

THE RHETORIC OF CONSTRUCTION:
A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE U.S. – MEXICO &
ISRAEL - PALESTINE BORDER WALLS

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Dedication

To those who are tearing down walls everywhere.

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ISRAEL - PALESTINE BORDER WALLS

by

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Introduction

In his book *Do Good Fences Make Good Neighbors*, Brent Sterling (2009) examines six historical barriers to shed some light on the reality of physical barriers today, especially as modern weaponry would seem to be making physical barriers obsolete. Undeterred by this fact, the Israeli and the United States governments (amongst others) are building walls instead of tearing them down, while arguing that the wall is an effective tool to protect their homelands. Having grown up in Jerusalem and living now in El Paso I cannot help but be struck by a sense of déjà vu when I see the construction advancing through town and into the desert and wonder how a tool as medieval as a wall continues to be of value as a matter of public policy.

Even more paradoxical is the fact that the two governments can argue successfully and convince their publics to support this construction. This is puzzling given that both Israel and the United States have significant military, economic, and political resources that provide a range of public policy alternatives to building a wall. Despite a myriad of alternatives and various combinations of tools for homeland security they have both chosen the construction of a physical structure as a central instrument for homeland security in a global and regional environment that is not as open to all-out war (Sterling 2009, 7). The similarities between the Israeli wall and the American wall are numerous, from simple physical similarities to actual shared plans on paper, shared technology, infrastructure, and even construction companies¹. All of these aspects are worth noting and researching from a comparative perspective, but this study is primarily focused on the rhetorical scaffolding that supports the use of physical barriers as a central tool of public policy regarding homeland security. It examines the language and rhetoric surrounding the wall and its construction along the borders of both countries through mainly a comparative case study methodology.

Throughout this paper I write of walls, fences, and barriers going up on the U.S./Mexico border and going up in, around, and through the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories with an eye to how language surrounds their construction. In some places it is indeed nothing more than a barbed wire or chain-linked fence, a ditch, bulldozed rubble, or a concrete drainage ditch. In other areas it is a 15-foot

¹ Through Boeing, the same Israeli firm (Elbit Systems) that sells advanced fence and border technology to the Israeli government also sells the same products to the American government for use on its borders (Elbit Systems, Ltd 2006).

high concrete barrier topped with barbed wire and guarded by bulletproof, machine-gun manned towers every quarter mile, and at yet other expanses it is simply a bunch of tipped up airplane runways recycled from a different “war”. I use the words “fence”, “barrier”, or “wall” interchangeably as all aspects of the barrier exist, and without being on the ground physically examining that section, one cannot be sure of what type of barrier that section has. While the rhetorical name and placeholder is the same throughout, the fence itself differs greatly in its physical manifestation. Where it is specifically one construction as opposed to another I will refer to in by that name. More important than the facts on the ground are the words bureaucrats and politicians when referring to these physical barriers. Thus this study examines how and why they might employ specific rhetorical language to make physical barriers a centerpiece of public policy on homeland security.

1.1 AMERICA AND ISRAEL: CONVERGENCE OF A PROBLEM

The issues are interconnected both within between the two countries. While television and film have already happily embraced the notion of the Arab as the terrorist, the cooperation of Al-Qaeda and a Mexican drug cartel in a recent episode of *NCIS: Los Angeles* (CBS 2011) illustrates just how embedded and linked these notions of similar dangers have become. By linking the American alarm of unchecked drug violence to the Israeli and American dread of Arab terrorism, the shared rhetoric of fear is strengthened even further. It is no longer a subtle nuanced connection, but an open and blunt association.

The notion that the rhetoric utilized by both countries may involve similar concepts and images is hinted at by American politicians who have used the words “We are all Israelis” as a slogan to draw parallels and validations between Israeli “suffering” and American “suffering” (Lubin 2008). Staudt (2009) describes the United States-Mexico border as closing and in doing so it divides those who are “in” from those who are “out”. The wall is the physical symbol of this closing, ever accompanied by the complimentary language that creates a circle of affirmation. Anne Demo (2005) argues that the INS carefully selected the images it used to accompany language to create an overall picture of the border as lawless and chaotic, contrasting it to imagery of uniformed law/border enforcement and structures regaining control and sovereignty of the borderland. Key to this discourse is the actual footage of old existing sections of the wall as a dilapidated structure. This discourse continued in the 2011 Republican

Presidential Candidate debates with Herman Cain deciding that suggesting that the fence along the border should be electrified. Support of the wall was considered a perfectly safe and strategic point of debate (Henderson 2011). Who can argue against more “safety”? Cain’s choice of language is part of a larger recurring theme in presidential debates in the United States that constructs immigrants as dangerous and criminal (Beasley 2004), a theme that easily turns to language such as an “enemy”, “invasion”, “floodgates”, and “frontlines” (Payan 2006, Staudt 2008).

The wall in America has become a concrete symbol of its wars on terror, on immigration, and on drugs. It is often justified as a construct that keeps unwanted terrorists and immigrants out of America and on the “other” side of the wall. It keeps drugs from flooding the streets of America and “poisoning our children”. On this side of the wall is “us”, protected not only from horrific acts of terror but also from the petty crime and sea of brown that “illegal” immigration brings. On the other side of the wall is “them,” the terrorists, the invaders, the intruders, the freeloaders, the thieves. In the political spectacle to which this rhetoric is the script not only is the wall depicted as keeping ordinary Americans safe, but it is also depicted as protecting American jobs.

In the case of Israel a similar narrative is playing out. The wall keeps out the unwanted terrorists as well as the unwanted immigrants (from Palestine) who could upset a delicate demographic balance that the Israeli government considers to be of major concern (Lewin-Epstein 2003, Zureik 2003). As this study reveals, there is an ever-growing rise in rhetoric calling for the need to wall off Israel’s southern border to keep out immigrants and refugees from Africa who would take Israeli jobs and increase the crime rate. This development in the Israeli discourse brings the parallels of Israel and the United States ever closer. Like the Wild West setting of the United States, Israel’s past toys with the lawless and chaotic West Bank, in which settlements built in a “wall and tower” style set the precedent for today’s “security fence”: “the *Homa Umigdal* is the origin, the prototype, the model and the mold of Israeli architecture... occupation of territory through settlement and infrastructure” (Rotbard 2003). In Israel the wall also is a definer and divider of “inside the wall” and “outside the wall” and is itself justified and legitimized by security needs that inherently define an Israel without the wall as insecure (Hever 2010, Ochs 2011).

Scholars reference specific speeches to generalize the use of fear as a specific political strategy. Journalists have reported extensively on the physical barriers in both countries. However there is no study of the evolution of the rhetoric regarding a border wall. This study examines how much and how often rhetoric of this type is employed by the governments in justifying and legitimizing an action such as building a wall or fence. It will investigate the trends and specifics of the language of fear that is used so that a complete picture can be gained. By using the methodology of a structured and focused comparative case study this inquiry will compare the evolution and use of fearful rhetoric in both the United States and Israel to justify and legitimize the border walls they have built.

1.2 THE CULTURE OF FEAR AND THE RHETORIC OF INSECURITY

The idea of a culture of fear and its negative impact on society in the United States is investigated by Barry Glassner (1999) who notes the 1995 Oklahoma bombing and the immediate and incorrect conclusion by many, even in the media, that the perpetrators were Arab terrorists. That was even before two internationally important events helped the narratives of fear entrench themselves in their respective national psyches: the Israeli experience of increased attacks and bombings against civilians within Israel during the Al-Aqsa Intifada and the unanticipated events on American soil on September 11.

Since these two incidents, the language of fear and (in)security has resonated much louder within each country's national dialogue. Corey Robin (2004) investigates the vision of fear as a political force as seen through the words of Thomas Hobbes, Baron de Montesquieu, Alexis de Tocqueville, and Hannah Arendt. He finds that political use of fear has challenged a liberal commitment in the United States to pursue freedom and equality. Israel itself was created in the post World War II, post-Holocaust days of fear that the very existence of the Jewish people was in question. Now it too faces internal and external criticism of some of its policies effects on democracy and freedom. In the borderlands the cycle of fear has allowed politicians to ignore long-term and just solutions by focusing on the fears they have created. As Murray Edelman (1971, 65) writes, "inner anxieties are displaced onto public objects so that overt enemies can be blamed and social supports created." He goes on to write on the unquestioned and unchallenged cues that the government conveys to link political symbols and political behaviors. De

Genova (2011) names this interplay *the spectacle of terror* and *the spectacle of security*, where the heightened promotion of terror leads to a heightened marketing of making things more secure. This spectacle of security, manifested in the rhetorical machine of the state and in the bureaucracies created, “must produce – above all else – the state’s most precious and necessary political resource, and must advance what may likewise be its most politically valuable end; namely heightened *insecurity*” (De Genova 2011). This study will begin to investigate how the image given to the wall is connected to ideas of security and insecurity through rhetoric of fear.

1.3 A LITERATURE REVIEW IN RHETORIC

A brief search for the word rhetoric in the Oxford Dictionary gives the following definition: “the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the exploitation of figures of speech and other compositional techniques... language designed to have a persuasive or impressive effect... (Oxford University Press 2010). The types of rhetoric and the definitions and uses vary greatly in the differing disciplines in which rhetoricians can specialize. In examining rhetoric of the Cold War, Robert L. Scott (1997) writes that a rhetorical examination must include aspects of intellectual, political, and social histories in order to understand the rhetorical history. Rhetoric is one history among many, one way of examining people, places, and events. With this in mind, context is important when conducting an examination of rhetoric, however once this context is established some simple strategies such as word counting, and textual and content analysis can be very effective. Martin J. Medhurst (1997) uses word counts for “peace” and its derivatives to show how Eisenhower was using his ‘Atoms for Peace’ speech to establish the United States as a peacemaker. This effect of repetitive wording and language was a rhetorical objective of Eisenhower and his speechwriters. As language evolves and metaphors and rhetoric are used and reused, “terms compete with one another to dominate the hierarchy of meaning by which our interpretation of political experience, and ultimately our political acts, are guided” (Ivie 1997). Thus, the language can create the reality, as seen in a further look at the language of the Cold War. The Cold War was ripe with rhetoric of savagery that constructed a hostile and threatening enemy with decivilizing language, while at home Communists were portrayed as forces of darkness (Ivie 1997). The home team was similarly assigned language of light and guardianship. These portrayals enabled

those in power to justify measures that, though sometimes extreme and even illegal, were deemed legitimate because of the rhetorical scaffolding around it. This study will look for similar concepts in the use of language to find clusters of conceptual metaphors that can then be gathered together to form a scheme of the intended metaphorical concepts (Lakoff and Johnson 1981).

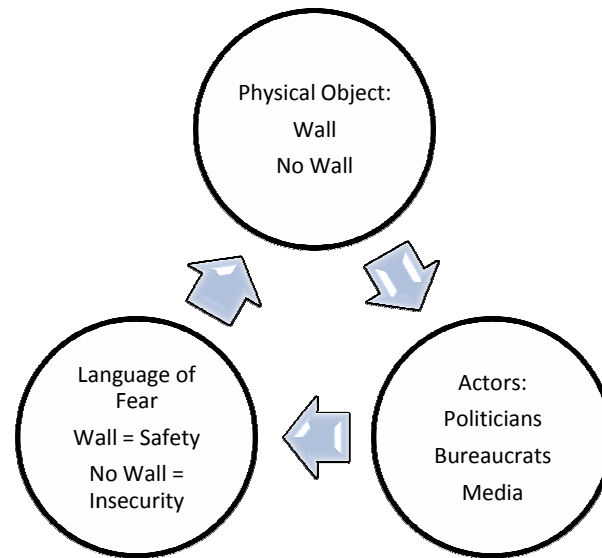


Figure 1.1: Cycle of Rhetoric: Fear, the Wall, and the Politicians.

