

# Protest, Television, Newspapers, and the Public: Who Influences Whom?

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**Abstract** *This study analyzes three related questions: To what extent does TV influence its audience, the newspapers, and the tactics of public pressure groups based on the existence and availability of TV in general? The study is based on a 52-day national TV strike in Israel in late 1987, with the following aspects investigated: the change in traffic accident and public protest frequency during the strike period; the change in number of articles and photos found in the newspapers; the coverage of all Israeli media regarding public protests over an extended period of time; and less quantitatively, the effect of public service announcements (PSAs) on traffic accident rates over the years. The findings indicate the following: PSAs seem to have an impact on traffic accidents; newspapers do change their product to a limited extent when TV is not available to the public; and most interestingly, despite the fact that TV does a far worse job of covering protest events, the public's erroneous perception of TV's importance has a significant impact on public pressure group behavior.*

**Keywords:** Media effects, intermedia influence, political communication, media coverage, protest and television, TV strike.

## Introduction

To what extent does television influence its viewing audience? The debate rages on.<sup>1</sup> Does the existence of television as a competing medium to newspapers change the latter's approach to the news? The jury is still out.<sup>2</sup> Do public interest groups take into consideration the availability of specific media when they plan their public activity? No one seems to have even asked this question in the scholarly literature.<sup>3</sup>

The latter question is of particular interest, for when the whole topic of "political communication and persuasion" is brought up, almost inevitably it is addressed from the standpoint of "how the media and/or political elite persuade the public." That political communication is a two-way street may be grudgingly acknowledged, but the vast amount of scholarly energy expended in the field is almost wholly directed at the one-way avenue of top to bottom. The present study, then, is also designed to advance the cause of "bottom-to-top" political communication.

On the face of it, the three questions posed above are seemingly unrelated. As is shown here, however, they are interconnected. The opportunity for addressing all three issues simultaneously presented itself during October–November 1987 in Israel when the nation's only television station went on strike for a 52-day period. This afforded the

opportunity for a rather unique "laboratory" test case, as there has been in the recent past no similar situation<sup>4</sup> in the democratic world where domestically transmitted television ceased entirely for so extended a period of time.<sup>5</sup>

In order to test the effects of such an electronic communications vacuum,<sup>6</sup> it was decided to focus on two readily quantifiable—but quite dissimilar—variables: traffic accidents and public protest events. Israeli television periodically mounts public service announcement campaigns (PSAs) for the prevention of traffic accidents; Israel leads the democratic world in per capita protest participation,<sup>7</sup> and its media do not hide the dimensions of such extraparliamentary activity.

Both phenomena, then, are widespread enough to exhibit possible sensitivity to media availability. However, the two are unlike: while traffic accidents are "accidental," their frequency may be directly influenced by the media; public protests are almost all "purposeful" (nonaccidental), albeit being influenced by the media in a much more indirect manner, as we shall see. In short, by looking at both, one may be able to see how television influences (or doesn't influence) the public in different ways: through direct, "stage-managed," and clear messages (PSAs); and/or through indirect, "reported," and ambiguous news items (protest).<sup>8</sup> Specific initial hypotheses were not generated; although this study's opening question has ample support in the literature for opposing conclusions, the second has hardly been addressed adequately, and the third question (especially regarding the influence on purposeful political behavior<sup>9</sup>) has not been addressed at all in the past. As the methodology makes clear, however, the study proceeded in a quite purposeful manner.

## Methodology<sup>10</sup>

Regarding this study's first question, in order to uncover the number of protest events which occurred in Israel during the entire period under discussion, two daily newspapers—*Ha'aretz* (morning) and *Ma'ariv* (afternoon)—were surveyed over three 52-day periods: pre-TV strike (August 15–October 6, 1987), TV strike (October 7–November 28), and post-TV strike (November 29, 1987–January 20, 1988). Data from another study (using *The Jerusalem Post* as primary source) were brought to bear for the same dates in the previous two years (1986–1987 and 1985–1986) for the purpose of comparison and control. The results are found in Table 1.

