustic scene of primitive poverty as the background.*

*The caption, referring to a conference on the creation of a viable Palestinian State, combines with the picture strongly to suggest that Palestinian poverty demands huge European investment if their state is to become viable.*

*No mention is made of the corruption and arms spending which together have squandered many millions of foreign aid.*





A Palestinian woman celebrates the Israeli handover of Tulkarem to Palestinian authorities. 22/03/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*Yet again the principal subject is a Palestinian woman. The Palestinian men who are depicted are standing around unarmed, smiling, jocular and generally looking pretty harmless. The Palestinian policemen are apparently unarmed and unthreatening.*



A Palestinian man looks up at an Israeli soldier during an army patrol in the West Bank town of Hebron. 29/03/05.

### **bbcwatch comment**

*Although male, this Palestinian is elderly, unarmed, bespectacled and kneeling, with his pleasant face well lit and visible. The Israeli by contrast is a faceless uniformed figure, recognized only by his gun, and his finger almost on the trigger. The brutal Israeli soldier bears down in a most threatening way on this apparently harmless old man.*

*On a close look the Palestinian is smiling and we wonder whether the image is posed.*



Juma Urwaydee, whose house in Silwan, eastern Jerusalem, is marked for demolition by Israel, at an information session for residents. 31/05/05

### **bbcwatch comment**

*Note that the Palestinian man here is unarmed and elderly, emphasising his harmlessness. His face is seen in full, lit up by the sun, suggesting openness. His expression one of stoic resignation commands respect as well as pity. The caption- suggesting that his house is to be demolished – makes no mention of why this is to occur. Usually it is because the house has harboured terrorists, or was built in breach of planning law.*

---



A Palestinian man suspected of carrying an explosive device awaits the approach of an Israeli bomb disposal robot.09/06/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*Here we see both sides stripped to their essentials – the Palestinian a naked, defeated and defenceless man; the Israeli represented by a totally dehumanized and threatening machine bearing down on him. The caption that the Palestinian is “suspected” of carrying an explosive device is almost ironic, since he is self evidently carrying nothing.*

*In fact attempts to infiltrate Israel with weapons and bombs are foiled almost daily by Israeli checkpoints. This image appears to mock what remains as a serious threat to Israeli lives.*



Palestinians cross through an Israeli army checkpoint near the village of Halhul, in the southern West Bank.28/06/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*The principal subject of the picture is yet again a Palestinian woman, face to camera, distressed by the restrictions on her movement. The other Palestinians harmless gentle men, kindly assisting her.*

*The Israeli, by contrast, face away from camera, is an armed and uniformed male soldier. His position of dominance is mitigated by the fact that he is assisting the woman with his right foot.*



Israeli policemen watch as Palestinians who were not allowed to go to Friday prayers inside the al-Aqsa mosque compound pray at a street outside Jerusalem's Old City.10/06/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*Here we do see Palestinian young men. However they are unarmed and are praying, face to camera. They are depicted in the act of bowing in what must be seen as a dignified defiance of the oppressive and cruel Israeli regime which denies them even the right to pray in their mosque.*

*The Israelis by contrast, back to camera, are a faceless, heavily armed, mounted group looking on apparently implacably and unmoved by the*

*spectacle. No explanation for the exclusion from the mosque – almost certainly a response to a serious security threat – is provided in the caption.*

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**c) Palestinian demands for prisoner release – 6 images**  
(sensitivity analysis – powerful)



Protesting Palestinian women hold up portraits of men held in Israeli jails.  
17/01/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*Palestinians are again depicted as women, oppressed by the Israeli regime which imprisons their husbands, brothers, sons. The absence in the caption of any justification for the imprisonments suggests that perhaps there is none. There is no hint of the war of Palestinian terror which in fact lies behind the arrests of many Palestinians.*

---





A relative expresses her joy after Israel's release of the first group of 500  
Palestinian  
prisoners as part of a ceasefire deal. 21/02/05.