This study will look at the rhetoric that creates a problem, shapes the image of the “enemy,” and then provides the notion that a wall is the ultimate solution. To this end the general discourse on walling contains contradictory language that portrays states as both vulnerable (thus needing protection) and strong (being able to provide that protection) with language harkening back to a day of invasions and sieges against walled cities (Brown 2010). In the conclusion to his book, Sterling (2009) notes that the increase in subjective safety from a wall is an advantageous policy choice for politicians, allowing a nation to delay and avoid the pursuit of a long-lasting, legitimate, and just solution to hostilities at a time when it would be strategically advantageous to do so. In looking at the differences and similarities between two analogous and yet so distant barriers, this study hopes to shed light on the political legitimization of the wall as a symbol to assuage the fears that politicians themselves have built up. By looking at the interplay between the rhetoric around the wall and the political discourse, this study aims to find the connection between a general rhetoric of fear of the “other” and its connection to borders and

walls. The literature and discourse on the US-Mexico wall is extensive and by not only adding to it, but also broadening the ideas to encompass the Israel-Palestine wall for contrast and comparison, this study hopes to expand upon ideas of border imagery and rhetoric. The events of September 11 and George W. Bush's war on terrorism seems to have allowed a common rhetorical enemy of terrorism to be draped over anything to create a common enemy. It is important to understand the underlying message of the language being used in order to see the on-the-ground effects and implications of building a barrier. Only then can the issues for which the wall is but a Band-Aid be addressed.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

1.4.1 Benefits of a Mixed Methods Analysis

To draw out the lessons regarding the construction of political rhetoric and to understand *how* and *why* rhetoric is used to justify and legitimize the wall, this paper uses a mixed methods approach, drawing on both descriptive quantitative and qualitative techniques. This approach to comparative case studies is a good way to study two contemporary events where behavior cannot be manipulated and the number of cases is too small to allow the use of standard statistical quantitative methodology (Yin 2003, Ragin 1987). It can be argued that most research in the social sciences does not distinctly fit into a "qualitative" style or a "quantitative" style of research, but is actually a favorable mixture of the two (George and Bennett 2005, King, Keohane and Verba 1994). By expanding the tools with which a case or cases are examined, more can be discovered than by only using a strict and narrow approach from only one aspect of one field of study (Vaughan 1992). Thus a look at physical barrier through the language and rhetoric used by politicians, specifically the heads of government, will help broaden our understanding of the connection between the language, the politicians, and the tangible object at the center of it all.

1.4.2 Picking a Case

Selecting two cases that seem similar from the outset may seem to run the risks associated with picking cases based on the dependent variable. While the ultimate solution of building a wall may seem similar, the circumstances that give origin to the wall may not be the same and may in fact stem from different causal relations, as reflected in the what, when, and why of the language politicians use to

justify the wall to their populace. This allows the study to explore the possibility of equifinality: reaching the same outcome through different paths. Process tracing within each case can reveal two different sets of variables with a good amount of variation that will negate the concerns of picking a case based on its dependent variable (George and Bennett 2005). By looking at the similarities and differences of the two cases in context this study can examine how different conditions may have the same causal significance, or indeed, how causal factors that are similar can result in two different strategies (George and Bennett 2005, Ragin 1987). The issue addressed in this study is whether the same rhetoric is used in both cases and in the same way to persuade the public and justify the construction of the wall. If so, then there may be something to learn about political language and its persuasiveness. As long as it is not assumed from the start that the make-up and meaning of each case will be the same, then this is a starting point from which to look for negative cases for continued and future research (Ragin 2009). In selecting successful cases (in this research, successful in building a border wall) this study can look at what mix of conditions the two cases have in common, specifically looking at the mix of language and rhetoric of fear. Furthermore, while there are distinct differences between the United States and Israel, and Mexico and the occupied Palestinian territories, the similarities are substantial and seemingly significant enough that a more careful and methodical approach is called for in the vein of the “most-similar cases method” that looks at these cases in a holistic matter, not simply as a collection of variables. “... [C]ase-oriented methods stimulate a rich dialogue between ideas and evidence... they do not restrict or constrain the examination of evidence” (Ragin 1987, 52).

1.4.3 Operationalization and Time Limits of Study

Rhetoric is a concept often used to describe political language. However operationalizing it in order to measure it seems a little more difficult. Like those examining Cold War rhetoric, I intend to look for a hierarchy of language formed by recurring themes and words that form conceptual metaphors and metaphorical concepts (Ivie 1997, Medhurst 1997, Scott 1997). This comparative study uses textual and content analysis to compare and contrast rhetoric over time from government sources to find what words and phrases have come to dominate the hierarchy of discourse. By comparing the use of different components of the language used in these two countries over time, this study will better be able to study

the dynamics of how the rhetoric has changed, better able to show the effects of events on the rhetoric, and simply give more data with which a richer analysis can be given. With this information collected, later studies can look at cross sections of the study, or chart only one country's time-series data.

So as to confine the potentially limitless parameters of this study it will focus on specific dates that can be linked to paradigm shifts in feelings of national vulnerability. This longitudinal study will take into consideration September 2001 and the World Trade Center Attacks as a starting point in changes in rhetoric in the United States, and September 2000 and the beginning of the Al-Aqsa Intifada as the starting point of changes in rhetoric in Israel. The study will thus examine rhetoric from 2001-2011

1.4.4 Seeking Parity: Language and Actors

In order to compare governments effectively and find parity in language and actors this study finds and examines the symbolic language used in referencing the border construction in Israel by the Prime Minister's Office, and the symbolic language used to reference the border construction in the United States from the White House (in both cases focusing on the head of state, their press offices, and their chief of staff). While the precise systems of government may differ between the countries, and thus affect the exact realities each faces as a politician, they are comparable in the head of government's capacity as the major singular spokesperson of that government. It is well documented that the president (and similarly the Prime Minister) can be an influential agenda setter in the policy-making process due to their high visibility in the media and their prominence in the governmental hierarchy (Baumgartner and Jones 1993, Cohen 1995, Light 1991). With this in mind, when a member of the cabinet and the president's inner cabal speaks, such as a White House Press Secretary, it is for the president that they speak.

1.4.5 The Method of Structured and Focused Comparison

The method of structured and focused comparison as laid out by George and Bennett (2005) is an excellent general guideline to follow. By asking the same questions reflecting the notion of rhetoric and the wall of each case, data collection is standardized and cases can be systematically compared. Additionally, further studies may follow the same method and reasoning to investigate other cases and

build and expand this study's objectives. This paper is a far cry from an exhaustive investigation into the vast world of immigration, fences, politics, and language. By remaining focused on the precise topic of the research question the research does not get lost in the background.

In order to stay within the boundaries of a structured and focused comparison this study examines the same actors with the same questions on the rhetoric of language. This study gathers the data needed from online depositories of complete sources of information from the office of both nations' leaders (*The American Presidency Project* for the United States, and *Prime Minister's Office (PMO)* for Israel). This includes official speeches, press releases and press conferences as well as other documents. Every document containing one of the major descriptive words used to reference the construction (fence, wall, and barrier) was pulled and checked. Those that were specifically about either the US/Mexico wall or the Israel/Palestine wall were saved, thus providing a complete dataset of official releases from the head of government's office concerning the wall. I travelled to the Middle East to speak with representatives of Israeli government who serve as policy translators and transmitters to the foreign press. It was verified that the translations in English provided by the PMO contain the same language and general rhetoric as the original documents in Hebrew. The same office that writes and releases Hebrew language information for the Israeli Prime Minister and his cabinet also translates and releases the English releases, thus ensuring that the rhetorical objective is the same. The websites are the same (simply an "English" extension and "Hebrew" extension of the same official government server). Furthermore, the words used to describe the construction in Hebrew translate directly and literally to "fence" and "barrier". While the word "seam zone" was more commonly used in Hebrew, if it was not translated literally, it was changed to the word "fence". "Wall" is seldom used, but a search was conducted for wall nonetheless to ensure parity in searches between the United States and Israel.

1.4.6 Textual analysis: Atlas.ti and word counts

Once these documents were collected in their entirety for 2001-2011, they were entered into Atlas.ti, a textual analysis tool. Before any deep and rich analysis was conducted, a simple word count through Atlas.ti was applied to the documents collected from each country. This was modified to remove what are the most common words in English and thus cannot be indicative of importance simply

due to volume (such as the words “and” and “to”). To make these statistical profiles of texts more meaningful they are illustrated through the use of word clouds² (Fahnestock 2011). Language of fear was coded together in a cluster to highlight appropriate sentences and paragraphs. Then each document was individually and carefully read, and unconnected sections (such as a section on “Iraq” in a Press Secretary question and answer session) were also removed leaving only official releases from the head of government’s office. Following the time line, the general mood and specific language from year to year were analyzed looking for imagery and rhetoric from the following clusters as well for any deviation telling a different story or alternative narrative to that of fear.

Table 1.1: Metaphorical Clusters.

SECURITIZATION/ SOVEREIGNTY	PHYSICAL STRUCTURE	FEAR	INVASION
SAFE/SAFETY	WALL	ILLEGAL	HORDE
SECURITY	FENCE	TERROR/ TERRORISM	SWARM
NATIONAL SECURITY	FENCING	VIOLENCE	TIDE
SEPARATION	BARRIER	ATTACK	ATTACK
PROTECTION	STOP	CRIMINAL	INFILTRATE
		DRUG/ CARTEL	

1.1.1 Hypotheses

I expect to find that the Israeli and the United States governments will share metaphorical concepts when defending, explaining, justifying, legitimating and writing about their respective border barriers. This means that as the head of government speaks (personally, or through their office) they will speak of a wall by way of the fears from which the wall will protect the public, while simultaneously portraying the wall as the solution to these fears. Cluster of “fear” and clusters of “security” will come hand in hand. Within these concepts I expect that, beyond the broader metaphor, the countries’ rhetorical clusters will share many of the same wordage. These clusters will portray a fear of the unknown, of the

² Using the online tool available at <http://worditout.com/word-cloud/>.

wilderness outside storming over unprotected borders, and a fear of the terror only recently put center stage and spotlighted by a still shook America. I expect to find that the common cluster of fear that is exploited for these political gains is being based on recent national experiences of terror. Thus, though the national realities may be unique, the way rhetoric is utilized will be very similar, as will the actual words and language used. I expect to find an increase in rhetoric of fear in the early years of the study as a result of the 9/11 attacks and the Al-Aqsa intifada, and remaining steady throughout, as construction of both walls is still continuing in 2012. I expect to find that, despite a variance of time, place, and person drawing upon those specific words, the metaphorical concepts that conclude with the sanity and inevitability of building a wall.

The United States of America

2.1 WARS IN OTHER PLACES (2001-2004)

In the year 2001 President George W. Bush began his first year in office coming from a governorship in Texas on the U.S. – Mexico border. From 1995-2000 Texas did between \$33-69 billion cross-border trade with Mexico (U.S. Department of Transportation 1994-2012) and shares 27 automobile crossings with Mexico (Rose and Davidson 2010). A social conservative and family man, Bush championed the rights of immigrants to work and be united with their families.

He took office with a divided Congress sitting in Washington. In September of his first year in the White House the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon brought the national security debate to the forefront of public conversation. This conversation and the distraction of two overseas land wars seems to have kept the fence out of any debate in 2002, 2003, and 2004. In 2003 the Bush administration had the advantage of a united Republican Congress as an outcome of midterm elections. This meant that with a security-focused agenda and no political opposition it was likely that any law the administration considered putting forward would have enough support to be passed. With the dramatic effect that September 11 had on US domestic and foreign policy, especially with regards to the security debate, a dramatic change that greatly increased the visibility and stakes of a border wall would be expected. In this same time period, the Republican controlled Congress introduced and passed in both houses H.R. 5005 the “Homeland Security Act of 2002” which called for the completion of fencing in the San Diego area border, showing that in Congress at least, for some Senators and House Representatives, building a fence along the border was important, either politically, constituently, or ideologically.³

³ Of those introducing bills calling for construction of a fence, in the Senate, only 1 state (Arizona) was actually on the border, and only 2 counties (both in California) were counties that were actually on the border. Other bills introduced came from Senators and Representatives from Oklahoma, Colorado, Alabama, North and South Carolina, Indiana, and Pennsylvania (besides inland counties in Texas Arizona and California). A careful examination of the advantages specific to each of these members of Congress and how these interests converge would add greatly to the scholarship concerning the border wall.

In 2001 the Executive only had two records concerning the border wall neither of which contained rhetoric of fear or exclusion. President Bush instead speaks of a borderless economic atmosphere, setting a tone of openness:

And that's why it's so important for us to tear down barriers and walls that might separate Mexico from the United States. And that's why it's so important for us to stand strong when it comes to free trade with our neighbors to the south... Oh, I know there's some voices who want to wall us off from Mexico. They want to build a wall. I say to them, they want to condemn our neighbors to the south in poverty, and I refuse to accept that type of isolationist and protectionist attitude. (Bush, Remarks to the Hispano Chamber of Commerce in Albuquerque 2001)

Bush uses this speech to set himself with apart from those calling for isolationism and separation, instead placing himself and the Hispano Chamber of Commerce on the same side in wanting economic integration.