In order to ensure that the protest results were not an artifact of "extraordinary" events in Israel during the periods in any of these three years, the general Israeli news environment was looked at closely as well. Of the nine specific periods under review here, only one was marked by such an unusual news repertoire: the 1987–1988 post-TV strike period saw the commencement of the West Bank intifada (uprising). Whether this had any significant impact on the overall total of protests during this period is questionable. On the one hand, the intifada did generate six demonstrations (pro and con) during that period. On the other hand, during times of crisis the Israeli (as any other) population tends to become defensive and put off criticism of the government to another time, so that the intifada probably artificially lowered protest (on other issues) which would have occurred had the situation been "normal." In any case, even if the intifada did cause an additional six events overall to show up, this still does not change the basic thrust of the post-TV strike protest increase during the last period of 1987.

Table 1 also displays the number of traffic accidents occurring during these periods (for the TV strike year 1987–1988, and again the two preceding ones 1986–1987 and

**Table 1**Number of Protest Events and Traffic Accidents<sup>a</sup>: Pre-, During, and Post-TV Strike<sup>b</sup>

Year	Pre-Strike	During Strike	Post-Strike
..... <i>Protest Events</i> .....			
1987 <sup>c</sup>	40	11	24
1986 <sup>d</sup>	26	35	26
1985 <sup>d</sup>	30	41	16
..... <i>Traffic Accidents</i> .....			
1987	2967	2172	2096
1986	2110	2114	2006
1985	1894	1900	1760

<sup>a</sup> As reported by the Israeli police.<sup>b</sup> During each year, for the periods August 15–October 6, October 7–November 28, and November 29–January 20 of the following year.<sup>c</sup> As reported by *Ha'aretz* and *Ma'ariv* together.<sup>d</sup> As reported by *The Jerusalem Post*.

1985–1986).<sup>11</sup> It affords some comparative perspective between a political consequence of the strike (protest events) and a possible social consequence (traffic accidents).<sup>12</sup>

Regarding question number two, during the same three periods one week each respectively was chosen,<sup>13</sup> and five daily newspapers were researched to reveal whether any change took place as a result of the TV strike in the number of articles and/or pictures which these papers presented.<sup>14</sup> This also served the purpose of indicating whether any increase or decline in newspaper protest coverage during the TV strike period was an artifact of a change in the overall number of items covered. The results are displayed in Table 2.

As to the study's third question, in addition to the three-period protest analysis mentioned above, a comprehensive six-month survey (November 1987 through April 1988) was undertaken comparing the results of protest coverage by all of Israel's media (see Table 3).<sup>15</sup> These included nine daily newspapers, the major news program *Erev Tov*

**Table 2**

Number of Articles and Pictures in Five Dailies: Pre-, During, and Post-TV Strike

Newspaper <sup>a</sup>	Pre-Strike	During Strike	Post-Strike
<i>Ha'aretz</i>	75.0 <sup>b</sup>	81.3	81.7
	15.6 <sup>c</sup>	13.0	17.8
<i>Dayar</i>	75.8	78.5	74.3
	17.8	12.6	19.6
<i>Ma'ariv</i>	55.8	62.0	63.6
	16.3	16.1	17.1
<i>Yediot Ahronot</i>	63.0	62.8	64.3
	19.8	15.5	17.0
<i>Hadashot</i>	110.0	114.0	110.1
	64.0	58.0	65.1

<sup>a</sup> For the first four newspapers listed here, only the news pages were counted, and not the editorial pages. Due to the nature of the fifth paper all of its articles were counted, which accounts for its higher totals.<sup>b</sup> Daily average number of articles during the week surveyed.<sup>c</sup> Daily average number of pictures during the week surveyed.

**Table 3**  
Number of Reported Protest Events Per Medium<sup>a</sup>

Source	Number of Events
1. <i>Jerusalem Post</i> <sup>b</sup>	118
2. <i>Ma'ariv</i> <sup>b</sup>	91
3. <i>Al Ha'mishmar</i> <sup>b</sup>	59
4. <i>Davar</i> <sup>b</sup>	56
5. <i>Ha'tzofe</i> <sup>b</sup>	51
6. <i>Ha'aretz</i> <sup>b</sup>	41
7. <i>Yediot Ahranot</i> <sup>b</sup>	35
8. <i>Mabat La'hadashot</i> <sup>c</sup>	31
9. <i>Ha'modiah</i> <sup>b</sup>	30
10. <i>Hadashot</i> <sup>b</sup>	21
11. <i>Erev Tov Yisrael</i> <sup>d</sup>	17
Overall Total Reported: 420	
Overall Total Events <sup>e</sup> : 211	

<sup>a</sup> For period November 1, 1987–April 30, 1988.