### **bbcwatch comment**

*The sobbing child, long parted from some close relative evokes a strong sense of sympathy. The absence of any explanation as to why the relative was imprisoned helps preserve the sympathy. In fact many Palestinians were imprisoned in response to the wave of terrorist attacks which rocked Israel over the previous 3 years.*



Hamas members protest outside Egypt's embassy in Gaza City, seeking  
intervention to release

Palestinian prisoners in Israel.17/03/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*Hamas, recognized as a terrorist organisation by the UN, the EU, the UK, the USA and others, is here depicted involved in a peaceful rally. The caption evokes merely the anger at the unexplained – and therefore perhaps inexplicable/unjustifiable – imprisonment of oppressed Palestinians. No indication is provided of the many terrorist acts for which Hamas has (credibly) claimed responsibility.*



Palestinians demonstrated on Monday demanding the release of relatives in the wake of Israel's pledge to free 400 detainees. 30/05/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*Here we have yet another reminder of the imprisonment of Palestinians, yet again with no explanation proffered. The Palestinians depicted are women and children, symbolically themselves behind bars – hinting at the restrictive oppression of all Palestinians.*

*Although the woman is obscured, the pretty girl's face is fully lit, clear, open and innocent, expressions echoed in the picture of her relative which she is holding up.*



Palestinian prisoners released by the Israelis pray after arriving on the outskirts of Ramallah. 02/06/05

### **bbcwatch comment**

*Yet again we see pictures of Palestinian men, unarmed, subservient, unthreatening and praying. The image suggests that the response of Palestinians when released from unexplained (by the caption) and therefore perhaps unjustified imprisonment is merely to pray. No hint of the violence which lead to their incarceration.*

---





Palestinians demand the release of prisoners in Israeli jails and protest against the alleged desecration of a Koran by guards. 13/06/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*Yet another image of a beautiful young Palestinian child, face full to camera and well lit, engaged in the most peaceful demonstration against an unexplained (and by implication unjustifiable) imprisonment. The little blond boy, whose head is partially visible, evokes still more pathos.*

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**d) Negative Images of Israelis – 7 images**

(sensitivity analysis – marginal)



An Israeli soldier watches as Jews visit holy shrines in the West Bank city of Hebron during the Passover festival. 25/04/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*The Israeli, his eyes in shadow, his face obscured by his gun, his body obscured by sandbags presents a fearsome, isolated image. We see nothing of the unarmed Jews going to pray – to which the caption refers.*

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An Israeli soldier directs a tank near the Palestinian town of Deir el-Ballah in Gaza.20/05/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*The Israeli is yet again depicted as a faceless armed soldier. The menacing firepower of the tank – the muzzle of its gun pointing almost direct to camera – is cleverly evoked by the soldier who appears to hold his hands up in surrender before it.*



An armed Israeli guard patrols a beach as families play in the sea in Gush Katif, the Gaza Strip. 02/05/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*Even Israelis on the beach are armed. On a superficial level this suggests a resolutely aggressive and permanently armed Israeli population. To those more familiar with the background of Gush Katif, the image appears to suggest that, if you can't even go to the beach without armed guards, the message is clear that you just don't belong.*

*Note that the Israelis are yet again face away from camera, obscuring their humanity.*



Israeli soldiers at a Gaza Strip checkpoint observe a moment of silence in memory of the Jews killed during the Holocaust. 05/05/05

### **bbcwatch comment**

*This is a strange image to use to depict Holocaust memorial day. At the heart of this image is the gun, then the muscular Israeli soldier holding it, standing erect, head up, almost arrogant. Around him are ten other armed and uniformed Israeli soldiers. All have their faces either obscured by dark glasses or in partial shadow, or are too small clearly to be depicted.*

*Israel detractors claim that the Israeli state was created in a moment of international guilt at the holocaust and that it is an irony that Jews of all people oppress Palestinians just as Jews were themselves persecuted by the Nazis. (The attempt to draw moral equivalence between genocide by Nazis and firm control of terrorists by Israelis is untenable, but is nevertheless widely*

*used). This image encapsulates that irony – young armed Israeli men celebrate the holocaust in the very act of guarding (oppressing) Palestinians in Gaza.*