Bush stresses this idea again using almost identical language once more in September immediately before September 11, and again in 2002 in three different records, each one in reference to economic “walls”, “fences”, and “barriers” that Bush continues to speak out strongly against. Within the United States, Bush’s rhetoric regarding immigrants is positive and forward thinking: “This system will be more humane to workers, who will be protected by labor laws and able to establish their identities. It will live up to the highest ideals of free nations.” (Bush, The President's News Conference With President Vicente Fox of Mexico in Crawford, Texas 2004). Overall the border wall on the U.S. - Mexico border was a non-issue for the Bush administration in 2003. In the international arena, American support of the Israeli border wall was mixed, with support voiced for it as a security measure, but not as a delineating tool for negotiations of state boundaries. This suggests future attitudes of the Bush administration in which a fence as a security tool is acceptable along a U.S. - Mexico border.

Beyond this, Bush addresses the shared values of the two nations, and the need for the United States to address its part in being a consumer of the drugs that are entering the United States from Mexico. The low importance and unfamiliarity of the issue of the border fence in the administration is highlighted when a journalist asks the White House Press Secretary about environmental issues regarding the border fence extending out from the California Coast into the Pacific Ocean. The response

was: “I’m not familiar with the specifics of the report you’re talking about. It’s something that was constructed by the Border Patrol?” (Bush, Press Briefing by Scott McClellan 2004). Most records, prior to 2004, show that a border wall was not a central piece of the Bush Administration border or immigration policy.

In December 2004, the Bush administration takes its first leave from the positive narrative of an open and wall-less border:

The President, what he is working to do is to strengthen our border security and to strengthen our controls along the border to prevent people who should not be entering the country, like terrorists or criminals, from coming into the country, while also making sure that we remain a welcoming society. We are a nation of immigrants, and the President believes in those core principles that we should remain a welcoming society, but we also need to take steps to strengthen our border enforcement. (Bush, Press Briefing by Scott McClellan 2004)

This border enforcement is symbolized by an increase in Border Patrol agents, with no mention of physical structures of any kind. The message here remains mixed, with Bush repeating and thus stressing the importance of the notion that America is a welcoming society, while dealing with the antithetical nature of open arms and a closed door.

Overall the first four years of the Bush administration is free of any discussion of a structure along the U.S. - Mexico border, despite the hypothesis that September 11 would have been a turning point in the importance of border security to the administration. Only at the very end of these four years is there a connection on record of terrorists and criminals being linked to the border by the administration. This is a change that allows a chink in the armor of Bush’s main argument: that those crossing are essentially good, and simply need a system that can catalogue and keep track of them. With the administration now allowing that there may be exceptions, they are allowing legislation aimed at those exceptions of the most dangerous kind: criminals and terrorists.

2.2 THE BEGINNING OF SUPPORT (2005)

In February of 2005, after being declared the winner of the previous year’s presidential elections, the Bush Administration announces its support for the REAL ID Act of 2005, as a statement of

Administration Policy. The Statement highlights certain portions of this act including “strongly supporting” building physical barriers where appropriate to “protect against terrorist entry” into the United States (Bush, Statement of Administration Policy: H.R. 418 - REAL ID Act of 2005 2005). The press is aware of the wall being constructed on the border, and it is international news as Mexican President Vicente Fox speaks out against the building of this wall, calling for it to be torn down (Sullivan 2005). When asked about Mexico’s concern, the President’s press secretary Scott McClellan sidesteps the issue of the wall, merely emphasizing his immigration reform programs as well as “a number of steps to strengthen enforcement along our borders... also free up our ability to go after those who are coming here for the wrong reasons,” specified later as terrorism and criminal activity (Bush, Press Briefing by Scott McClellan 2005). This avoidance of declaring support for the wall continues into March with the focus being on free trade and open economic borders as well as ensuring humane treatment of those entering the country illegally.

By October 2005, with the introduction of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, the message has changed from one of avoiding the issue of the wall and focused on struggling immigrants trying to help their families, to a message containing much more language of danger and fear. “When our borders are not secure, terrorists, drug dealers, and criminals find it easier to sneak into our country”, and so as part of a plan to make the border more secure, “The Administration is also taking steps to complete a fence running along the San Diego border with Mexico” (Bush, Fact Sheet: President Bush Signs Homeland Security Appropriations Act 2005). This language continues in full force: “To stop illegal immigrants from coming into the United States, the Federal government has...improved physical barriers along the border” (Bush, Fact Sheet: President Bush Signs Homeland Security Appropriations Act 2005). This seems to be a concession to the members of Congress that are pushing for, specifically, a fence in the San Diego, California portion of the border with Mexico. In doing so the administration is tacitly agreeing to a functional nature to the fence.

According to the expanding rhetoric, the Department of Homeland Security with strong support from the Bush Administrations has upped enforcement to catch “criminal gangs and coyotes that traffic in humans” and prosecuted many thousands of people for “smuggling drugs, guns, and illegal

immigrants” (Bush, Fact Sheet: President Bush Signs Homeland Security Appropriations Act 2005). To catch and prevent “non-Mexicans” trying to “sneak through” and “end the violence associated with human smuggling, and save lives,” the administration funds DHS with \$70 million dollars for fencing and other border barrier construction (Bush, Fact Sheet: President Bush Signs Homeland Security Appropriations Act 2005). This message continues repeatedly for the remainder of 2005, with depictions of the border as a lawless, dangerous place, and an avenue for terrorists and criminals to enter the United States unfettered. Bush calls for an increase in enforcement officers, in fencing and other construction, in detention facilities, and for a streamlining of the legal process so the law is not “forced to release ... murderers, rapists, child molesters, and other violent criminals.” (Bush, Remarks on Border Security and Immigration Reform in Tucson, Arizona 2005).

This focus on the danger continues unabated:

Our skilled immigration security officers are also going against some of the most dangerous people in our society—smugglers, terrorists, gang members, and human traffickers... we have prosecuted more than 2,300 smugglers bringing drugs, guns, and illegal immigrants across the border... [f]ederal agents have arrested nearly 1,400 gang members who were here illegally, including hundreds of members of the violent Latin American gangs like MS-13. (Bush, Remarks on Border Security and Immigration Reform in Tucson, Arizona 2005)

Bush seems to have found the place where his rhetoric of caring for people and families, meets the rhetoric of terror and mass murderers. It is the coyotes, the murderers, and the rapists who he brings into the picture. In his narrative, Bush is protecting and helping the immigrants themselves from those who will take advantage of them. It is important to note the consistent presence of terrorists in the language forming a non-negotiable foundation on which all other arguments can built.

2.3 A RHETORICAL HIGH (2006-2007)

While the make-up of the American government remains the same as previous years, as does US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, the year 2006 culminates in the passing of The Secure Fence Act of 2006 being signed into law by George W. Bush in October. Amongst many other provisions for border security, it authorizes the funding for hundreds of miles of more fencing to be built along the

border. As we get into 2007, the Congress changes hands to the Democrats during elections, and the White House and Congress face increasing criticism from Mexico for the construction of the fence. In Congress, the 109th Congress (2005-2006) introduced 8 bills other than the Secure Fence Act calling for continued construction along the border, with bill titles such as *Securing America's Borders Act*, *Illegal Immigration Crisis Response Act* and additional provisions such as making English the official language of the country. Only the Secure Fence Act of 2006 passes.

In 2006 the Bush Administration continues serving a combination of fear-full rhetoric about criminals and terrorists being able to cross an open border, with some of Bush's earlier language advocating immigration reform for hard working immigrants. Just as important is the repetition of rhetoric of open borders for trade and tourism in contrast to the rhetoric of closed borders for security and sovereignty reasons. The Administration's complete rejection of any form of amnesty is now apparent - rejection "for the sake of justice and for the sake of border security" (Bush, The President's Radio Address 2006). The Administration's plan for immigration reform is laid out as being a three-part plan: creating a temporary worker program; strengthening enforcement inside the country; and most importantly, "securing the border". A large part of securing the border is, "protective infrastructure, such as vehicle barriers and fencing in urban areas" (Bush, Comprehensive Immigration Reform: Securing Our Border, Enforcing Our Laws, and Upholding Our Values 2006). As in earlier years, though the term *illegal immigrants* is used excessively, it is the depiction of criminals, gang members, human traffickers, drug dealers, and terrorists entering the country that is used most in connection with justification of construction of fencing and other barriers. The language of the need to "slow the tide of people coming into the United States" is also used along with other imagery such as that of a flood; a flood that could be stopped by the fence. (Bush, Press Briefing by Tony Snow 2006, Bush, Remarks on Border Security and Immigration Reform in Yuma 2007). The message however is consistent, with Bush stating, "It's impractical to fence off the border... And I don't think anybody believes that you could totally fence off the border and be effective." (Bush, Interview With CNN Español 2006). This is in response to a House bill calling for 700 miles of border to be walled. By May, the Administration is upping the ante by sending up to 6,000 National Guard troops to the border, to, amongst other things, help install fencing

and barriers, but not to militarize the border (Bush, Address to the Nation on Immigration Reform 2006). As the year draws to an end, the Administration agrees that it is indeed committed to building 700 miles of fencing – not the virtual high-tech fencing touted until now, but actual fencing, and if at all possible, double-fencing (Bush, The President's News Conference 2006). This is a definite turn in the discourse where the fence does not seem as though it is merely a bargaining chip in the administration's goal for immigration reform, but now a good option described with modifiers such as “actual” and “double”. This move away from the vague and into the affirmative is a move away from being able to back out of commitments to a barrier.

One of the talking points of the White House in 2006 and 2007 is the notion that the fence (along with increased Border Patrol Agents and high-tech equipment) is having a positive impact because the Border Patrol was making *fewer* arrests, and that the increased internal enforcement (going after immigrants and employers away from the border and instead in the interior of the United States) was working because of the *many* arrests being made (Bush, Press Briefing by Tony Snow 2007). This paradox of contradictory statements is left unexplained. The audience is lead to believe that fewer people were coming across the now safer border, meaning everyone in the interior was safer, *and* more dangerous people were being arrested in the interior, meaning everyone in the interior was safer.

Another ongoing concern in the Administration's conversation regarding the border wall is the official diplomatic relationship with Mexico. The obvious emphasis is on the understanding between the Mexican government and the American government with regards to illegal drugs and illegal immigration (neither should be happening), however the relationship between the governments shows signs of stress when the issue of sovereignty and the border wall appear. In response to a question on the Mexican government's concern, the administration replies, “Last time I checked, Calderón did not have any official authority over the activities of the United States government” (Bush, Press Briefing by Tony Snow 2006). In later press conferences what is really the beginning of a diplomatic row between two vitally connected nations is portrayed as a difference of opinion – the construction being discussed is not a wall, but “you have fences in some places -- you really have a mix of fences, Border Patrol agents, technical means, surveillance and that kind of thing, so it's not strictly fences” (Bush, Press Briefing by

Tony Snow 2006). When asked about walls on the border, the various spokespeople for the White House are very careful to correct the language to “fence”. The precision and estimation of choosing the word fence is revealed as a White House strategy. In the United States, a white picket fence is the symbol of the American dream in the American suburbs. The use of the word fence also brings to mind the old maxim ‘Good fences make good neighbors’. By using such a familiar proverb the audience is likely to agree subconsciously and take such an idea for truth (Fahnestock 2011). This is in sharp contrast to a wall, which brings about images of prisons, and barrier whose sole purpose is to stop – nothing neighborly there.

While the administration’s rhetoric on the need for physical barriers on the border becomes more prevalent in 2006, it is important to note that it always stressed the importance of comprehensive immigration reform as just as important as the issue of physical border security. A repeated phrase is one stating that family values do not stop at the Rio Grande, in direct contrast to the imagery of criminals and drug dealers. This element is not translated into the actual legislation passed in 2006. It does however become more of a salient issue once the Democratic Congress comes into power in 2007, suggesting that as far as the Bush administration was concerned, the Democrats were better allies for consideration of actual immigration reform and not just the militarized enforcement option. The inclusion of vast increases in funding and infrastructure for fencing and Border Patrol agents seems to essentially be for the sole purpose of attracting Republican votes to comprehensive immigration reform.