<sup>b</sup> Newspaper.

<sup>c</sup> Television nightly news program.

<sup>d</sup> Israel Army Radio late afternoon hour-long news program.

<sup>e</sup> Discounting duplication of reported events by all the sources.

*Yisrael* (5–6 P.M.) on Israel's most popular radio channel, *Galei Zahal* (the army station), and the nightly *Mabat* news program on Israel's single television channel (state-supervised). The purpose here was to ascertain whether the electronic or print media did a better job of covering protest, compared to the perception on the part of the protest groups (as derived from Table 1) regarding which medium was more important and effective in getting their message across.

## Findings and Discussion

Regarding the question of television's influence on the public, Table 1 presents some interesting—and in one respect, relatively unambiguous—evidence. First, whereas in 1986 and 1985 the level of traffic accidents held fairly consistent over the three periods (7% maximum change within each year), the television strike year exhibits a marked 27% decline between the pre-strike and strike periods (the previous two years showed almost no change whatsoever between these two periods). Were it not for a continued small decline in the 1987 post-strike period, one would have been able to state quite unequivocally that the elimination of television had a very significant impact on traffic accidents. As it is, the evidence of some relationship is strong although not absolute.

But what could explain such a connection? Two different possibilities present themselves: the influence of televised PSAs regarding how to prevent accidents, and the lessening of societal tensions as a result of the elimination of television news.

The first explanation is the more readily provable. For starters, Israel's worst year for traffic accidents was 1978 (with 16,695). As a result, the government decided to spend money on regularly televised traffic PSAs, and the frequency of accidents began to de-

cline over the ensuing decade on a steady basis.<sup>16</sup> When in 1986 an increase in accidents became apparent, the authorities once again decided (in March 1987) on a higher frequency of PSAs, focusing primarily on the major problem of pedestrian accidents (which immediately began to decline in April–May of that year). From June to early October 1987 the redoubled PSAs returned to their traditional emphasis on proper driving behavior. The result? Whereas in each of the previous eleven years the July summer vacation accident rate was higher than in June, in 1987 the July totals were lower than the previous month! Yet the numbers here remained relatively high throughout the summer of 1987, with the PSA effect apparently only making itself sharply felt after the summer and Jewish holiday season ended—precisely when the TV strike began.

How convincing is this explanation? Both the long-term and short-term statistics seem to support the theory of television (PSA) influence quite strongly. However, paradoxically the very strength of the data raises a problematic question: if indeed PSAs do influence driving behavior, and the impact seems to be quite immediate, why wouldn't there be a regression in traffic accidents (to higher levels) once those PSAs went off the air (during the strike)? A possible answer, of course, is that a long-term PSA campaign may have a lasting cognitive effect for some time after the televised messages cease (the PSAs started up immediately after the strike's cessation, perhaps explaining the continued decline in 1987–1988 accidents). Such a theory (and the extent of such a lasting effect) must await further, more refined, research.

An alternative theory involves the issue of environmental stress. It is well known that increases in traffic accidents occur when the weather gets very hot. Might it not also be possible for a decrease in traffic accidents to occur as a result of less sociopolitical heat and stress?

Such a hypothesis is not at all far-fetched. At least one study on Israel,<sup>17</sup> and another comparing fourteen different countries (including Israel),<sup>18</sup> have shown a consistent relationship between "social stressors" and various forms of aggression. Concerning Israel specifically: "what is interesting to the observer are the fluctuations and historical changes in levels of aggression, and the correlations between aggression and social conditions."<sup>19</sup> Traffic accidents can certainly be viewed as a stress-related social phenomenon, along with homicide, rape, suicide, etc.

What, however, does the TV strike have to do with a reduction in social tension? The Israeli press was replete with articles (during the TV strike) reporting on a citizenry (and politicians) thrilled to be given a break from the steady drumbeat of televised "bad news."<sup>20</sup> Notwithstanding the general animosity felt by large parts of the Israeli public (and press!) toward Israeli TV, the possibility exists that indeed a respite from nightly politically charged pictures and reports had some influence in ameliorating the (usually high) general tension level of Israeli society, with a subsidiary positive impact on traffic accidents (among other social phenomena).