---



Holidaymakers enjoy the view of Mount Hermon in the Golan Heights, seized by Israel from Syria in 1967. 16/02/05

### **bbcwatch comment**

*This image, of Israelis enjoying a holiday, would be classified as neutral were it not for the gratuitous attack on Israel supplied by the caption. The verb “seized” is emotive and critical, appearing to make a value judgement about a lively historical debate as to whether Israel was acting defensively or aggressively during the 1967 war – when Israel gained control of the Golan Heights.*

*Note that, even on holiday, Israeli faces are obscured both by clothing, inclination of the body and distance.*

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A member of the Jewish "Temple Mount Faithful" retaliates after his group was hit by a bottle thrown as they marched through the Muslim quarter of Jerusalem, on the anniversary of Israel's capture of East Jerusalem in 1967.

06/06/05

### **bbcwatch comment**

*The caption here suggests the existence of Muslim violence. The image is only of aggressive Jewish men. Their violence is somehow made all the more unacceptable because these are religious men – Temple Mount Faithful. This image contrasts starkly with the images we have seen of Muslims who are so frequently depicted bent in quiet and peaceful prayer.*

-----



An Israeli security agent carries away an ultra-Orthodox Jew protesting at the desecration of



graves during construction of a motorway next to the northern kibbutz of Regavim. 13/04/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*This is a confusing image which we found hard to classify. It depicts Israeli society made up of men, engaged in struggle and using force; nutty religious fanatics; an arid piece of land and the background dominated by massive machines tearing up the terrain. The overall effect is to evoke negative attitudes towards Israelis.*

*As usual all but one of the Israeli faces is obscured. The one which is seen (albeit indistinctly) is of a bizarrely dressed religious extremist preferring death (graves) over modern progress (the new motorway)- an unsympathetic image.*

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**e) Disengagement from Gaza – 2 images**

(sensitivity analysis – all marginal)



A Jewish man prays in a former hotel in Gaza where hundreds of settlers had barricaded themselves in, in defiance of Israeli pullout orders. 30/06/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*The image of an elderly man praying evokes some sympathy. However the background image of the Israeli flag, combined with the caption, indicates that*

*this Jew is engaged in a form of politically incorrect nationalistic struggle – barricading himself in and defying orders. He is a die hard protector of settlers. Knowing this our sympathy ebbs swiftly away.*

---



Israeli settlers build the new outpost of Tal Yam after the army demolished beach houses in the southern Gaza Strip. 27/06/05

### **bbcwatch comment**

*Yet again Israelis are depicted here as almost all male, and their faces are almost exclusively obscured – they remain dehumanized. We are told that these obscure beings are “settlers” (bad people) who are apparently using the cover of night clandestinely to defy the army which is trying to prepare for the withdrawal from Gaza.*

---

- e) **Positive images of Palestinians – 6 images**  
(sensitivity analysis – all marginal)



A Palestinian catches fish off the coast of the southern Gaza Strip. 24/02/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*One can almost hear the waves lapping at the shore in this beautifully serene image of the primitive fisherman. It is as though the Palestinian is here being depicted as the noble savage of the 18 century Philosophes, living undisturbed in his garden of Eden.*

*This image could certainly adorn the cover page of a holiday brochure, and presents a strongly positive image of Palestinians.*

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A young Hamas supporter in Nablus joins a rally to mark a year since the killing of the movement's leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. 22/03/05.  
**bbcwatch comment**

*Hamas is recognised as a terrorist organisation by the EU, the UN, the UK and the USA amongst others. It's charter, a deeply anti-semitic document blames Jews for most of the world's ills and calls for the total destruction of Israel by violent means. It has claimed responsibility for numerous murderous attacks against unarmed Israeli citizens.*

*Here however Hamas is depicted as a sort of girl scouts organisation, entirely supported by wholesome looking young girls, their smiling faces to camera, armed with nothing more threatening than a pretty flag.*

*The caption evokes yet more sympathy, reminding us that Israel has brutally killed the revered leader of this delightful bunch of school girls.*