2.4 INTEREST WANES (2008)

Congress remains divided, however the presidential primaries in the election cycle are in full swing and completion of construction of a border fence is an important and central topic in the Republican National Party rhetoric in debates. Amongst the Democratic primary candidates it is seen as a non-issue. George W. Bush and his eight years of border and fence policy are essentially out of the picture as his two terms draw to an end leaving rhetoric regarding the wall largely out of White House conversation. In Congress, however, the introduction of bills to build a wall along the border is now in full swing. In the 110th Congress (2007-2008) 18 bills calling for more and faster construction of the border wall were introduced in both houses.

Bush begins the year with mention of the fencing in the State of the Union address as helping to keep the nation's borders secure. The construction on the border then becomes a non-issue, until September, when it is mentioned as part of a paper outlining how the Bush Administration has protected America, under the sub-heading of "The President Has Implemented Programs To Secure Our Homeland And Fight The War On Terror" (Bush, Fact Sheet: The Seventh Anniversary of 9/11 2008). Again, in December, the fence is just a bullet point in how the Bush Administration has protected America from terrorism since September 11, 2001. There could be several reasons for this. Bureaucratically, the fence has become an issue for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to deal with, and so details go through them. This suggests that the political gains from openly and strongly calling for safer border are no longer as strong. It could also mean that the chips held by players at the bargaining table are now different. Perhaps the members of Congress who needed the wall politically are satisfied; maybe they are no longer playing. The Bush administration is certainly aware of the limited days left in its second term, and may be less inclined to bargain.

2.5 CHANGING OF THE GUARD (2009)

Barack Obama is sworn into office, ushering a Democrat into the White House with a Democratically controlled Congress alongside him. During this first year of the Obama Administration the border fence is not brought up a single time by the administration as it focuses on controversial signature issues such as health care reform.

2.6 BUSINESS AS USUAL (2010-2011)

Barack Obama and his administration are in power in the White House, with a Democratically controlled Congress that will go back to Republican control in 2011. This proves to be a very small window to put forward legislation such as immigration reform that may seem to have more of a chance to pass in a Democratically controlled congress. The Congressional push in the 111th Congress is felt less, with only 6 bills being introduced (and only 1 making it to action on the floor) calling for fencing to be built along the U.S. - Mexico border.

Though any mention of border construction is few and far between (it is touched upon in only six documents in two years), the Obama administration continues with the Bush administrations language of needing to secure Americas borders, as well as with the Bush administration's talking point that a fence is useless without broad and comprehensive immigration reform including interior enforcement: "...we can try to build as many fences as we want at the border, but the fact is, if folks are making \$2 a day back home and they can make \$10 an hour here, they're going to come here, unless we make sure that employers are doing what's lawful" (Obama, Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting and a Question-and-Answer Session in Ottumwa, Iowa 2010). Obama argues here with the enthymeme⁴ that without interior enforcement against employers (part of his broader immigration reform plan) there will always be undocumented immigration. Unfortunately this is still a solution that avoids the elephant in the room: immigration policy. The Obama administration's language is still punctuated by references to the evils of September 11, "This would allow agents to focus on the worst threats on both of our—both sides of our borders, from drug traffickers to those who would come here to commit acts of violence or terror" (Obama, Remarks in El Paso, Texas 2011). This hearkens back to Bush's early years in which he stressed the need for the United States to address its own consumption of drugs, as Obama addresses border security in terms of outgoing (to Mexico) rail traffic being checked for weapons. This is an acknowledgement of the two-way nature of the border as weapons take an inverse path to the drugs the wall is supposed to stop. The highly publicized violence in Mexico is at its peak now (The Economist 2010), demanding a discussion beyond what a wall alone can do, and instead bringing up ideas of American cooperation with the Mexican government as well as the implicitness of the American public insofar as the demand for drugs and the supply of weapons. Unfortunately acknowledgement of a wall that doesn't work can go in two directions: one calls for removal of an ineffective wall, and the other calls for beefing up of an ineffective wall.

Included in official Administration paperwork are Office of the Press Secretary Press Releases from the broader Executive branch, such as an August 13 press release that included Janet Napolitano, Secretary of Homeland Security. Here the language is directly connected to the rhetoric of the second

⁴ Enthymeme: a claim and a resulting premise without the logic being explicitly laid out as cleanly as it is in the syllogism (where: A=B; B=C, so therefore A=C) (Fahnestock 2011).

half of the Bush Administration's era. References to criminals and drug dealers and terrorists abound, and nearly every point is capped with counsel of the need for the 2,000-mile border to be made "safe and secure" (Obama, Press Briefing by Press Secretary Robert Gibbs and Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano 2010). She goes on to say that the structure itself is useless without Border Patrol Agents and technology to back it up, commenting: "as I said, I think famously, when I was a governor, you show me a 15-foot fence and I'll show you a 16-foot ladder".

Whilst the Obama administration continues the mantra of security and deportations, the fence is referred to only as being a stepping stone to broader immigration reform: an obligation to law-makers, that now, being fulfilled, would demand that these same law-makers follow through and support immigration reform. "You know, they said we needed to triple the Border Patrol. Or now they're going to say we need to quadruple the Border Patrol. Or they'll want a higher fence. Maybe they'll need a moat. [Laughter] Maybe they want alligators in the moat. [Laughter] They'll never be satisfied. And I understand. That's politics" (Obama, Remarks in El Paso, Texas 2011). By taking the argument for a wall to its nonsensical conclusion, Obama uses hyperbole to great effect in showing his opposition to the wall. It doesn't seem that the opposition has made it further than the microphone.

2.7 CONCLUSIONS

In the United States, Administration rhetoric concerning the construction of a barrier on the U.S. - Mexico border has a definite progression. There is definitely a vocabulary of motive: a rhetoric of fear. It is made through *ploce*, where "a term or phrase can continually, if unobtrusively reappear over a longer passage, and by its frequency and versatility in different contexts establish itself and the concept it encodes" (Fahnestock 2011, 133). *Ploce* already existed in terms of terror and terrorism from a barrage of speeches and addresses after September 11. Although the inclusion of terror and terrorism in the border discourse does not follow immediately in the wake of September 11, once the language does appear it is connected back to the fear of terrorism and open borders that 9/11 created. This repetition exists also with the terms of crime and criminals, drugs and drug dealers, and of course "illegal" immigrants. "The continual reappearance and reassertion of the same term or phrase has undoubted

rhetorical force. These devices are a formal mechanism for fulfilling the general rhetorical goal of giving *presence* to certain notions” (Fahnestock 2011, 135).

The move to build a wall along the U.S. – Mexico border while not entirely new, seems to have reached its apex during the Bush Administration’s eight years in office. It was not a primary, or even peripheral goal of the administration. It seems that political bargaining between Congress and the President eventually nudged Bush to begin to take a stance on the wall. From there it there was a swift transference of the language and metaphors used to gain public support for the “war on terror” to securing the border. This is seen in a massive upswing actually addressing the issue, and in the corresponding upswing in rhetoric and metaphors aimed at instilling fear in the idea of an open border. This rhetoric spikes, and then falls just as quickly back few and far between references. In President Obama’s term the existence of real violence along the border and thousands of deaths on the Mexican side that includes a city titled by some as one of the most dangerous cities in the world (Borunda 2010) only raises the level of discussion and level of fear to what seems to be a steady low level. This suggests that there is no correlation at all between actual violence and the rhetoric of violence, between reasons for fear and political use of rhetoric of fear. The spikes in the rhetoric of fear is brought about purely by political forces purely for political reasons

The rhetoric of the fence though potent and indeed full of language of fear, seems to be used only hesitantly by the Bush and Obama administrations, although the Bush administration did embrace the language in the 2006 and 2007 period of its time in office. The language instead seems to stem from the lawmakers in Congress who will not support any administration move towards immigration reform without first addressing an insecure and open border. During the time period that this study looks at, over 45 bills were introduced in Congress calling for construction of a barrier on the U.S. – Mexico border, suggesting a possible source for the political push that corresponds to a surge in fearful rhetoric.

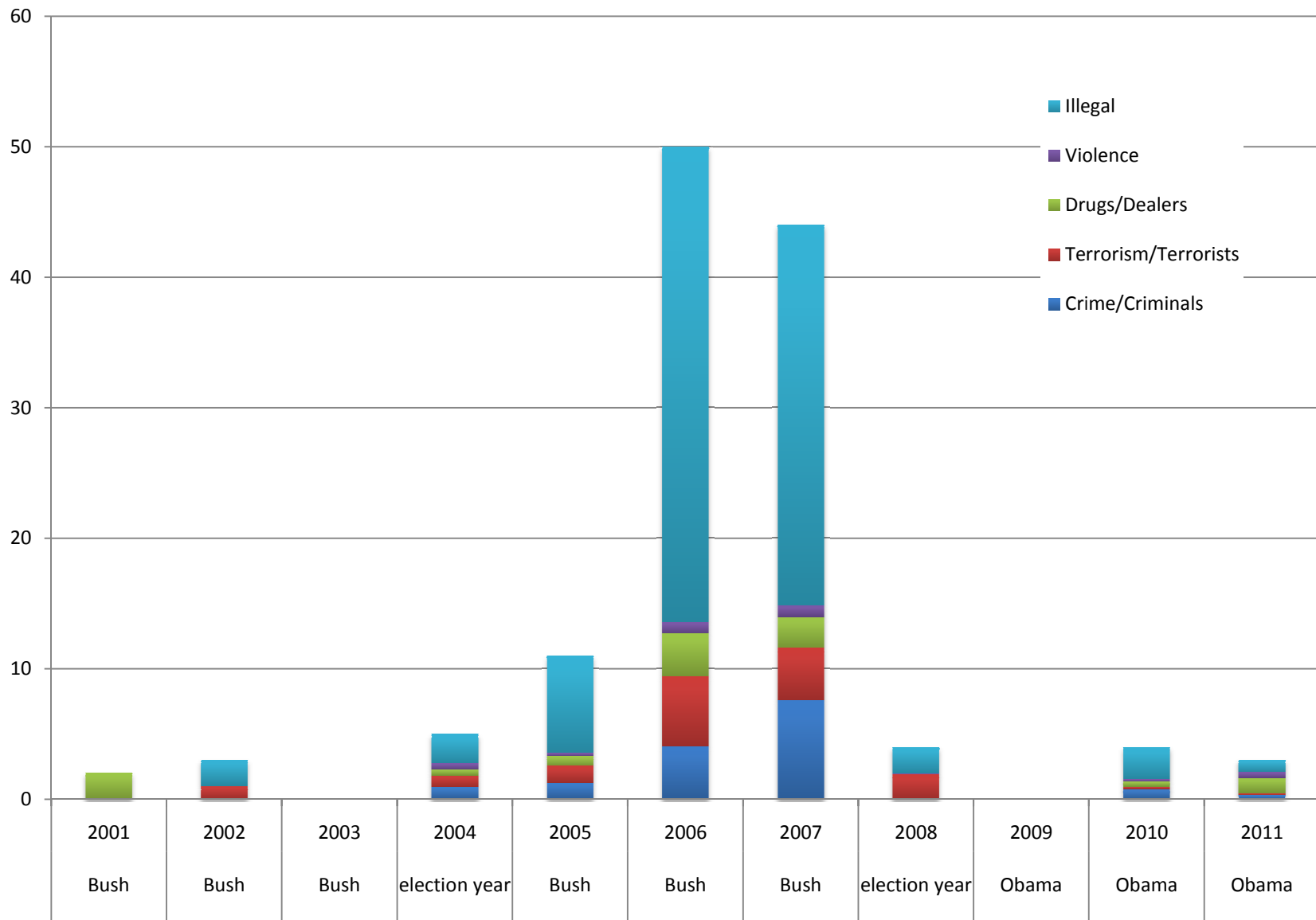


Figure 2.1: No. of American Border Wall Releases and Rhetorical Make-up.