It must be noted, of course, that the blacking out of the TV screen was not in and of itself the cause for any objective reduction in real sociopolitical stressful factors. Rather, television acts as an important facilitator of social stress by transmitting the stressfulness of sociopolitical reality. If the above hypothesis is correct, though, the implications are quite important not only for society but also for researchers who wish to understand such stress-aggression correlations. It is not enough to look only at the "stressor" independent variables (e.g., national unemployment) and their impact on the dependent "social stress indicators" (e.g., civil aggression), but also at the intervening variable in this relationship—the media! It is not only the objective reality which counts; sometimes the subjec-

tive perception of that reality on the part of the public, as a result of the way that reality is presented or not presented, is the determining factor in the level of social aggression and behavior.

From the standpoint of this study's findings, the major problem with this theory is that (as noted above) the Palestinian Arab intifada commenced almost immediately after the Israeli TV strike ended. The intifada undoubtedly raised the political temperature during this post-TV strike period, but the traffic accident rate continued to decline! Thus, despite the inherent logic of the social stress theory, some proof of its effect in areas other than traffic accidents, and the fact that the Israeli public itself seemed to support the theory during the TV strike, the evidence is not conclusive. Once again, further research is necessary before any definitive statement may be made along these lines.

When we turn to the protest event data in Table 1, the evidence becomes far more substantial. Whereas in 1985 and 1986 the protest frequency numbers were initially positively curvilinear over these three periods (with a moderate average slope), in 1987 the three strike-related periods exhibited a sharply sloped, initially negative curvilinear evolution. Simply put, the number of protest events plummeted dramatically during the TV strike period (to by far its lowest level among all the nine periods surveyed here), and then rose almost equally as sharply in the post-strike period—a very strong indication that the TV strike affected Israeli protest negatively, and that the existence of television in Israel is a strong catalyst of public protest.

This conclusion is given added support when one looks at the historical evolution of Israeli protest frequency relative to the introduction of television into Israeli society.<sup>21</sup> Before television began in Israel in 1968, public protest events averaged about 45 annually in the preceding two decades; after 1968 the annual average skyrocketed to about 150!<sup>22</sup> This relationship is not unique to Israel. As Etzioni noted regarding the American case: "The number of demonstrations in the pre-mass television decade (1948–1958) was much smaller than the first television decade (1958–1968). . . . [T]elevision has played a key role in the evolution of this particular form of political expression and in the increasing frequency with which this form is applied."<sup>23</sup>

Before we discuss the possible reasons for the influence or connection between television and protest, let us turn to Table 2, which has some bearing on that issue as well as on question number two: does the existence of television have a bearing on the way newspapers present the news? Here too the evidence is quite clear, albeit not totally unambiguous.

In four of the five newspapers surveyed, an increase in the number of articles was registered during the TV strike period compared to its predecessor (in the fifth, virtually no change occurred)—suggesting that the newspapers attempted to make up for the television news void. This trend is somewhat blurred, however, by the fact that in only two newspapers do we find a post-TV strike reduction in the number of articles printed (*Davar* and *Hadashot*). The evidence is almost completely unidirectional regarding newspaper pictures: in four of the five papers the number of photos declined for the strike period (in one it stayed the same), while in all five papers the number of photos increased after the TV strike ended. A reduction in the number of newspaper photos during a television strike may seem illogical at first, but given a situation in which the newspaper will not, or cannot, increase its overall size, the number of photos and articles become involved in a zero sum game. In this case, it is obvious that the written word won out over the visual presentation.<sup>24</sup>

In short, based on these data one can say with some assurance that newspapers are

somewhat sensitive to changes in intermedia competition, and will adjust their product accordingly to a certain limited extent.<sup>25</sup>

Might not this be the case regarding other social actors on the national scene? Is it not possible that protest groups, for example, might also adapt their activity to the exigencies of the communications environment? Here we return to the possible explanations behind the results shown in Table 1.

Why does public protest dramatically decline during the TV strike period? The first possible answer is the one broached earlier: social stress. If television news (Israeli, at least) gets people angry, frustrated, etc., they might be less likely to take to the streets when that specific negative stimulus is eliminated. The problem with such a theory is that in the Israeli context at least, there are very few "spontaneous" demonstrations or riots (5-10% at most). Most of the public extraparliamentary activity is preplanned, group-initiated (although not necessarily by a fully institutionalized interest group), and these are far less likely to be spontaneously and psychologically affected by television-induced angst (unlike, perhaps, car drivers).