-----



Palestinians in the Gaza Strip take part in the annual wheat harvest. 24/05/05

### **bbcwatch comment**

*This is another image which would sit well in the Gaza holiday brochure. Again the 'noble savage' represented here by the simple Palestinian farmer, smiling open face full to camera and lit by the sun, clutches his simple and primitive farming tools as he peacefully and cheerfully goes about his lawful business.*

*This image seems so far from the chaos, violence and corruption which seems to prevail in the Gaza strip that one wonders what wishful thinking was operating when the BBC chose it.*



Palestinian police officers are briefed by their commander before being deployed across the Gaza Strip.21/01/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*Where we do see an image of Palestinian police, they are unarmed and dwarfed by the size of the square in Gaza city. Thus they are presented as a non violent and entirely unthreatening body of men.*



Palestinian police officers exercise at their barracks in Gaza City.02/03/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*As in the previous image, when Palestinian police are depicted, they have no weapons and here appear as a tightly disciplined professional body. They are both unthreatening and inspire confidence as to their commitment and ability.*



Members of the Palestinian community in El Salvador uncover a bust of late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. 25/05/05

### **bbcwatch comment**

*Here is another picture of an elderly Palestinian man, unarmed, face well lit and almost full to camera, in an act of quiet reverence and a gesture which looks close to prayer. The image is one of peace, which is only enhanced by the dignified posture of the bust of Arafat.*

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## **II Neutral – 10 images**



A Palestinian man seeks to protect himself from heavy rains in Abu Dis in the West Bank. 05/01/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*This banal and enjoyable picture, depicts the common practice of people to cover themselves in plastic to protect themselves from the very heavy downfalls which occur in the area.*



Supporters of interim Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas show their allegiance during a meeting in Gaza City. Palestinians will choose Yasser Arafat's successor on 9 January. 03/01/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*The fairly heavy coverage of Palestinian elections tended to leave an image of a well established culture of democratic process amongst Palestinians. In fact the opposite is the case. Arafat would postpone elections year after year, and was widely accused of rigging those few elections he did take part in.*

*There is an argument that we should classify the pictures of Palestinian elections as Pro Palestinian, constituting an attempt to paint a misleadingly positive image of the Palestinians as wedded to the democratic process. We have however chosen to classify these images as neutral.*





A Palestinian boy has his hair cut in a barber's plastered with posters of the late Yasser Arafat and the man who hopes to succeed him in Sunday's elections, Mahmoud Abbas.07/01/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*Palestinian elections – for comment see preceding image.*



A brightly-lit billboard of newly-elected Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in the main square of Ramallah 11/01/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*Palestinian elections – see above.*

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Supporters of Palestinian militant group Hamas celebrate a victory in its first-ever local elections in Gaza. 28/01/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*Palestinian elections – see above.*

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A Palestinian woman passes a list of voters at a polling station set up for local elections in the Gaza Strip. 05/05/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*Palestinian elections – see above.*

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Ultra Orthodox Jews pray in front of a fire in Jerusalem during a ceremony ahead of the Passover holiday, marking the Israelites' exodus from Egypt 3,500 years ago. 22/04/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*The flames in this image are reminiscent of so many violent acts at demonstrations that this image is initially confusing. However on careful consideration of the image and the caption together, one can see that the dominant image is not of a violent Jewish religion, but of a quaint and curious one.*

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Israeli soldiers and rescue workers carry an injured person from a train that crashed into a lorry in the Revadim, south Israel, killing seven and injuring about 100. 21/06/05

### **bbcwatch comment**

*Yet again we see Israeli men – not women or children – involved in an act of destruction and violence. However this type of tragedy - a crash - is typical of the subject matter of Day in Pictures images, and we considered it appropriate to classify it as neutral.*



A woman in Beirut pauses to gather leaflets dropped by the Israeli air force calling on the Lebanese government and people to prevent Hezbollah staging attacks in Israel.30/06/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*This image tells a complex story. On the one hand the Israelis are seen as compassionate, using peaceful means to try to achieve military aims. On the other hand it presages a possible Israeli attack against a sovereign state, Lebanon. On balance we consider it neutral.*

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Demonstrators in Egypt's capital, Cairo, protest against Israel and its policy towards the Palestinians.14/02/05.