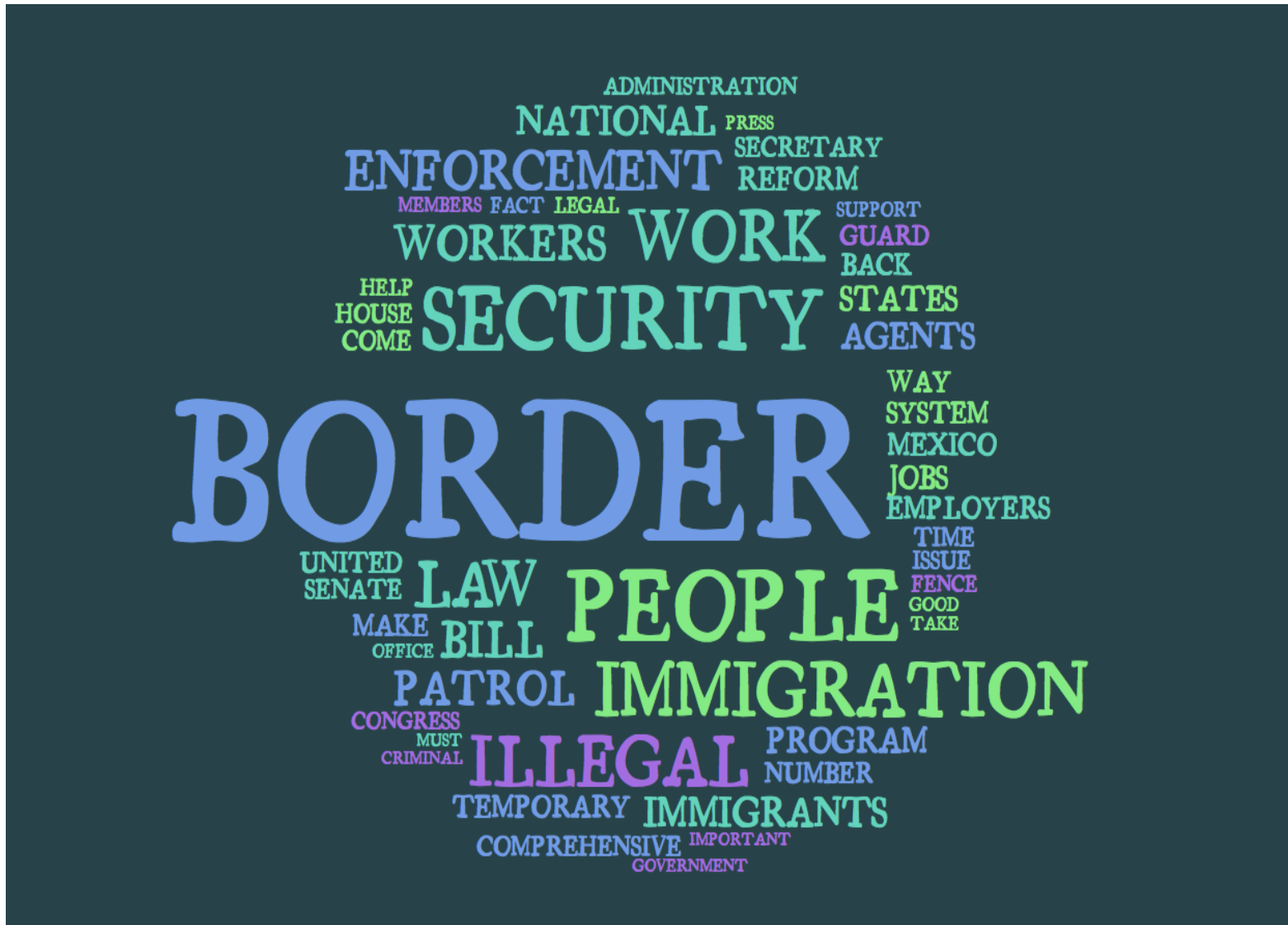


Figure 2.2: Word Cloud of American Border Wall Documents.

The State of Israel

3.1 AN UPTURN IN VIOLENCE (2001-2002)

The year 2001 is a period of heavy attacks in Israel with 88 Israeli civilians dead in Israel due to Palestinian attacks. *Likud*⁵ leader Ariel Sharon is the prime minister. In accordance with Israel's parliamentary system, Sharon creates a broad unity government that includes Labor and Likud parties along with several other parties from the political spectrum. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) makes no mention of any construction around the West Bank in 2001.

In 2002 Ariel Sharon is still in office although the unity government collapses late in the year. The number of Israeli civilians killed in Israel by Palestinians more than doubles to 185 deaths. June 17, 2002 is the first official release by the PMO's office to specifically mention the wall going up around the West Bank. Defense Ministry Director-General Amos Yaron reports that construction has begun and "is intended strictly for security needs and has no political significance" (Sharon 2002). This point is reiterated several times over the year by various ministers as well as by the Prime Minister himself. The very fact that the wall is already being defended against an international criticism that has not yet formed speaks to the foresightedness of the Sharon Cabinet as well as foreshadowing the coming rhetorical strategy.

3.2 AN UPSWING IN RHETORIC (2003)

Elections are held in January with Ariel Sharon again emerging as the winner, this time forming a government with his own Likud party, two right-wing parties (the National Religious Party and the National Union party), and a centrist party (*Shinui*). Attacks against Israeli citizens in Israel drops to 104 deaths in 2003, however the rhetoric is still riding high from the elevated numbers of the previous year.

⁵ Major Israeli Political Parties:

Labor – center-left.

Likud – right-wing.

Kadima – more recent party that falls in between Labor and Likud in the center-right.

Shinui – center-right.

Me'retz – left-wing.

Far Right Secular – Israel Beitenu.

Religious Right – National Religious Party, Shas, National Union Party, United Torah Judaism.

The rhetoric of 2003 regarding a construction around the West Bank is introduced in a speech by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in January:

In the framework of our fight against terrorism, we must continue the construction of the security separation fence, in order to create a continuous physical buffer zone between the population centers of the State of Israel and the terror centers. The fence is currently being constructed, with tremendous investment and at full speed. I want to tell you that this is the greatest work that has ever been carried out in Israel. 400 items of heavy machinery are currently operating, many of which were brought from abroad, as we do not have this amount of machinery in Israel... At the same time, I must emphasize: the significance of the security fence should not be magnified beyond what it is - another important obstacle to terrorism and a vital cornerstone in the comprehensive battle against the terrorist organizations, but not beyond that. It is not a magic drug and is certainly no substitute for the continuation of the IDF activity in the terror centers and against the terrorists, their abettors and dispatchers. (Sharon, Prime Minister's Address - Meeting with the "Scientific Club" of the Association of the Friends of the Weizmann Institute 2003)

Sharon uses the iconic form here to great effect, building up the tension with extraneous information on how many bulldozers and shovels were put to use and how surprisingly quickly the construction is going. This puts a great deal of emphasis on the destination of the build up – the tail end of the paragraph details what the wall is for: a wall against terror – a simple wall that will help but might just not be enough.

During 2003 the construction is referred to as the separation fence early in the year, and later on as the security fence. It eventually becomes referred to as the *seam zone*. In response to the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) firing on peaceful demonstrators at the fence, the Defence Minister stressed that the IDF had “an obligation to prevent the destruction of the security fence which saves lives,” a statement in which Sharon confirms the imperative that the fence should not be damaged in any way (Sharon, The Following is the statement of the Government Secretary at the end of Cabinet meeting Sunday, 28.12.2003: 2003). By setting out his definition of the wall as actively saving lives, Sharon is able to introduce the unsaid – that by destroying the wall that saves lives the demonstrators were therefore taking lives. In order save lives it was acceptable to take them. In other releases from the Sharon Cabinet the wall is also referred to as a preventative measure for criminal activity, as differentiated from terrorism. This parallels the American argument, where the everyday worry of crime and the extraordinary worry of terror can justify a wall at both ends of the emotional spectrum.

By the end of the year any discussion of dismantling the wall or even halting construction is off the table completely in peace and cease-fire negotiations with Palestine (Sharon, Cabinet meeting 1/12/03 2003). This is another foreshadowing of the possible permanent and political nature of the wall in the minds of the Sharon administration, and a concept that clashes directly with the alternative narrative that is being introduced in other contexts.

The alternative narrative in the rhetoric of Sharon's administration is revealed in his language when discussing an undivided Jerusalem (on a national holiday dedicated solely to the celebration of an undivided Jerusalem⁶) free of barbed wire fences that is "protected by a wall of love" (Sharon, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Speech on the Occasion of Yom Yerushalayim Givat Hatachmoshet 2003). Sharon also guarantees regularly that the wall will infringe as little as possible on Palestinians daily lives, as the Israeli government distinguishes between terrorists and civilians. To this end the creation of gates in the fence and leasing fees for land used for construction is shown as a solution. The alternative narrative here is for the benefit of many interested parties. Locally, Sharon must please voters that are very happy to feel safer, as long as they know that innocent Palestinians are not being unfairly treated with some form of collective punishment. Internationally, Sharon must placate a United States that wishes to know that the wall is indeed only to save lives, and not to create a political reality on the ground. In August, after a meeting with President Bush in which the United States expressed concern over the implications of the wall, Sharon made it clear that the wall "constituted neither a political nor a security border, but was an additional measure designed to prevent terror activities" (Sharon, Cabinet Meeting 2003). The choice of words has the effect of highlighting a notion that the wall is not a well thought through political strategy, but simply a matter of quick and necessary *reactions* to being attacked.

3.4 THE RHETORIC SPIKES (2004)

In 2004 there were fewer Israeli civilian deaths in Israel as a result of Palestinian attacks - a total of 53 for the year. In the summer Sharon's coalition government saw some instability as Sharon called

⁶ A reference to armistice agreements in 1949 and the no-mans land (the original *seam zone*) between the west side of Jerusalem controlled by Israeli troops and east side of Jerusalem controlled by Jordanian troops.

for Israeli disengagement from the Gaza strip – a move that involved relocating many right-wing settlers from within Gaza. As a result of the political fallout Sharon fires two and accepts the resignation of a third minister from the right-wing parties of the coalition in order for the cabinet to approve the disengagement plan. The negative feedback from settlers and right-wing politicians is strong.

The rhetoric about the wall intensifies, particularly with regard to its successes. Government releases point out that “terrorist leaders” during “questioning” admitted that the wall was making them find different points to enter Israel around the wall (Sharon, Conclusion of the year 2003 from the Security System. 2004). This is both justification and vindication for the construction of the wall and bolsters any and all calls for rapid completion of the wall at any cost. There is no time for the internal and international questioning that colors this time period.

In 2004 considerable time and resources are reserved for the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague’s upcoming deliberations concerning the legality of Israel’s construction of the wall. The build up of international pressure concerning the wall is beginning to affect the rhetoric of self-defense and the wall, as seen in an address by Sharon to the foreign press, “...I know people are talking about the fence. Do you know who built the fence? The terror built the fence! If not for terror, we would not have done, its very hard for us economically, the fence was built by the terror! If not for the terror, maybe we would not have done it at all” (Sharon, Address by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon To the Foreign Press Corps in Israel. 2001). This question asked by Sharon and then answered by Sharon is device known as *rogatio*. It allows for the Prime Minister to construct the issue and flow of argument without the uncertainty or even hostility from the press. By asking the questions himself, Sharon sets himself up for the *ploce* – for a bombardment of the repeated use of the word terror. It drives home the point that the wall was not a choice, but left with no alternatives, the only option for the Israeli government to protect its innocent civilians. He finishes this strong rhetorical statement with what might seem like Freudian slip: “*maybe* we would not have done it at all”, leaving the option open that if there were no terror, there might still be a wall.

Furthermore it is agreed that an intensified information dissemination campaign will occur within Israel, in Europe, and in the United States – information that will make the reality of terrorist

attacks in Israel clear to the world at large. Sharon decries to an audience of American Jews the ICJ's decision to discuss the legitimacy of a "fence that will save human lives" (Sharon, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Speech at the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations 2004). This is an indirect message to the American government through citizens that may base their votes according to candidates' policies towards Israel. Although the ICJ decision is of concern to the cabinet, Sharon insists that there will be no changes to the wall due to any UN or ICJ judgments. During discussion concerning the ICJ, the wall is now occasionally referred to as the "terrorism prevention fence", yet another reflection of the linguistic search for the most effective name for the wall. The Israeli High Court of Justice reaffirms Israel's right to build the "temporary" wall wherever needed to prevent terrorism, and this is seen as a great decision as it will help influence the ICJ. This is important as the Sharon Cabinet sees this as sound legitimization of the wall through the judicial system.