Second, public protest could also possibly be a function of the amount of political information received by the public: the more information, the greater the likelihood that "negative" stimuli (i.e., against one's specific interests) will be received by sundry public groups, which in turn might move them to demonstrate. But this theory has even greater problems with which to contend.

To begin with, as shown in Table 2, the nation's press attempted to make up for the informational shortfall during the TV strike period. From a pure (and overly simplistic) quantitative standpoint, all the five papers together managed to add on average a total of nineteen items to their pre-strike totals—far more than the number of television news items appearing on any single half-hour news program. More germane is the fact that virtually all the television news reports are on the important news events which are normally covered by all the newspapers, so that qualitatively it would be very difficult to argue that television news adds much to the general informational fare. This is especially so when one considers that it is the protest group which initiates almost all the protest, and one would have to assume that the collective leadership hardly loses any important information when the TV set is black, given the multiplicity of newspaper (and other) sources from which such an elite can draw its information.

The above two theories are characterized by an assumption that the social group is acted upon by the media. This, of course, may be far from the case, or certainly not the entire picture. Equally as plausible a theory is that such groups are sensitive to and are able to exploit and adapt to the availability of different media.

The extremely marked reduction in the number of protest events that took place during the TV strike (a 73% decline), and subsequent sharp increase (118%), indicate that a conscious process of media selection was at work here. The tendency of protest groups to seek television exposure especially is a natural one. As Wolfsfeld found in his field research of Israeli protest groups: "Television, and by association, its reporters were seen by all of the [protest] participants as the most powerful of all the media."<sup>26</sup>

Why is there such a perception? Demonstrations are action-packed, emotion-laden events, and the visual dimension of television most completely reflects and carries that component to the audience. Newspapers are a "cold" medium designed to address the rational and cognitive needs of their audience, and as such, the nonspecificity of the protest message is not ideally suited for print transmittal, which emphasizes the details and reasoned rationale behind the events reported upon by the newspapers.

The Israeli historical relationship between television and protest, as outlined above, lends further credence to this theory of social group adaptation to media availability. It would be stretching the imagination quite a bit to argue that television news per se caused Israeli social tension to skyrocket to the extent that public protest more than trebled as a result. It would be even more outlandish to argue that television news added so much information to the general news pool as to cause such a huge rise in protest due to increased "negative" news stimuli. But it is not difficult at all to accept the possibility that many citizens who heretofore were inactive (or who felt that getting their message across through the newspapers was not very effective) might have begun to get involved in extraparliamentary activity due to the advent of this new and potent visual medium.

The remaining question, however, is how correct this perception of television influence may in fact be. The results shown in Table 3 suggest that such groups may be making quite a big mistake.

Israeli TV's coverage of protest events was quite poor compared with its print counterparts (it was somewhat better than the Israel Army Radio).<sup>27</sup> It covered more protest events than just two newspapers,<sup>28</sup> and less than the reportage of seven others—falling significantly short of three papers, seriously short of another (*Ma'ariv*), and extremely short of one more (*The Jerusalem Post*). Thus, even from the perspective of television's strength, agenda-setting, i.e., getting the specific issue to be aired in front of the public, albeit not necessarily the details of that protest message, Israeli TV fails the test. To be sure, it may very well be that those protest events which are covered by television do succeed in getting their (gross) message across in a "stronger" fashion than if merely the papers had covered them. On the other hand, from the pre-protest tactical decision standpoint (to protest or not to protest based on the availability of only the newspapers), a decision to wait until the TV strike was over was probably not a correct one. As Table 3 indicates, only 31 of the 211 actual protest events were covered by Israeli TV in the six-month period surveyed, a very low 1:7 ratio!<sup>29</sup>

Nor does the erroneousness of the protest groups' seeming decision not to protest during the TV strike period end with the problem of limited television coverage. Another consideration is the audience being addressed by the protest. Two major audience possibilities present themselves here: either those with political influence, or potential future protesters who might be convinced to join the extraparliamentary battle. In both cases, the relevant audience is comprised mainly of the sociopolitical elite in Israeli society,<sup>30</sup> those who are most prone to receive the brunt of their political information from newspapers.<sup>31</sup> Thus, when one takes into account the kind of audience which the protesters are trying to reach, reliance on television is precisely the wrong approach to take.