**bbcwatch comment**

*We find this image confusing. The international outrage against Israel shown here suggests that Israel must surely be doing something wrong to deserve such hatred. On the other hand the sight of crowds of angry and violent looking young men espousing the Palestinian cause is rather unedifying. On balance we consider the image to be neutral.*

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**III Pro Israeli/Anti Palestinian – 11 Images**

**a) Pro Israeli – 6 images**

(sensitivity analysis – mixed)

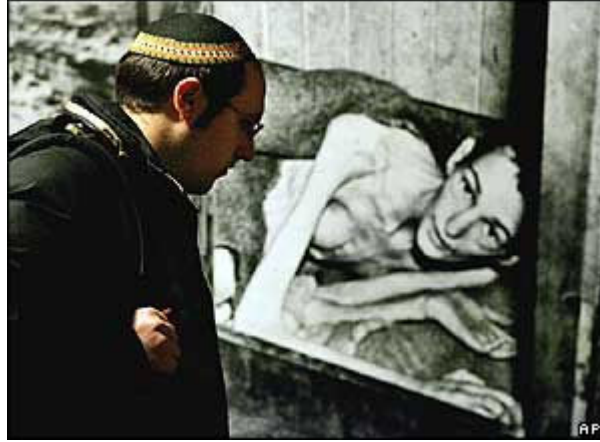


An ultra-Orthodox Jew stands during the Passover blessings at Jerusalem's Western Wall. 26/04/05 (marginal)

**bbcwatch comment**

*Yet again all Israeli faces - except one – are covered from sight. The one you see has his back to the camera. Notwithstanding this the picture shows Jews engaged in what appears to be an ethnically interesting, peaceful and possibly bizarre act of prayer. The general image is positive.*

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A Jewish man looks at images of Holocaust survivors at a memorial in Jerusalem - three days before the 60-year anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland. 24/01/05. (marginal)

### **bbcwatch comment**

*The dying and persecuted Jew of the Holocaust is a woman with face to camera; the live Jew is a man, with face obscured by shadow and looking away from the camera. Notwithstanding this, the picture is sympathetic to Jews.*

*Although we classify this image as pro Israeli we do so with a heavy heart. The modern Israel hater will seek to protect himself from allegations of discrimination by being sympathetic about the holocaust. It is as if the Jew as victim is an acceptable image, whereas the Jew as victor is not. The suggestion that sympathy for the holocaust victims somehow entitles one to be unreasonably critical of Israel is wrong headed.*

*It is interesting that 4 out of 6 “pro Israeli” images are in fact celebrating the Jew as victim. Two of those are to do with the holocaust, which in fact is not an “Israeli” topic.*

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In Jerusalem, a new museum will present the story of the Holocaust from the Jewish perspective.03/03/05. (marginal)

**bbcwatch comment**

*See previous image for an explanation as to why we classify this as a “pro Israeli” image.*



Israel marks its national memorial day, which remembers Israeli soldiers killed in wars since 1948.11/05/05 (Powerful)



## **bbcwatch comment**

*At the centre of this image is a grieving elderly woman, face to picture, and comforted by another grieving woman (perhaps her daughter), the two framed by other attractive young unarmed female soldiers, their faces out of focus but clearly visible, face to camera, dignified and appealing.*

*Of the entire 62 pictures this is the only one depicting Israeli Jewish women (none depicts Israeli Jewish children), and almost the only one to show Israeli Jewish faces clearly. It is the only one of the “Pro Israeli” images which has a demonstrably Israeli quality to it. Yet even here, the dominant image is of a military people, with military images being in the foreground.*



A labourer builds temporary accommodation on the Nitzanim dunes, southern Israel, where Israel plans to house settlers evacuated from the Gaza Strip next month. 23/06/05 (marginal)