When, in July, the ICJ declares the Israeli wall illegal and must dismantle it, "Israel outright rejects it... This is a biased opinion... supported solely by political considerations... completely ignores the reason behind the construction of the Security Fence – which is murderous Palestinian terror. It is only concerned with the Israeli response – the erection of the Fence, which is the most reasonable measure in the face of this wicked terror." (Sharon, PM's Statement Regarding the Opinion of the International Court of Justice at The Hague 2004). The choice of words again highlights the supposed restraint shown by the Sharon Cabinet in adopting a "reasonable measure" in response to terrorism. Construction of the wall is ordered to continue with all possible haste, despite the fact that, "the sacred right of the war against terror received a slap in the face from the International Court of Justice at the Hague." (Sharon, Weekly Cabinet Meeting 11.07.04 2004). Here the Prime Minister uses the *epithetical* style to add emphasis with the use of "*wicked* terror" and "sacred right" while explicitly calling and associating Israel with the Bush *metaphor* of the "war on terror".

The opinion of the United States in these matters is important to the Israeli government, and Sharon is excited to receive letters from US President Bush that according to Sharon assert Israel's right to negotiate new boundaries with Palestine according to the need for "defensible borders", though this notion is not directly connected to Israel's right to build the wall (Sharon, At the weekly Cabinet

meeting, Sunday 18.4.2004: 2004). In every other discussion with the United States, the Israeli Cabinet reassures its audience that the wall has nothing to do with creating borders. According to the Israeli Cabinet reports, the United States was conducting its own campaign, through its embassies worldwide, against the decision of the ICJ to call for a halt to construction of the Israeli wall (Sharon, Weekly Cabinet Meeting 2004).

3.5 SHARON'S WAY OR THE HIGHWAY (2005)

Throughout 2005, divisions within the Likud party cause issues that finally prompt Sharon to leave the party in late November, and form his new party *Kadima* – a party that is slightly more centrist than Labor. Sharon pushed through his disengagement plan that withdrew many settlements from the Gaza Strip, despite a loud outcry from right-wing factions. The number of Israeli civilians that are killed in Israel by Palestinian attacks is down to only 25 in the year 2005.

To further legitimize the construction of the wall, rhetoric continues that claims that the wall is responsible for reducing the number of terrorist attacks in Israel, along with a continued call to speed up construction. Meanwhile, a parallel dialogue is in effect that maintains the level of fear. It is asserted that despite the “calm” that has occurred, more attacks are actually occurring, more rockets are falling, the Palestinian leadership is doing less to prevent terrorism, and Israel is in danger of attacks from Lebanon. Now that the fence is, according to the rhetoric, keeping terrorist attackers out of Israel, a new threat is found: “It has been found that progress in constructing the separation fence has converted Palestinians who hold Israeli identity documents into an even more preferred population by the terrorist organizations” (Sharon, At the weekly Cabinet meeting 15.05.05 2005). This means that any Arab (non-Jewish) citizen of Israel may now be suspect. It seems that the sense of danger has dropped with the number of attacks, and so keep the levels elevated a new element to fear is introduced. This does not mean the wall is a remnant of more dangerous days. Though brought up far less frequently than in previous years, the Sharon administration strongly reiterates that it will “continue in full force to build the security fence, without any budgetary, implementation or political restrictions” (Sharon, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Address at the Opening of the Knesset Winter Session 2005).

In direct contrast to this, the Cabinet devotes an entire meeting to ensuring that when construction on the wall has completed its winding path through Jerusalem, it does not affect the “fabric of life” of those residents left on the wrong side of the wall. This alternative narrative that the wall only affects terrorists, and not the everyday life of Palestinians is also part of a repeated rhetoric.

3.6 DEATH OF A SALESMAN (2006-2007)

Sharon, now prominently leading his new party Kadima calls for new elections March of 2006, however in January he suffers a stroke that removes him permanently from politics. Leadership of Kadima goes to Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, the former mayor of Jerusalem. In March, Olmert leads his party to victory in the elections and forms a coalition government in May with Labor (leftish) and several smaller parties. During 2006 there was a further reduction to 10 in the number of Israeli civilians killed in Israel by Palestinian attacks.

Acting Prime Minister Olmert quickly enters the linguistic and rhetorical maelstrom promising, as Sharon had in years before, to complete the wall with all possible speed. He also immediately adds contradictory rhetoric to the rhetoric of previous years in which the wall was carefully referred to as temporary and apolitical, stating; “[e]ven though this is a security fence, my instructions are that Gush Etzion and Maaleh Adumim⁷ will be an inseparable part of the State of Israel in any future developments” (Olmert, Acting PM Olmert Tours Along Separation Fence in the Greater Jerusalem and Gush Etzion Areas 2006). This may be due to Olmert’s need to quickly legitimize himself as a hawk who is strong on security. This notion is reiterated with regards to the Ariel bloc, another settlement deep in the West Bank that the wall loops to take in: “The Ariel bloc is an inseparable part of the State of Israel in any situation. It is understood that the route of the security fence... Ariel is Israel and we will see to security arrangements so that Ariel will continue to prosper as an inseparable part of the State of Israel” (Olmert, Acting PM Olmert Toured the City of Ariel 2006). This rhetoric of boundary building is continued in Olmert’s first speech as elected Prime Minister in which he declares: “we will also act without an agreement with the Palestinians to create an understanding which will, first and foremost, be founded on a correct definition of the desired borders for the State of Israel. These borders must be

⁷ Gush Etzion and Maaleh Adumim are both settlements in the occupied West Bank close to Jerusalem.

defensible, and ensure a solid Jewish majority. The Security Fence will be adjusted to the borders formulated east and west” (Olmert, Address by Interim PM On Presenting the New Government to the Knesset 2006).

This decision of Olmert is an important change in the image of the wall presented to the nation and the world. It is recognized as a boundary maker and marker that will define geographically and demographically the State of Israel in future negotiations. The diplomacy of Sharon showing he was not a hawk is replaced with a hardline discourse by Olmert to show he is hawk. Sharon spoke to the public and to the world with rhetoric of fear to justify his wall, while Olmert speaks to the hawks of Israel assuring them that they have nothing to fear because the wall will, politically, be put in the right place.

Ehud Olmert remains in office in 2007 with his Kadima and Labor coalition government. Again the number of Israeli civilians killed in Israel by Palestinian attacks has dropped, this year to 5 over the course of 2007. Only one mention of the wall is given in 2007 in a newspaper interview, where Olmert clarifies a past interview and states a “clear barrier” between Israelis and Palestinians would be necessary for a two-state solution. He is not concerned any longer with selling the wall, and construction continues unabated.

3.7 OLMERT: A BRIEF INTERLUDE (2008)

During 2008, political scandal in the form of corruption allegations and the related police investigation plague Olmert throughout the year eventually forcing him to resign in September. The remainder of the year is spent without a governing majority being formed. During this year the number of Israeli civilians killed in Israel by Palestinian attacks rises to 21 for the year.

The fence is not brought up outside of a routine mention until July in a speech the day after an attack by a Palestinian from Israel: “We invested billions in building the Fence – a fence which is highly effective, but apparently the fence can prevent someone from coming in or penetrating it or going through it or going through the existing crossing, but it still cannot provide a solution to the terror problem within the population that lives on our side of the Fence” (Olmert, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert’s Speech at the Caesarea Forum 2008).

This again puts the onus on Arab (non-Jewish) citizens of Israel as being a source of terrorism. If terror is not happening in order to drive public opinion, and the government has claimed it is due to the fence, then another source for fearful rhetoric must be found. In this case the source is attributed to the minority already living amongst the population. The notion that the fence is not the only answer to Israel's problem is later rejected as the old rhetoric of the wall being the ultimate solution returns:

Wherever there is a fence, terrorism against Israelis is prevented. Over the years, the security fence has gone from the project that sets the international community against us to a project that constitutes an example of how to defend against terrorism. Countries that wish to fight the kind of terrorism that we have absorbed in Jerusalem and other cities throughout Israel, will yet study the model of the security fence." (Olmert, PM Olmert Tours Greater Jerusalem Area 2008)

The alternative narrative also continues, with a focus on how little Palestinians on the other side of the wall have had their lives affected. There is a logic to singing praises of the good life for Palestinians on the other side of the fence while pointing an accusatory finger at the Palestinian citizens of Israel on the Israeli side of the fence. If life is unbearable in place you are unwanted because of your effect on demographics, and there is a supposed good life with your own people somewhere else, would you not want to move?

3.8 RETURN OF THE HAWKS (2009)

With the head of Kadima unable to form a government after the resignation of Olmert, new elections are held in February. Kadima wins the most seats of any party, however Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu forms a right-wing coalition government and he becomes Prime Minister in March. This shows that though there is popular support for secular centrist politics, overall there is a larger diffused backing for the right-wing, the hawkish, and the religious. Only 1 Israeli civilian death in Israel is attributed to Palestinian attacks.

Through the political turmoil that marks the first half of 2009, little is said about the wall. In July however, Netanyahu addresses the full Knesset and devotes a large section of his speech to the continuing construction of the wall – a wall that, according to Netanyahu, cannot come down when

events are peaceful, because the peace only exists because of the continuing presence of the wall (Netanyahu, PM Netanyahu's Speech at the Knesset Special Session 2009). He uses the *antimeabole*, arguing through inversion, to show causal reciprocity and connect in the minds of his audience the terms of peace and wall. He speaks strongly of the deaths the wall would have prevented in the past had it been constructed earlier, and the appalling decisions by the international community to condemn the wall. In light of this he states there is only one choice for the Loyal Opposition in Parliament to keep Israel secure, and that is to support him in every matter (Netanyahu, PM Netanyahu's Speech at the Knesset Special Session 2009). In this statement he skillfully uses the *sylllogism* to prove his argument, where the wall keeps Israel secure, Netanyahu supports the wall, so in order for the opposition in parliament to support security they must support Netanyahu. This parallels Bush's argument in the war on terror where there was no middle ground or debate to be had (CNN 2001). In conjunction, the alternative narrative of the lifting of restrictions on the Palestinian side of the wall is still part and parcel of the rhetoric of the wall, where not only is it portrayed as a humanitarian choice that Israel has made, but also that Israel was thus to be thanked for removing checkpoints and barriers and thereby causing the Palestinian economy to grow (Netanyahu, PM Netanyahu's Speech at the Knesset Special Session 2009).

A new issue that has emerged in this year is the "infiltration", not of terrorists seeking to do harm, but of foreign workers across Israel's land borders. An obvious solution discussed is of course, a border fence along Israel's southern border with Egypt, as well as sanctions against employers of illegal workers in Israel.

3.9 THE INFILTRATION OF IMMIGRATION (2010)

One Israeli civilian is killed in Israel as a result of Palestinian attacks in 2010. The year is mostly devoted to rhetoric on a new construction not covered in this paper – the construction of a wall along Israel's southern border with Egypt. This fence is on an internationally recognized border, and the rhetoric is openly concerned with demographics, and not allowing "illegal aliens" into Israel, "the only country in the advanced world that may be reached on foot from Africa" (Netanyahu, At the Weekly Cabinet Meeting 14.02.2010 2010). The use of hyperbole is matched with the use *ploce* repeating terms

such as criminals, drug dealers, and flood of immigrants. When repeated enough, they become a natural part of the narrative, and once part of the narrative, it must be true. It is paired with an alternative narrative of welcoming war refugees and preventing human trafficking. This has the effect of extending the parameters of those to be feared to the outside world – specifically to Africa.

The only return to the conversation concerning the wall around and through the West Bank is brought up in political conversation over the exchange of captured Israeli soldier for imprisoned Palestinians. Netanyahu will not allow any of the prisoners who are considered dangerous to be released to the West bank because the wall will *not* keep them out of Israeli cities: “Through the existing breaches, passageways and gaps in the fence, they [released prisoners] can reach Raanana, Petach Tikva, Kfar Saba, Netanya, Haifa, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Everywhere” (Netanyahu, PM Netanyahu’s Remarks at a Special Press Conference Regarding the Continued Efforts to Release Kidnapped Soldier Gilad Shalit 2010).

The continued narrative of the wall brought up before international listeners has now turned the battles of the past (with the ICJ and general international opinion) into a conversation of whether any of these organizations and bodies have a right to question Israel’s sovereignty (Netanyahu, Address by PM Netanyahu to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, New York 2010). The conversation of the legality of the wall as a technique by an occupying power has now turned to a conversation of sovereignty and protecting ones borders. This changes the nature of the debate from whether or not the wall could be used to define the borders of Israel, to whether or not Israel has a right to build a wall on this accepted border of Israel.