## Conclusions

At least two ironic conclusions emerge from the findings. First, television probably does a much worse job of reporting on protest events than the printed press.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, this fact has seemingly not permeated the social consciousness of the nation, and thus the protest groups' perception of television superiority leads them to give TV a backhanded "influence" on the existence of protest events. Put another way, television news does influence protest, but indirectly—it is the protest initiative of the groups based on the existence of television (and incorrect notion of its greater coverage) which lends a sort of pseudo-influence to television on public protest. This does not mean that the influence is any less "real;" it does suggest that it is far from direct, i.e., not based on unconscious



effects emanating from television on the audience groups, but rather the latter's belief that such an effect exists. In a sense, one can say that at least here (from the perspective of the social groups), it is the medium which is more important than the message.

A second, and related, ironic conclusion has to do with those social groups themselves. As we saw, they definitely seem to be rationally deciding on the timing of their political pressure relative to the availability of the television medium. However, that decision may not in fact be a rationally correct one, as the chances of their appearing on the nightly news is quite low (while the television audience may not be the one which they are most interested in addressing). In short, it is not that such pressure groups are not smart; rather, they may be too smart for their own good (or at least not as smart as they think).

In the final analysis, then, can it be said from the data here that television has a significant impact on public political behavior? Robinson and Levy are correct when they ask and reply: "how do people learn about the world 'out there'?" The . . . mythic answer—from television news."<sup>33</sup> However, their conclusion that it is really the newspapers which provide most of the news (at higher levels of comprehension) to the public, misses part of the point. For it is precisely the myth of television impact and power which may indirectly give television its greater influence on the public which continues to believe in that myth. The bottom line, therefore, is that while the press indeed does a better job of reporting on events (Table 3), it is still television which not only significantly influences public behavior (Table 1), but to a limited extent even influences the press itself (Table 2).

## Notes

1. The literature on this topic is vast. Regarding television news specifically, see, for example, John P. Robinson and Mark R. Levy, *The Main Source: Learning From Television News* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1986), which concludes that: "Television news should not be considered the public's main source of news" (p. 232). An even more radical conclusion is reached by Peter Clarke and Eric Fredin, "Newspapers, Television and Political Reasoning," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 42(2) (Summer 1978): 148: "Television may actually exert an inhibiting effect on knowing about politics." A contrary assessment is offered by Shanto Iyengar, Mark D. Peters, and Donald R. Kinder, in their "Experimental Demonstrations of the 'Not-So-Minimal' Consequences of Television News Programs," *American Political Science Review* 76(4) (December 1982): 855: "We have shown that by ignoring some problems and attending to others, television news programs profoundly affect which problems viewers take seriously." One must note that not all the scholarly disagreements on this issue are in fact "contradictory," as some researchers are looking for influence on the public's opinions, while others (as Iyengar *et al.*) study television's agenda-setting role.

2. See Stephen Lacy, "Effect of Intermedia Competition on Daily Newspaper Content," *Journalism Quarterly* 65(1) (Spring 1988): 95–99. His conclusion (p. 99): "The presence of television, radio and cable in a market appears to have little, if any, impact on the allocation of resources by newspaper management." However, this begs some of the more important questions; e.g., has television influenced the press from the standpoint of the way the latter's product is presented? Are there more pictures in the papers in the television age? Shorter articles? Greater use of color graphics? In short, do newspapers attempt to at least package their product differently? Impressionistically, such successfully upstart papers as *USA Today* strongly suggest that this might indeed be the case. This element is studied below in this article.

3. This is not to say that no one has looked into the interrelationship between public pressure groups and the various media. On the operational level of give-and-take in the field, a worthwhile contribution is Gadi Wolfsfeld, "Symbiosis of Press and Protest: An Exchange Analysis," *Jour-*

*nalism Quarterly* 61(3) (Autumn 1984): 550–55; 742. However, his research does not touch upon the strategic question of whether to demonstrate at all, given the media coverage available. Indeed, an indication of how little the whole question of mass media/political conflict has been researched is the fact that from its inception *Journalism Quarterly*, the most senior communications journal in the field, has published a mere seven articles and/or research notes, over a period of 65 years, on the connection between the mass media and demonstrations, riots, etc., in all of the subject's manifestations.