## **bbcwatch comment**

*This image could be anywhere in the (sunny) world. There is nothing Israeli about it except for the caption. As usual the human being who is depicted is male and too distant to present a human face.*

*Nevertheless the image is light, airy and appealing. The caption suggests confidence in the withdrawal from Gaza which was widely praised in the*

*Western world. On balance we consider it a positive image of Israel although we could equally argue that it should be classified as neutral.*

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In the Israeli town of Sderot, meanwhile, fathers who lost children to Palestinian rocket attacks protest at the lack of security. 17/01/05. (powerful)

### **bbcwatch comment**

*When combined with the caption, this is a powerful image. It depicts grim silent and dignified resignation of two men to the terrible loss which they have each suffered. The fact that it is men (not women or children); that they are sitting passively (not weeping) and that their faces are cast in deep shadow all reduces the impact.*

*In ways this is a bizarre image. The man on the right appears to be a black African, and is therefore atypical of Jewish Israelis. He also does not appear to be wearing typically Israeli clothes. The man on the left also lacks any identifiably Israeli characteristic. It is not at all clear that either is an Israeli Jew.*

*Notwithstanding these reservations, we have classified it as a powerfully pro Israeli image.*

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**b) Anti Palestinian – 5 images**  
(sensitivity analysis – powerful)

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A Palestinian throws a tear gas canister back towards an Israeli army vehicle in the West Bank town of Saida. 02/05/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*The image of the violent Palestinian youths hurling explosives is redolent of the worst violence of the Intifada. Note that the Palestinian depicted here is male, has his back to camera and is involved in breaching the law.*

*A careful reading of the caption reveals that that tear gas canister being thrown by the Palestinian was in fact originally thrown by the Israelis. This reduces the impact of the image, but we did not consider it justified a change in classification.*





Palestinian militants from the Islamic Jihad group on the march at a rally in Gaza City.11/03/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*This image of gun toting, aggressive young male Palestinians, faceless behind their masks, is a truly frightening image and one likely to evoke sympathy for the Israelis as the intended victims of the Islamic Jihad group.*



Palestinian militants from al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade parade in Gaza City. 08/04/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*We repeat our comments on the previous image, which are equally applicable here.*

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An Islamic Jihad militant holds up a copy of the Koran during a protest in the  
Gaza Strip  
over the alleged desecration of the holy book by US troops at Guantanamo  
Bay. 10/06/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*This is a powerful image of a faceless (hooded) armed and apparently violent young man, made all the more powerful by adding apparent religious fanaticism to the already potent mixture. We have no difficulty in classifying this as a strongly anti Palestinian image.*

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An effigy of Israeli PM Ariel Sharon is burned by militants in Gaza in protest after Tunisia invited him to a conference.08/03/05

**bbcwatch comment**

*This image can be read in a number of ways. The hatred of Sharon which it depicts might suggest that Sharon really is the monster portrayed here. However we consider that the more rational viewer will be repelled by the mindless violence which seeks to set fire to an effigy of a prime minister just because he has been invited to give a public talk. Accordingly we have classified it as a powerful anti Palestinian image.*

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**Schedule III**

**Statistical Analysis of Images**

I Breakdown of principal categories of Day In Pictures Images

	Political	Religious	Disease & Disaster	Life style	Other
January	63	11	26	54	8

February	57	9	21	73	10
March	68	8	12	57	8
April	56	23	11	64	12
May	76	6	6	87	8
June	66	7	16	68	7
Total	386	64	92	403	53

## II Breakdown of Images within the “Political” category

	Iraq	Israel	Darfur	Tsunami <sup>10</sup>
January	24	11	1	19
February	11	7	0	11
March	8	13	0	5
April	12	8	0	5
May	14	11	0	2
June	20	12	1	2
Total	79	62	2	44

<sup>10</sup> Whilst the Tsunami was not a political subject, it is included here to meet the BBC argument that Day In Pictures does not in fact reflect world news. The pattern of images on the Tsunami precisely matched what one would have expected in other news reports, namely intense coverage at first which then tailed off over time.