3.10 A WAR ON TWO FRONTS (2011)

Three Israeli civilians are killed during 2011 in Israel as a result of Palestinian attacks. The wall around/through the West Bank is rarely brought up over the course of the year. It is mentioned when it fails with regards to the one attack that did occur in which 3 Israeli’s were killed - the attackers “climbed/jumped over the fence” (Netanyahu, Details on Murderers of Five Members of the Fogel Family 2011). Netanyahu also continues his criticism of the UN and other international bodies who themselves continue to condemn the wall around/through the West Bank, “[t]hey cast as enemies of

peace those of us who insist that we must first erect a sturdy barrier to keep the crocodile out” (Netanyahu, Remarks by Israeli PM Netanyahu to the U.N. General Assembly 2011). Netanyahu uses the metaphor to depersonalize and dehumanize the Palestinians.

A repeated alternative narrative is given by Netanyahu on Jerusalem Day, in which he follows in Sharon’s linguistic footsteps of this special day, speaking of currently undivided Jerusalem, and his remembrance of the days when there were fences dividing the city constricting it and withering Jerusalem. Meanwhile his government continues to build walls that divide the city.

Again, though mentions of the inevitable fence around/through the West Bank are few and far between, the new fence to be built on Israel’s southern internationally recognized border with Egypt is being given the same rhetorical praise as the interior wall was given in its heyday... the southern wall will keep out terrorists and infiltrators (no more mention of demographics and war refugees), and "Israel's border with Egypt is a border of peace. To continue the peace, there must be security and to this end a fence is necessary. Its rapid construction is important for both peace and security” (Netanyahu, PM Netanyahu Tours Egyptian Border 2011).

3.11 CONCLUSIONS

In Israel the rhetoric coming from the Prime Minister’s Office also has a definite progression. It uses place to repeat the language of terror and attacks over and over again to solidify those ideas with the construction of a wall around and through the West Bank. The PMO connects the terror Israel has experienced to the American War on Terror. When these words lose their relevancy due to a rapid drop off from a spike in Palestinian attacks in Israel against Israeli citizens, the language morphs to rhetoric concerning the danger of criminals and immigrants from outside the Middle-East as well as to the dangers Palestinians living inside Israel.

Although continual construction of the wall proceeded, aided by a bureaucracy that carries out its mission no matter the talk in the halls of the Knesset, the rhetoric dished out by Israeli leaders changed depending on the leader himself. Ariel Sharon, following a spike in terrorist attacks, struck back heavily and forcefully with a language loaded with reference to suicide terror attacks. This corresponded with

his push to begin the momentum of building a wall. It seems once events were set in motion, Sharon laid off to a lower yet steady rhetoric in the face of international pressure. This was maintained by his successor Ehud Olmert at an even lower rate. Binyamin Netanyahu ratcheted the rhetoric back up again, although with few terror attacks to speak of, in order to maintain support for the wall, he had to invent other fears, namely outsiders from Palestine and Africa.

In general the Israeli case seems to show a rhetoric of fear that spikes with controversial political decision-making – in this case the construction of a wall around and through the West Bank. Israeli Prime Ministers have used this rhetoric to ensure support from the Israeli population and other legislatures. In a Parliamentary system, the Prime Minister must always be on guard for a vote of no confidence, however with a frightened population and a hawkish government this is unlikely to happen. This leads to leaders using every opportunity to remind the public what they must fear and why. If there is a stabbing, then the public must be reminded that the current government and the wall they are building is all that is standing in the way of an entire population of criminals, murderers, and terrorists.

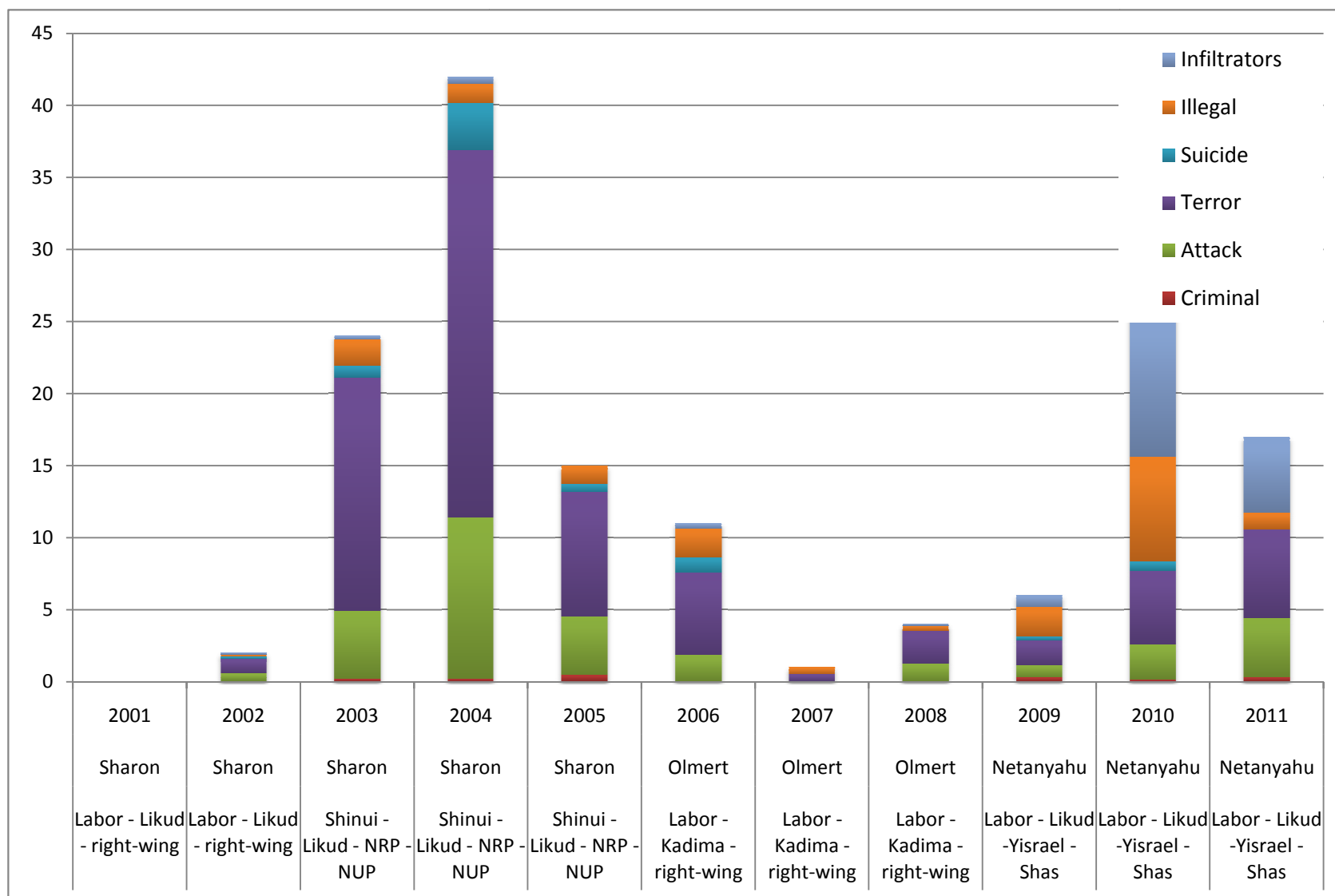


Figure 3.1: No. of Israeli Border Wall Releases and Rhetorical Make-up.



Figure 3.2: Word Cloud of Israeli Border Wall Documents.

A Comparative Analysis of the Cases of the United States and Israel

The most obvious similarity in the rhetoric of fear in connection to a border wall both in Israel and the United States is the enormous spike seen in the rhetoric of fear in both countries. The spike is in two different time periods, and Israel even sees a second spike, although with less magnitude. This shows that the rhetoric doesn't remain at a steady even level, but in each case a massive two-year jump that then falls back to nothing or close to nothing. Before diving into the comparative analysis of the rhetorical paths taken by the United States and Israel, a quick comparison must be made of the rhetors themselves, as past experiences and personality can offer some explanation of the language used.

4.1 THE EXECUTIVE: PROFILES AND PERSONALITIES

George W. Bush and Ariel Sharon, the two leaders under which the rhetoric of fear was at its height in their respective countries, have a few similarities, such as spending their free time on their ranches in the countryside. A deeper assessment, however, finds some key differences in their personalities, and their past experiences.

George W. Bush, as the former governor of Texas, managed a state that had very close ties with Mexico. Texas shares a massive land border with Mexico across which trade and traffic has always been very important – the cross-border trade amounted to close to \$33-69 billion per year when Bush was governor, and is more than twice that today (U.S. Department of Transportation 1994-2012). Bush's original concept after 9/11 for a guest worker program fell in line with the business community's notion that more foreign laborers in the country was a good thing, and thus legislation proposals did not include any provisions for tougher enforcement. These only became part and parcel of immigration reform after the Republican controlled House of Representatives resisted any type of guest worker program whatsoever from the Bush White House (Kretsedemas 2008).

Ariel Sharon was not only considered a hawk amongst hawks with a rather infamous military career, but he was also from an early point in his career involved in the civil engineering policy of carving up and settling the West Bank. This point is demonstrated with Sharon's advice as opposition

leader in the Knesset advising settlers to “move, run and grab as many hilltops as you can to enlarge the Jewish settlements because everything we take now will stay ours... everything we don’t grab will go to them” (Agency France Presse 1998). He came to power in a period of fear and insecurity amongst the Israeli public where Sharon’s hawkish views became representative of a centrist point of view. He is one of many of Israel’s political elite that come from a background of special operations and commandos (also including Ehud Barak, Benjamin Netanyahu and more) that literally pushed Israel’s boundaries by conducting operations wherever they wished, creating a fluid and permeable border (Weizman 2007). Although the rhetoric of fear with regard to the wall has yet to rise to the heights it reached under Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, it has seen a rise corresponding to the election of Benjamin Netanyahu who himself was an ardent critic of Sharon’s less hawkish policy of returning settlements in the Gaza Strip to Palestinians.

Thus, though a massive spike in rhetoric did indeed occur under both George W. Bush and Ariel Sharon, the reasons behind them seem to be very different. Ariel Sharon, and to a lesser extent, Binyamin Netanyahu, has always been associated with state-building through a means of force and fabrication. The rhetoric used was his own agenda. George W. Bush, on the other hand, had an association with open borders and an immigrant friendly agenda that opposed walls. His spike in rhetoric in support of the wall can be seen as a response to the political pressures put on from outside – as a chip on the political bargaining table.

4.2 CREATING THE PROBLEM: RHETORIC OF SOVEREIGNTY AND SECURITIZATION

In both Israel and the United States, there was immediate backlash from the head of government against any international or outside criticism of the walls they were in the process of building. The cry in defense of national sovereignty is strong from both governments. Israel asks why the international community has the right to tell Israel not to defend itself on its own borders. The United States is also quick to retort to any comment from Mexico in condemnation of the wall with a response that essentially states that there is no reason to justify a wall that is being built on US land. The United States is building (for the most part) on US land along an internationally recognized border, though Mexico may not like the fence that is being put up by its neighbor, there is no higher power to appeal to as no

explicit international laws or norms are being broken. Israel on the other hand, is still held accountable by some organizations for being an occupying power, and though this is not technically applicable in Israel proper, their involvement in the West Bank and Gaza is subject to international law, and thus the involvement of the International Court of Justice. Though very different cases, the parallels in rhetoric based on this notion of sovereignty are notable. Before rhetoric that calls on a fear of attacks and invasion by outsiders can occur, the scene must set, situating in from out, ours from theirs, and them from us. This is done by both nations by asserting their sovereign rights.