4. A mirror-image analysis of the one presented here is K. E. Meyer, "Hut of Darkness: Television Viewing During the New York Newspaper Strike," *Saturday Review* Nov. 11, 1978, p. 56.

5. What makes the choice of Israel all the more serendipitous is the fact that polls conducted over the years show that from 75 to 90% of Israeli adults watch the nightly news broadcast at least several times a week—a very high level of news viewership. See, for example, Wolfsfeld, "Symbiosis of Press and Protest," p. 553, where he reports that "77% of the population report watching the news 'almost every night.'" By way of comparison, the American totals are much lower. See Lawrence W. Lichty, "Video Versus Print," *The Wilson Quarterly* 6 (1982): 49–57; he found that less than a third of all adult Americans watch television news daily. In a more refined but geographically limited study, John P. Robinson concluded that in three Ohio towns surveyed in depth, approximately 50% watch television news daily: "Daily News Habits of the American Public," *ANPA News Research Report*, No. 15 (1978).

6. All of Israel's radio stations were struck as well, except for the army radio station (*Galei Zahal*). Israelis continued to receive foreign TV, such as from Jordan and the Middle East (American Christian) channels, but as explained below, for our purposes these were irrelevant.

7. See my "The Israeli Protester," *The Jerusalem Quarterly* No. 26 (Winter 1983): 127–38 for substantiation of Israel's leading place regarding extraparliamentary behavior.

8. Harvey Molotch and Marilyn Lester, "News as Purposive Behavior: On the Strategic Use of Routine Events, Accidents, and Scandals," *American Sociological Review* 39(1) (Feb. 1974): 101–12. Among other things, the authors differentiate between the media function of "promoting" news and "assembling" news (pp. 104–5).

9. The effects of PSAs on social behavior has at least been touched upon: Jerry R. Lynn, "Effects of Persuasive Appeals in Public Service Advertising," *Journalism Quarterly* 51(4) (Winter 1974): 622–30.

10. For an extended elaboration of the methodology regarding the scoring of protest events and a discussion of the problems inherent in such an approach, see my *Stiff-Necked People, Bottle-Necked System: The Evolution and Roots of Israeli Public Protest, 1949–1986* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), chaps. 2 and 4. Briefly, all protest events in which ten or more adult Israeli (not Palestinian) citizens participated, were scored, including political and hunger strikes (but not purely economic strike action).

11. All the data regarding traffic accidents were graciously given to me by central headquarters of the Israeli police. My thanks for their help.

12. My thanks to Gavriel Yehuda for researching and providing both the protest and traffic accident data. This was accomplished under my supervision in a Master's seminar.

13. The weeks were: Sept. 1–7, Nov. 3–9, and Dec. 15–21.

14. This too was done by Gavriel Yehuda.

15. This survey was conducted under my supervision by a special undergraduate seminar class of students from Israel's Ministry of Defense. My thanks to them for the difficult assignment carried out quite punctiliously, and especially to Zvi Granot for the difficult task of organizing and assessing the data. It should be noted that these six months covered most of the strike period and all of the post-strike period. There was little advance warning of the TV strike, so that no such survey was conducted in the pre-strike period; as the survey included television and radio, it was impossible to score these media retroactively for that earlier period. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that the results here are representative of Israeli media coverage in general (although see note c in Table 3).

16. To be sure, the government also began to increase its capital investment in transportation infrastructure, so that the PSAs were not the sole factor here.

17. Simha F. Landau and Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, "Aggression in Israel: A Psycho-Historical Perspective," in *Aggression in Global Perspective*, ed. A. Goldstein and M. Segall (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983), pp. 261–86.

18. Simha F. Landau, "Trends in Violence and Aggression: A Cross-Cultural Analysis," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 25(3–4) (1984): 133–58.

19. Landau and Beit-Hallahmi, "Aggression in Israel," p. 284.

20. See, for example, Menachem Shalev, "Politicians unruffled by quiet on airwaves," *The Jerusalem Post*, Friday, October 30, 1987, p. 7: "The whole pace of life in the country has slowed because of the strike," Pazner [PM Shamir's media adviser] says, 'and it might not be such a bad thing. I think the public is generally far less nervous and agitated because it is not attached 24 hours a day to the newscasts.' To be sure, Pazner was not a disinterested party here, but his comment did reflect a widespread feeling at the time.

21. For a more elaborate analysis of this general point, see Lehman-Wilzig, *Stiff-Necked People*, chaps. 3 and 8. Many of the same points are made in my "Conflict as Communication: Public Protest in Israel, 1950–1982," in *Comparative Jewish Politics: Conflict and Consensus in Jewish Political Life*, vol. 2, ed. S. A. Cohen and E. Don-Yehiya (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1986), pp. 139–40.

22. The turning point actually occurred in 1971, suggesting some lag between television's introduction and its impact on the extra-parliamentary arena. See *Stiff-Necked People*, p. 107, for the possible reasons behind this time lag.

23. Amitai Etzioni, *Demonstration Democracy* (New York: Gordon & Breach, 1979), pp. 12–13.

24. The clearest indication that this is indeed what occurred can be derived from the *Hadashot* numbers. Not only are the article/photo results here a mirror image of each other, but this is the "television newspaper" par excellence on the Israeli scene—a newspaper (à la *USA Today*) which was established in the early 1980s for the television generation. Consequently, its editorial staff would be most sensitive to any change in the television environment.

25. This is not to say that the press can't influence television to a certain extent. See James D. Halloran, Philip Elliot, and Graham Murdoch, *Demonstrations and Communication: A Case Study* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1970), in which they note: "in one sense television appears to be dependent on the press. . . . The morning newspapers are an important source of information about the likely stories of the day" (p. 305). This is true to some extent in Israel as well. Israel Peleg noted through personal observation of the work within Israel TV's newsroom: "The suggestions for that day's line-up . . . are based on the reporters' sources, their [the reporters'] following national events, and also from reading the morning papers and listening to the morning news broadcasts on radio." The author, however, did not try to find out the relative quantitative proportion of each of these sources. *Objectivity in Television News* (Doctoral diss., Department of Political Science, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, November 1981), p. 116 (my translation from the Hebrew). Here is virtually virgin research territory for future quantitative work.

26. Wolfsfeld, "Symbiosis of Press and Protest," p. 553.

27. While not strictly comparable, Peleg's work, *Objectivity in Television News*, pp. 258 and 271 had a different finding. Surveying the coverage of Israeli "labor relations strife" over a 36-day period, he found that television had an item 75% of the time, as did 75% of all the four newspapers he surveyed taken together (unfortunately, he covered only the front page of the papers). Radio scored less well—in only 53% of the surveyed news programs was there such a report.

28. Perhaps three, if note c of Table 3 is taken into account.

29. Their decision was certainly not based on any thought that more Israelis watch the nightly news than read a daily paper. Israeli polls rather consistently show that about 85% read a newspaper "regularly," about two-thirds read them every day, with about half of the latter reading two papers or more daily! See Elihu Katz and Michael Gurevitch, *The Secularization of Leisure: Culture and Communication in Israel* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 183. These

numbers have hardly changed since Israeli television's inception, lending support to the findings of William A. Belson, "The Effects of Television on the Reading and the Buying of Newspapers and Magazines," *Journalism Quarterly* 25(3) (Fall 1961): 366-81.

30. For a discussion of this seemingly "anomolous" fact regarding Israeli protest participants, see my "The Israeli Protester," *The Jerusalem Quarterly* No. 26 (Winter 1983): 127-38.

31. Of course, this is the standard phenomenon elsewhere as well. See, for example, M. Mark Miller, Michael W. Singletary, and Shu-Ling Chen, "The Roper Question and Television Vs. Newspapers as Sources of News," *Journalism Quarterly* 65(1) (Spring 1988): 12-19. Among other things, they show how "preference for television is associated with lower levels of local/state public affairs knowledge" (p. 19). Somewhat the same conclusion was reached twenty years ago by Serena Wade and Wilbur Schramm, "The Mass Media As Sources of Public Affairs, Science, and Health Knowledge," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 33(2) (Summer 1969): 197-209. They found that the lower classes were more likely to use television as their primary source of political (campaign) information.

32. A discussion of why this is so would lead us too far afield, but at least one possibility can be advanced. In a half-hour televised news show, a maximum of 15 news items can be broadcast (assuming about 120 seconds per item). The average newspaper (at least in Israel) carries about five times that many items. Protests, then, have much greater difficulty in getting a spot on the TV news, even taking into account their "natural" advantages as mentioned above (e.g., action-packed, etc.).

33. Robinson and Levy, *The Main Source*, p. 7.