4.3 SHAPING THE IMAGE WITH A RHETORIC OF FEAR: THE ENEMY

Since Al-Qaeda attacked the United States, terrorism has been a watchword that has colored debate policy in the United States as well as worldwide. The expectation was that terrorism and terrorists would thus be a major part of instilling fear into a population. In Israel, this is definitely the case, although it was experiencing what most would indeed define as terror attacks. Releases from the Prime Minister's Office regarding the wall surge, and the rhetoric used to justify the wall is primarily composed of language of terrorist suicide attacks. Besides the relevant experiences of Israel, this coincides with the Bush Administration's worldwide call for support in the war against terrorism, and Israel seems to work its language to fit nicely into these ideals. Before taking any interest in America's southern wall, President Bush was calling for the global village to choose sides, America's or the Terrorists, good or bad, With Us or Against Us. Israel used this path to guarantee support from the American government, and peppered its statements with the fear of terror and terrorism, particularly in the early years of both Israel's border wall and America's war on terror. In later years, long after Bush's ultimatum, Netanyahu repeats the idea internally, calling for the Knesset to choose between Unity and Discord, Good and Evil, Opposition or Loyal Supporter. The United States, conversely, despite its ongoing international rhetoric against terror, uses the fear of terrorism steadily, but not overwhelmingly as a justification for building the wall. The terrorist, in American rhetoric regarding the wall, seems to be a reliable yet somewhat removed bogeyman when compared to its place front and center in Israel.

In America, the spike in fearful rhetoric is instead highly peppered with the language of *illegal* immigration supported by fears of crime and criminals. Steadily included is the connection to drugs and

drug dealers as well as to terrorists, but the main connection is to that of the everyday – the immigrant that looks different, talks different, and is a clear and present subject at whom the finger can be pointed. It is the Latino immigrants who included in the rhetoric along with adjectives such as criminal and drug dealer, while the terrorist (most likely Arab) is a shadowy sidekick. Israel's take on the immigrant is non-existent in the initial spike under Sharon's leadership. In the second small upswing in fearful wall rhetoric during Netanyahu's government the rhetoric suddenly mirrors that of the United States. The danger of insiders is brought to light (in this case Arabs in Israel instead of Latinos in the United States). Immigrants in the form of "illegal infiltrators" from the impoverished south (Africa) are threatening the demographics of Israel and taking Israeli jobs. Crime is mentioned for the first time in connection to the wall. Like the United States, there are no terrorist attacks occurring daily, and it seems that the fear must remain topical.

By examining how many releases (i.e. mentions in speeches, press conferences and press releases) concerning the wall were put out by the White House and the Prime Minister's Office each year, and examining what type and how often language of fear is used in these documents, it is obvious that language of fear and the wall are inexorably intertwined. Where there are more releases concerning the wall, there is more language of fear. There is no time period where there are releases without this rhetoric – where the wall is a topic of conversation without fear of immigrants and infiltrators, criminals and drug dealers, and terrorists and terrorism.

4.4 VULNERABLE AND STRONG: THE ALTERNATIVE NARRATIVE

An important aspect of the rhetoric of fear utilized by the USA and Israel is the use of the alternative narrative. This is a story that offsets the negative and fearful rhetoric, with a counter-narrative that is positive. This gives supporters of the idea a way out of any doubts they have, give those on the line a reason to step over, and is a pre-emptive strike against those who would argue the negative impacts of a wall. Israel's alternative narrative is the story of a flourishing Palestinian economy behind the wall. As the prison walls are built around the territory by Israel, the fact that cell doors within are left open is touted as a great humanitarian accomplishment. The Israeli Prime Ministers tell a story of undisturbed and unfettered lives on the other side of the wall – a story that portrays both sides as

winners, and only the evildoers (the terrorists and criminals) as losers. When language such as evil is used to describe what the wall protects a nation from, then opposite is used to drive home acceptance of side of the narrative. The use of the *antithesis* forces the audience to accept the full argument. The wall is *good* for Palestinians, therefore no wall is *bad* or evil for Palestinians.

In the United States the alternative narrative takes a different form. It acknowledges the hard-workers, the honest family women and men. It then intertwines the two, allowing the wall to be a defense for these everyday people against the coyotes (people smugglers), drug dealers, and other untoward characters. The audience, by accepting that some immigrants are good family people, also accepts the antithesis, that *other* immigrants could be the opposite: bad criminals and drug dealers.

4.5 BUILDING MOMENTUM: THE BUREAUCRACY

In each case there is a build-up of momentum in the language and rhetoric of fear that begins slowly and unobtrusively and then seems to run wildly out of control as time passes. In the later narrative, the construction of a wall becomes not a part of a package of comprehensive fixes for a perceived problem or threat, but balloons into the only and all-encompassing solution. It becomes ontologically necessary.

In the United States the wall is one tiny afterthought of a measure to President George W. Bush's solutions of broad and comprehensive immigration reform. The attacks of September 11 do not up the rhetoric, nor does passage of bills such as the Patriot Act. As time progresses and a conservative interest is expressed repeatedly by a select group of Senators and Representative in the form of introduced (and un-passed) bills to build a fence, language of fear from these bills makes its way into the rhetoric of the White House.

In Israel the momentum takes a different form. In the early portion of this study, Ariel Sharon uses his ex-military credentials and right-wing qualifications to justify decisions to both the left and the right. Both are unhappy with him and neither is able to challenge his decisions with any success. After a two-year period of many casualties in Israel the public fully supports any effort that might help them feel safer. A war-hero with an aggressive reputation and a rhetorical style to match is just the leader to supply this comfort. After Sharon slips into a coma, his successor Ehud Olmert, in order to prove

validity and legitimacy to make defensive decisions for Israel makes a huge increase in his references to terrorism and attacks but is unable to convince his government or the public, who put the right-wing Netanyahu in. Netanyahu picks right up where Sharon left off, increasing the rhetoric of fear and carrying the momentum of the continuing construction of the fence by the Ministry of Defence.

The Ministry of Defence, and its American bureaucratic counterpart the Department of Homeland Security are an added variable to the momentum of language and rhetoric of fear. As the government bureaucracies charged with the task of building and maintaining their respective barriers these are the heavy boulders that, once started rolling down the hill, are very difficult to stop. Once these bureaucracies have begun to move in a direction, unless there is a direct order to halt all progress, the political rhetoric has very little direct effect on construction. A basic understanding of government bureaucracies is that they must legitimize their existence over and over again. If they ever solve the problem they are tasked to resolve, they have no reason to exist. If the bureaucracy believes in its mission, it must also believe that it should continue to exist. If bureaucrats wish to keep their job, they also wish the mission to never quite be completed. In way, Bureaucracies aid in the extension of these narratives of fear, as they make protection against criminals and terrorists part of a mission statement, and immortalize this mission statement in a national budget line.

4.6 CAUSE AND EFFECT

In all of the discussions surrounding the wall, there is a “chicken and the egg” type of dilemma. The rhetoric of fear creates the need for construction of a wall, and the existence of the wall justifies the continuing rhetoric of fear through both success and failure. This is similar to Weizman’s (2007) description of the cycle of violence in Palestine, where the Palestinians react with violence against the very security measures put there to pacify them, thus ensuring further ‘temporary’ security. This is the physical manifestation of the spectacle of security actually creating insecurity.

Conclusion

In writing on the rhetoric of the Cold War, Medhurst (1997) states that language is not literal, but rather a “reflection of the goals, motives, and values of those who choose to use it... to realize their ends... [Criticism] is the study of how language is used by humans to channel response, and is... a paradigm both of linguistic deception and strategic posturing at the highest levels of government.”

The cases of Israeli rhetoric of fear concerning its border wall and American rhetoric of fear concerning its border wall reveal a very telling pattern. There was a time in each case when the rhetoric peaked. It peaked not only as a result of physical events, but because of political circumstances as well. At these peaks, the rhetoric of fear became the overwhelming language and reasoning associated with the rationale for building walls along borders. As any actual reasons faded away into history, and politicians faded into obscurity, their lasting legacy is the norm of connecting this language of fear to all that happens on the border.

Although the language of fear, in the end, seems very similar regarding both the US-Mexico and Israel-Palestine borders, the circumstances in which it developed were dissimilar. In the United States, there was a narrative that connected immigration with criminal activity with the specter of 9/11. Although very few bills concerning the border wall were passed, the success of the narrative is seen in the permeation of this language of fear to all levels of government, where to address the fear publicly, gives it credence, and not acknowledging the fears opens up that individual or agency to the question of competence in the field of security and safety. In Israel, fear has a similar cyclical effect where the fear grows whether it is acknowledged or denied. However in Israel due to its parliamentary system, the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister’s cabinet are the governing body, thus making it easy to create and maintain the language of fear through both the justification and the existence of the security wall.

In the United States, the rhetoric peaked years after the events of 9/11, yet defense against similar attacks remained ostensibly the primary reason for the need for a wall. To bolster these claims far from the dark cloud of the World Trade Center towers, the fear of drugs, drug dealers, and criminals is conflated with the fear of terrorism. Israel’s rhetorical pioneers were blessed with a continuing barrage

of attacks with which to justify the fears they played up, yet these too fell away. For that the wall was credited, justifying further construction along Israel's southern border.

In both cases, the rhetoric of fear is used to justify all sorts of policies that set in motion a chain of events that vindicates the original fears. By focusing on the negative, politicians can gain a short-term advantage where their action is contrasted to their opponents seeming inaction on a dangerous subject. The long-term effect is that of the bureaucratic machinery that grinds on with a lifetime goal of what was a one-time campaign slogan, thus ensuring the longevity of a culture of fear. When the initial reasons for this fear drop off we can see it applied to different issues in order to keep a need for security alive. In Israel this is seen in the shift of fear's focus to infiltrators on the southern border, thus keeping Netanyahu's credentials as a hawk valid and even needed. In the US, the language of fear is bolstered by massive arrests and deportations of immigrants all under the name *illegal* and all pointing back to an insecure border that must hold back the flood of invasion.

In looking at the language of these two nations' leaders, we can see that their choice of words and talking points are a good manifestation of where the country is. They may be reacting to important geopolitical events; they may be reacting to elections, or to the mood of the legislature. While many conversations are going on, it is the voice of the executive that can solidify the importance of an idea by embracing the rhetoric, or even starting the rhetoric. A leadership that wishes to change the cycle of fear of the "other" will change the language of the discourse, even if it means a direct substitution of words where necessary. It will change the language of the bureaucracies, so while the job description may remain mostly the same, the rhetoric may be completely different. Otherwise, by accepting the language of fear and using it, we are also accepting the goals, motives, and values of those who created it. Conversely, in order to reach a just, peaceful, and mutually beneficial border policy, the rhetoric of fear used by politicians, bureaucrats and the media must cease. A self-fulfilling cycle doesn't reach an end: it must be a conscious decision to change the language by the major players. Only once the rhetoric has changed can effective policy begin to be implemented.

Initially this study had hoped to conduct a full comparison not only of the Executive Office of each country, but also of the legislative process and the bureaucratic process. Following who introduced

what bills when with regards to the border wall could be very illuminative in discerning the actual process. Was it the Prime Minister who bullied members of Knesset to support and pass a law to build a wall on the border? Was it individual members of Congress, or a specific group of members of Congress who worked to force the idea of the wall into the President's radar? Process-tracing these events could be very illuminating as to why the wall became an important topic all of a sudden. The bureaucracy also plays a very important role as it is tasked with carrying out construction of the wall and, as all bureaucracies must do, continue to push the rhetoric, justification, and legitimization of the wall and the bureaucracies' very existence. The initial momentum might have come from a bureaucrat pushing a tangential operation of the organization. Looking at a thorough history of bureaucratic involvement will also bring to light where the bureaucracy itself was instrumental in shaping the debate.

While these tasks are fairly large, further study can move in other directions as well. Although the wall as we know it is fairly recent, there may have been previous attempts to make it an issue. Looking back further than 2001 for moves to build a wall and looking at the previous rhetoric could be enlightening. Expanding the study to other nations that have chosen to build walls, and asking the same questions of the rhetoric of their leadership would also be very interesting. How about when walls come down? Is there a reversal of rhetoric? Do politicians move towards changing the setting, or simply one day a wall and the next day nothing? There is still a lot to be learned.

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Curriculum Vita

Jesse Kapenga spent the first 18 years of his life crossing the many borders of Israel, Palestine, the Occupied Territories, East Jerusalem and West Jerusalem. Beginning his education at the Ramallah Friends School in the Occupied West Bank, and graduating from the Anglican International School in Jerusalem, he went on to receive his Bachelors of Arts in Politics at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. In a circuitous path that involved travel to New Zealand, a year-long return to Jerusalem with Seeds of Peace, and a year guiding tours at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Jesse found himself a Park Ranger in El Paso, Texas. El Paso's border culture and its similarities to the Middle East that Jesse grew up in guided him back to a Master's degree in Political Science at the University of Texas at El Paso, where he could focus on border issues important both locally and internationally.

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